



tubeworker

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SUPPORT THE SCHOOL STUDENTS' CLIMATE STRIKE

Tens of thousands of young people joined the Youth Strike for Climate school walkouts on Friday 18 February in town centres and outside schools across the UK.

It was organised as part of the Fridays for Future school walkouts started by Swedish school student Greta Thunberg, which have now gone global.

Students from Australia, Austria, Belgium and Germany have also taken part. School students in France walked out on Friday 18th, too. Over 3,000 people attended the London rally in Parliament Square, ranging from sixth-formers to primary-school-age children with their parents. The atmosphere was very militant. Students blocked the road and some climbed on buses and traffic lights with their homemade placards. There were chants of "Hey ho, hey ho, fossil fuels have got to go" and "Fuck Theresa May."

In Bristol, a few hundred students protested and blocked the road. There were also large rallies in Sheffield, Brighton, Exeter and Glasgow. Most school strikers said that the protests were about raising awareness and demanding young people's voices be listened to, rather than this or that specific demand to confront climate change. Votes at 16 was a recurring theme. It takes us blocking roads for one day the government should realise that they need to listen to people. Environment is hidden.

The forthcoming Youth Strike for Climate on Friday 15 March will be global. We can expect even more people to take part. This time the walkouts were mainly built on social media rather than by organisation in schools and colleges, with students from the same school often meeting up at the rally rather than walking out of



school together. Next time, more students will be able to organise in their schools to build the walkout, holding meetings and placard-making sessions, and forming plans to continue organising afterwards.

NUS (the National Union of Students) should support school students taking part in the walkout, producing guides on how to organise and seeking to use them to build lasting organisation in schools and colleges (sixth formers are members of NUS). Young Labour groups should help to build the next walkout and organise students involved.

The political demands of the strike, and the focus on social need over profit and the need to take on the power of fossil fuel capital, should make socialists very hopeful. The terms of the debate have been set by the school strikers in a way that promises a real fight against the capitalists and their political servants who are paving the way to hell.

As transport workers we should be supporting demands for cleaner, greener and ultimately free public transport. *Tubeworker* supports the students in taking further action and we would urge everyone who can to join them in Parliament Square on 15 March!

BRING THE JOBS FIGHTS TOGETHER!

Many grades in many locations are suffering under the destaffing over recent years, or are facing imminent cuts to jobs.

The unions - primarily RMT - are fighting back on several fronts. RMT has scored some successes, including on Bakerloo South stations groups and the cleaning contractor, ABM.

Now, more stations groups are going into action, and the union is gearing up for battles against a 2009 agreement on trains that restricts depot staffing levels, and threatened cuts to train prep.

Moreover, other issues under dispute - for example, the ludicrous red tabards - are rooted in staff shortages.

Our fightback will be stronger if we fight the roots cause rather than just the symptoms. The more we can bring these disparate disputes together, the better.

This might be easier said than done, particularly since the imposition of difficult-to-reach ballot thresholds by the 2016 Trade Union Act, but with the will and the effort, it can be done. And even if we don't feel ready to call everyone out on strike yet, we can synchronise ballots and actions in different areas.

Under-staffing is also the result of under-funding. *Tubeworker* would like to see our unions campaign more stridently against the government's cut to TfL's funding.

THE PAY FIGHT AND YOU

A lot of us have come onto the job since the last pay claim in 2015. If you are Night Tube then you probably don't remember the last time a pay increase was on the cards. All unions have now gone to the bosses with what they want.

Negotiations will start, but we mustn't wait until the bosses tell us they can't afford anything! We should be taking the fight to them, and aiming to win the demands we've already agreed. Whatever happens, they are not going to meet demands like a £3,000 flat-rate pro rata pay increase or a change to a 32 hour week, without a fight. That means getting ready for strikes.

Every time we strike, or even threaten to, the *Evening Standard*, LBC and the company will come down hard with lies and misinformation and try to stir up division between us as the so-called "ordinary Londoners." But let's look at the facts. Yes, some grades are relatively well-paid, but does that mean we just have to shut up and accept a race to the bottom? Lots of us got this job knowing it paid better than most, but that is because we've fought and won that pay by taking the action needed to win: striking.

We work on short staffed stations and depots, do extreme shifts in a safety critical workplace, and that's before you get to station staff dealing with the public

Whether you're a probationer or have done 30 years, we should all be enthused by the chance to get on the front foot and take the fight for real improvements to the bosses.

WORKING AS A CSA IN SÃO PAULO

JB, a worker-militant working on the railway in São Paulo, Brazil, recently visited London, and spoke to a number of radical workers' organisations including *Tubeworker* and the Angry Workers of the World. He is involved with the Invisíveis collective.

He wrote a document describing his experiences as a worker, and outlining his perspectives for struggle. They are not perspectives *Tubeworker* would entirely share, but we have republished them, with the author's permission) in the interests of making links between transport worker-militants internationally. The document was originally published in Portuguese by the Passa Palavra website. Read it online: bit.ly/jb-doc

21 MARCH MEETING: TUBEWORKER DEBATES BREXIT

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GET ASSAULTED? GET SACKED!

The Employment Tribunal had some choice words for London Underground Ltd as it found the company to have unfairly dismissed Sharma Jagrup after he was assaulted at work.

The Tribunal has ordered LUL to reinstate Sharma to his CSS2 post on the Central Line, with all his back pay and pension contributions restored.

LUL chose to sack Sharma just three months after he was assaulted by 20 people, and while he was still dealing with the impact on his mental health. We look forward to LUL's next 'mental health awareness' campaign.

The judgment is a damning indictment not just of the managers involved but of LUL as a company. And it vindicates the unions and their activists and members who have been demanding for a long time that the company show proper care to victims of violence instead of the dismissive and victim-blaming response that we usually see.

In particular, LUL must urgently reconsider - and drop - its outrageous disciplinary action against Zahra Tirmazi.

DITCH DE-STAFFED DEPOTS!

RMT is launching a long-overdue fight against the so-called "2009 agreement" which limited staffing levels in train depots.

It should be noted that some of the Aslef Trains Functional Council reps who drew up and signed this agreement hadn't driven a train for 20 years or more. The RMT would be wise to focus on what this important dispute is about: more train operator jobs. This benefits everybody, those of us who already drive trains, those who want a job driving trains, and those who need to get around London.

It's time to tear up this useless agreement and fight for more jobs in depots.

TABARDS LAUNCHED...

The red tabards are with us now. The launch has been patchy, with some refusals to wear them spotted in several places.

Tubeworker reiterates our view that individuals refusing in ones and twos might not be wise, but collective refusal-to-wear by everyone, or at least a significant proportion of people, on a particular shift should be organised wherever possible. As we're not an official union publication, or linked to any union, we can say that without risk of legal reprisal.

An official RMT ballot for action-short-of-strikes, to refuse to wear the tabards, is on its way.

TEA BREAK?

A post by the senior stations boss on the Bakerloo Line on Yammer, LU's "social network" (management megaphone) suggests that free communal tea and coffee supplies, which were a standard in the dim and distant past, may be returning to stations.

Good news. A little token of appreciation goes along way. But anyone inclined to tug their forelocks and effusively thank the bosses for their generosity should remember that they're only restoring something we used to get and they took away!

And note the timing; the announcement was made a few days before the launch of the notorious red tabards. A caffeinated bribe to get us to stop objecting to their nonsensical vests?

WOT NO WALTHAMSTOW LIFT?

Spare a thought for the passengers at Walthamstow Central station, who have had to manage without the lift from the ticket hall to the bus station for around three weeks now. They are left with no access other than by the pretty hefty staircase.

It seems that a part failed and that rather than holding a stock of spare parts, the contractor has to order a new one to be made, which is done in Italy and can take up to a month.

Such is the illogic of contracting-out bits of the Underground to private companies. Having said that, you'd think that if LUL insists on using contractors, it could insist on rather better contracts.

Unless you're fluent in the lingo of "card clash" and "contactless", it's likely to go over your head.



Above: RMT Tube cleaners teamed up with outsourced workers from three other unions - IWGB, UVW, and PCS - on 26 February, for a demonstration against outsourcing.

What is Tubeworker?

Tubeworker is a rank-and-file socialist bulletin, published at least monthly, written by Tube workers, for Tube workers. It is published by the socialist group Workers' Liberty, but is produced in editorial meetings open to all workers. Supporters from outside London Underground can help with public distribution.

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