

We've got postal bosses on the run, now let's..

Strike and hit them hard

What a great result! Over 76% voted yes to industrial action (61,623 for, 19,207 against) on a good turnout (67%). Royal Mail bosses were stunned into silence, their feeble appeals to workers to vote no having backfired. Even the media - against us from day one - was forced to concede workers were solidly united behind our union. As the BBC put it:

"The size of the majority in favour of action is certainly a surprise - much higher than expected - at a stroke undermining the Royal Mail's suggestion that staff disaffection with the company was restricted to a few hotspots around the country."

Yes, just like CWU activists and reps said all along. We've had enough of cuts and closures, management diktat and bullying, and now we are getting ready to fight it out for our future.

Bosses on the run

Royal Mail's managing director Mark Higson pleaded for the CWU to drop the strikes: "The union has repeatedly offered a strike-free moratorium. We call on the union to honour that commitment." Paul Tollman, operations director, promised Royal Mail was done making cuts for this year, so it was time to sit down and talk!

Forget it, there is no way Royal Mail would make even a single serious concession if we agreed to go back and work off the backlog. We should strike - and negotiate from a position of strength.

And strength is what we've got in spades. The workers have got the whip hand now. They won't be able to move managers all over the country to undermine our strike, like they have for the last few months. With Christmas on the way, which is a huge portion of many companies' profits and in the current recession even more



important, businesses are quaking at the potential loss of sales.

Amazon, EBay, and others can threaten to take contracts away but they are likely to return. They use Royal Mail for a reason - we are the only national delivery service to every address and cheaper than alternatives. TNT has so far refused to set up its own delivery system because of the costs involved. We hold some strong cards - let's play 'em.

Let's show them we mean business

We should build on the backlog by taking immediate, decisive action - three days all out in a row next week, for example. That would be long enough to knock the bosses again, test our own strength, hold demonstrations in every town and city, and convene mass meetings to elect delegates to a recall conference to hammer out a strike strategy.

Far from needing the "period of calm" that Dave Ward has unwisely offered Royal Mail, we need to kick up a storm!

Bristol branch has set up a solidarity committee, so that appeals for hardship funds can be turned into a real movement in our support. That's how we can win the battle for the public's hearts and minds - not by appearing "moderate" but by being determined.

We can make the strike rock-solid by

mounting mass picket lines, using these to hold mass meetings and elect strike committees to oversee the dispute and raise solidarity funds. That way we will be well placed to foil managers' tricks and pressure.

This is a great time to set up strike committees at a local level to make sure everyone has something to do and can take part in making decisions. These could be the base for similar rank and file controlled structures at the regional and national level.

Let's get ourselves sorted from the word go. Who knows what twists and turns the strike may take. Royal Mail could turn to the courts to try and break our strike, or victimise a string of union activists, like they've done to south west divisional rep, Chris Webb, or open up scab mail centres with casuals to take our work away...

That's why we've got to be ready to up the ante - and take all-out indefinite strike action. We believe this is the quickest and surest way to win. Binmen in Leeds are on all out strike. Staff at Tower Hamlets College recently won by going out and staying out. Why couldn't we?

There is everything to play for - let's rise like lions and hit back hard. If we take a determined stand, we can not only stop the closures, halt all job cuts and reductions in hours, and end harassment and bullying - but we could also show other workers that strikes can win, that we don't have to pay for the crisis created by the bankers, the politicians and the bosses.

- **No more delays - let's kick it off with a three-day strike**
- **Strike committees in every office**
- **Mass pickets and demonstrations**
- **Solidarity groups in every town**
- **All-out indefinite strike - the best way to win**
- **Victory to the post workers!**

★ Lessons of 2007

The 2007 ballot saw a similar turnout and a majority of 77.5%. Our effort then was magnificent.

Now the postal system is already creaking under a backlog bigger than in 2007, thanks to the hundreds of offices already on strike, led by London.

We had a strong hand in 2007 but our leaders folded in favour of the flexibility deal that led to the office-by-office attacks on our conditions, which forced us to strike again.

In 2007 we did not have strike committees and we did not have rank and file control of negotiations. This time we must have both.

We need to watch our leaders. Already Dave Ward is going on telly to offer a three-year agreement and to call the strike off, even while he is announcing the first national strike on Thursday 22 October.

We can't afford another bad agreement. This time, striking post workers should be in charge of all talks and decide whether or not to call off our strike action.

★ What We Need

Postal workers need a consistent campaign to defend our conditions and reject the market in our industry:

- Reverse all cuts, closures and victimisations since April
- No to the pay freeze, forward to £400/week
- Cut the hours not the workers: for a 35 hour gross working week, with no loss of pay.
- For the government to underwrite the pension scheme with no cuts
- No privatisation - abolish Postcomm, close the postal market and nationalise the private operators, like TNT.
- Elect strike committees, for a Rank and File Movement in the CWU
- For an immediate ballot on funding Labour: disaffiliate and build a New Anticapitalist Party!

In sum, we fight for workers' control of our industry, so we can build it up into the kind of service working class users need, as part of the revolutionary struggle for socialism.

- I'd like more info
- I'd like to JOIN Workers Power
- add my name to the appeal for a New Anticapitalist Party

Name

Phone:

Email:

Address:

Workplace:

Union:

Position:

Make cheques out to Workers Power, and send to: Workers Power
BCM 7750 London WC1N 3XX
or contact us at 02077084331 or
workerspower@bopenworld.com

Labour is behind these attacks, let's stop funding Labour

London Division voted 98% to stop funding Labour, let's follow this example in every branch. The unions should break from Labour and form a new, anti-capitalist workers party that fights for us, instead of helping the bosses fight against us.

After more than 12 years in office, Labour has proved itself time and again to be a party that attacks workers' pay, conditions, jobs and rights. And now we face the worst capitalist economic crisis for decades, with a massacre of jobs sweeping the country.

The working class in Britain does not have a party of our own to organise and inspire resistance to the bosses' crisis on a daily basis - on the

streets and in the workplaces as well as at election times.

Without a new working class party, there is a danger that the racists and fascists will take advantage of the anger and anxiety caused by the crisis and scapegoat migrant workers, asylum seekers, and Black and Asian people.

We appeal to all the trade unions and socialist organisations, to all activists fighting for resistance from

below, to anti-racist and anti-fascist campaigners confronting the BNP, to the trade union leaders and members: let's unite and build a new anti-capitalist party.

Many activists and groups are now discussing left unity. Conferences in the autumn will discuss challenging Labour at the next election. We want to see a new anticapitalist workers' party take up that challenge. We call for:

- **An open conference – bringing together unions, socialist organisations, workers, youth and left campaigners – to launch a new anticapitalist party**
- **Local committees for a new party: start building roots in communities**
- **For a slate of candidates in the general election**

To add your support,
go to the website:

www.AntiCapitalistParty.org.uk