

ISSUE NUMBER 4, VOLUME 12

APRIL 2010

RMT *news*

Essential reading for today's transport worker

Round Two!

Network Rail hides behind anti-trade union laws to ban strikes

Justice4Jarvis workers



www.rmt.org.uk

NATIONAL UNION OF RAIL, MARITIME & TRANSPORT WORKERS

Unity House, 39 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD



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CREDIT UNION

EDITORIAL

WE FIGHT ON



It has been an eventful period since the last RMT News came out, with attacks on jobs across the country and a particularly hostile media campaign against the union.

The April Fool's Day court judgment banning strike action at Network Rail was a direct attack on democratic trade unionism and had nothing to do with settling the long-running dispute.

The injunction launched by Network Rail made a number of ludicrous claims about burnt down signal boxes, non-existent workplaces and other issues designed to mislead.

The company knows only too well that ballot papers go to members' homes not where they work. That did not stop the judge finding against the union or the vicious attack on this union by BBC Radio 4 presenter John Humphreys.

Humphreys abused his position by making spurious claims of 'vote rigging' as part of a concerted attack on the union which *The Guardian* newspaper saw fit to join in with more ill-informed bilge.

The bottom line is that the Electoral Reform Society ran the Network Rail ballot, as it does for the hundreds of ballots we run every year. This union gives members the right to vote Yes, No or abstain and we should all accept the result of that democratic mandate regardless of the outcome.

Under the UK's draconian anti-trade union laws and their strict interpretation every grade and location must be accounted for. But by the time I have written this and you receive this journal any aspect of this information could have changed. By the same argument every government we have ever had would be illegitimate.

Moreover, did 1,200 Jarvis workers get a vote when it went into administration and Network Rail and the government just shrugged their shoulders?

Did members at Scotrail get a chance to be balloted over the company's plans to introduce Driver-Only Operation on the Edinburgh-Glasgow routes and on the North Berwick and Gallashiels routes by 2016?

Ultimately, UK laws are designed to support the employers and stop trade

unions from doing what they were set up to do, defend their members.

The lack of action to remove these outdated laws by this government has been a bone of contention for many years but to see them actually ratcheted up even further is a disgrace.

That is why sacked Jarvis worker Bill Rawcliffe is standing in the general election on May 6 against new Labour minister Ed Miliband in Doncaster North. Jarvis workers have had their jobs, back pay and pensions stolen from them yet Mr Miliband claims nothing can be done. That was his answer when Vestas workers making wind turbines were thrown on the dole too. Well, it is a mantra that this union does not accept. If you can hand bankers £150 billion in bail outs for a crisis they created, then something can be done.

RMT is also backing a number of other Trade Union and Socialist Coalition candidates standing across the country as well as Labour Party candidates that support RMT's Parliamentary group.

On London Underground RMT is balloting members for strike action after bosses announced plans to slash 800 staff and close ticket offices, undermining public and staff safety.

As well as cutting costs, it is clearly an attempt at union-busting as outlined by a leaked internal document from London Underground which talks about "ageing and entrenched workforce" and how the "recession helps, now is time to make changes".

RMT is also defending seafaring jobs at Dover, Portsmouth and Holyhead and continuing our campaign to defend lifeline ferry services like Northlink and Caledonian MacBrayne.

Finally, congratulations to those bus, rail and shipping members that went to Lille in France earlier this month to the international protest against EU rules that are dumping transport workers in the private sector regardless of the consequences. This is real international solidarity in action.

Best wishes

Bob Crow

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When you have finished with this magazine give it to a workmate who is not in your union. Even better, ask them to join RMT by filling in the application form opposite

NETWORK RAIL RUNS TO THE COURTS

Union to re-ballot signalling and infrastructure maintenance staff at Network Rail after court bans strike action

Instead of negotiating with RMT to avoid strike action over plans to slash 1,500 jobs at Network Rail, the government-backed company ran and got an injunction to ban industrial action by signallers and other operational staff.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow said that the union intended to re-ballot members and said that the legal challenge was a "scandalous attempt" to use anti-union laws to prevent workers exercising their right to strike.

Outside the Royal Courts of Justice, Bob Crow vowed that the union would reballot its members and insisted that the campaign to defend the safety of Britain's railways was "by no means over".

"Network Rail may have won round one, but this is a 15-round heavyweight contest - we are still in dispute and determined to fight on," he said.

TSSA general secretary Gerry Doherty backed RMT and pledged to reballot his members to ensure that supervisors could

continue to strike alongside signallers and maintenance workers.

"We had always intended to execute this dispute standing shoulder to shoulder with our sister union," Mr Doherty said.

In a highly political judgment Mrs Justice Sharp granted the injunction, which blocked strike action planned for April 6, after agreeing with Network Rail's allegations of discrepancies in the ballot.

The company claimed that RMT had balloted 11 signal boxes which had been closed for years; recorded more votes than the number of employees in 67 locations; failed to ballot 26 workplaces involving a total of 100 staff; and balloted 12 locations where staff were ineligible to vote.

Under the UK's draconian anti-trade union laws, a union must give the employer the number by grade and location of members balloted for industrial action.

But ballot papers are not sent to signal boxes or work

locations. Voting papers are sent direct to union members' homes in a postal ballot conducted by the Electoral Reform Society.

"If you follow the mad logic of Network Rail, then every general election ever held in this country would be declared null and void.

"This is a clear attack on democracy and the right of workers to withdraw their labour collectively, which is the cornerstone of a free society," Bob Crow said.

BALLOT-RIGGING SMEARS

Following the judgment, BBC Radio 4 presenter John Humphrys used an interview with Bob Crow to accuse the union of ballot-rigging. The Guardian newspaper also wrote a vicious editorial against the union.

John McDonnell MP immediately wrote to newspaper to protest over what he said was the worst example of a concerted campaign of media bias against a trade union since the 1980s miners' strike.

"John Humphrys' interview of Bob Crow, with his references to ballot-rigging, and the BBC's subsequent headline of "RMT's Bob Crow denies ballot rigging", was that disgusting classic of the old hack lawyer's tactic of asking the defendant: "When did

you stop beating your wife?" he wrote.

PROPORTIONAL?

Mrs Justice Sharp added insult to injury by effectively deciding that applications for high Court injunctions against industrial action can be granted where the strike can be shown to have a disproportionate impact on the travelling public.

RMT president Alex Gordon said that, by invoking proportionality, Sharp's judgment actually increased the scope of anti-union laws further (see page 23).

"This is a remarkable new development in UK law imported from recent European Court of Justice judgments, allows judges to assess effects of strike action and whether such actions are justified.

"This will have massive repercussions for public sector workers opposing post-general election spending cuts and is a Trojan horse to outlaw effective strike action to defend key services," he said.

The union is campaigning against these anti-trade union laws, which contravene many ILO conventions, and is in the process of challenging them at the European Court of Human Rights. ■

SHARP END: Bob Crow with Alex Gordon and executive committee members outside the High Court in London after Judge Mrs Justice Sharp granted an injunction to Network Rail banning legitimate strike action.



THE SHARP END

Brendan Montague posted this revealing blog on *The Sauce* website uncovering the background of the judge that banned strike action at Network Rail

The judge who imposed a court injunction against RMT banning strike action at Network Rail has close family ties with Goldman Sachs one of the principle dealers raising money for the transport firm.

Mrs Justice Sharp is the sister of Richard Sharp who until recently ran Goldman Sachs' European private equity fund. Goldman Sachs is a principle dealer for Network Rail's £34 billion Debt Issuance Programme.

The Sauce is not suggesting impropriety or conflict of interest in the court case but

merely commenting on the closeness of the British judicial system to major corporate interests a relationship which deserves greater scrutiny when strike action is barred by the High Court.

Dame Victoria Madeleine Sharp imposed a temporary order on the RMT strike despite a 54 per cent vote among signal workers because of technical inaccuracies and discrepancies in the ballot records.

The ruling moved TUC general secretary, Brendan Barber, to say: "It's becoming increasingly easy for employers,

unhappy at the prospect of a dispute, to rely on the courts to intervene and nullify a democratic ballot for industrial action on a mere technicality".

The judge's brother Richard was until his resignation one of the longest serving partners in the UK for Goldman Sachs with an estimated personal wealth in 2004 of £125 million mostly shares in the firm - and annual bonuses of between £5 million and £10 million, according to reports.

Goldman Sachs is named on the Network Rail website as dealers for both the £30 billion Multicurrency Note Programme and £4 billion Commercial Paper Programme. There is no suggestion by *The Sauce* that Sharp was involved in either programme.

Mr Sharp Junior also has close connections with the Conservative party: Boris Johnson announced with great fanfare during the London elections that Sharp would be appointed a senior advisor for the Mayor's Fund.

Dame Victoria Sharp's life will be unfamiliar to many of the Network Rail workers who have been told their democratic ballot for strike action is invalid because of a legal technicality: she was educated at the independent North London Collegiate School, became a QC and took her seat at the High Court under Labour in 2009.

The judge is the daughter of Lord (Eric) Sharp of Stanmore in the London Borough of Harrow who was a confidant of Margaret Thatcher and was handpicked by her Conservative government in the 1980s to privatise Cable and Wireless.

The ruling by Mrs Justice Sharp is just the latest from the High Court imposed through the strictest interpretation of the 1992 Trade Union Act which demands accurate records of balloted union members are presented to the company.

The same part of the act was used by Mrs Justice Cox to prevent the British Airways cabin staff from striking over Christmas last year.

Dame Laura Mary Cox was awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award by human rights group Justice - and would therefore have been aware of a ruling from the European Court of Human Rights (Demir and Baykara v Turkey) that suggests such injunctions may undermine union members' rights to collective bargaining.

Professor Gregor Gall, an industrial relations expert at the University of Hertfordshire, has calculated that the number of injunctions under this part of the act trebled during 2009. There have been concerns raised that the courts are being used to prevent strikes in the lead up to the general election. ■





RMT MEMBERS AT SCOTRAIL TAKE FURTHER ACTION

Due to First Scotrail management's intransigence and its refusal to comply with existing agreements on driver-only operation at recent talks RMT members took four days of solid rolling strike action earlier this month.

RMT guards and drivers took two days of action and sleeper train managers launched two days of action immediately afterwards.

The stepping up of the action comes after a total refusal by First Scotrail to resolve the dispute at ACAS, the

government's conciliation service.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow said that the company had refused to give assurances regarding keeping guards on the Airdrie Bathgate Line and on all those lines to be electrified under the Edinburgh Glasgow Improvement Project (EGIP).

"The company is now blaming Transport Scotland for this situation and relying on the fact that it will be indemnified against any strike action by the taxpayer.

"First Scotrail and the Scottish government are still refusing to face up to

their responsibilities to the travelling public and their staff and are prepared to slash corners on rail safety in the dash for cuts and the drive for profits.

"I repeat my call for a face to face meeting with First Minister Alex Salmond to resolve this issue and to get the company to comply with their obligations in respect of the guards.

"If First Scotrail and the Transport Minister are not able to bring this dispute to a conclusion then it falls to the First Minister to intervene," he said. ■

STOP THE BNP

RMT general secretary Bob Crow and RMT president Alex Gordon joined the anti-racist campaign Kick It Out recently at a recent game at Dagenham and Redbridge football club.

Kick It Out works throughout the football, educational and community sectors to challenge discrimination, encourage inclusive practices and work for positive change.

The campaign is supported and funded by the game's governing bodies, including founding body the Professional Footballers Association, the Premier League and The Football Association.

Bob Crow congratulated 'Daggers' and their supporters for backing the campaign.

"This area has been targeted by the British National Party

which encourages racism for political gain just as the Nazis did in Germany.

"There can be no place for this disgraceful political ideology in East London or anywhere else," he said.

Alex Gordon said that the BNP is already the official opposition in Barking and Dagenham and only needs 26 councillors to take control of its first-ever council.

"It's almost halfway there, currently holding 12 seats. Six 'marginal' council wards will determine this election -- and every vote will matter.

"RMT is backing the Hope Not Hate campaign to make sure that doesn't happen," he said.

For more information contact
<http://action.hopenohate.org.uk>



KICK IT OUT: Alex Gordon, Dagenham player Abu Ogogo (Man of the match), Bob Crow and Stephen Cavalier of Thompsons solicitors



A short film of the Lille protest can be viewed at:
www.youtube.com/user/RMTtelevision

FIGHTING FOR RAIL SAFETY

Around a thousand transport workers from across Europe protest in Lille against the EU-led privatisation of rail networks

Around 200 RMT activists marched out of Lille station in France earlier this month to be cheered by trade unionists from across Europe to protest against EU-led privatisation of rail networks.

Rail unions from Belgium, Portugal, Hungary and many other countries gathered outside the headquarters the European Rail Agency, an EU institution that oversees that implements various EU directives and rail packages that open up rail services to the private sector.

They were joined by French rail workers from the SUD union who were in their seventh day of strike action against the continued liberalisation of the French rail network.

Just outside of Lille is the Somain rail freight yard where over 300 jobs are threatened by the continued dismantling of France's freight industry which is being 'liberalised' as demanded by the second EU rail package.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow told the noisy protest that unions across Europe were uniting against the systematic

destruction of national rail networks, jobs and safety standards brought by EU diktats.

"Liberalisation might sound harmless, but we have already seen fatal crashes like the one between commuter trains in Belgium in February, and now there are demands to dilute the Channel tunnel's safety rules to allow competition.

"Millions of people across Europe believe that railways should be a public service not a commodity to be smashed up and exploited by privateers who, ultimately, are only interested in profit.

"Big business and faceless eurocrats are implementing this dangerous experiment without any democratic mandate whatsoever," Bob Crow said.

Jeronimo Prieto of the Basque LAB Trade Union said it was "absurd" that different private companies could now operate on the same tracks from this year as outlined in the third rail package.

"The companies have brought in contracts where workers are employed on just a temporary basis which has led to lower

standards of safety and an increase in accidents," he said.

He said that the travelling public in the mountainous Basque region were also paying cost of EU rules.

"The companies care more about shareholders than providing a good service, less profitable services in the higher less densely populated areas have seen less investment in track maintenance.

"This has seen the cancellation of trains that people rely on in rural areas," he said.

A similar picture was painted by Hans Gerd Ofinger representing a German pressure group Bahn von Unten, (Railways from Below).

"The process of privatisation started in 1994 when Deutsch Bahn was transformed into a stake holding company and since then it has been split up into 300 subsidiaries.

"The drive for profit has meant that there has been less investment in infrastructure and safety. As a result the intercity express trains to Berlin had problems with the wheels and

axles.

"The number of jobs has halved since the privatisation started and contract Labour is almost slave labour.

"Recently we had a very harsh winter and it was revealed that a sub-contractor hired Bulgarian workers who were paid just two euros an hour to clear the snow from the tracks," he said.

He said that the German state railway was trying to create a feeling of competition between German and French rail workers as the two countries battle for control of Europe's rail networks.

"They are trying to tell the German workers that the French are their enemies but what we need are rail networks under democratic control operating on the basis of cooperation not competition," he said. ■

RMT has produced a DVD about EU rail privatisation and is available at Unity House or by e-mailing bdenny@rmt.org.uk

VOTE ON MAY 6

RMT has endorsed a number of candidates standing in the upcoming general election on May 6. Make sure you use you vote to keep out the British National Party.

Contact details of Trade Union and Socialist Coalition candidates

Candidate	Party	Constituency	Election Agent Name	Mobile Number	Email Address
Baldwin, Tom	Trade Union and Socialist Coalition	Bristol South	Domenico Hill	0117 9715722 (Home) 0117 9288463 (Work) 07757 653238 (Mobile)	tradom@live.co.uk
Brunskill, Elaine	Trade Union and Socialist Coalition	Gateshead	Norman Hall	0191 421 6230	Norman.hall@yahoo.co.uk
Cooney, Paul	Trade Union and Socialist Coalition	Huddersfield	Ian Brooke	01484 325100	75 Forest Road, Huddersfield HD5 8EU
Downes, Nicky	Trade Union and Socialist Coalition	Coventry North West	Dave Griffiths	02476 555620 m) 07929 395884	rkid@griff57.fsnet.co.uk
Gibson, Keith	Trade Union and Socialist Coalition	Hull West & Hessle	Janet Gibson	01482 712 967	geminis@geminis.karoo.co.uk
Grunsell, Jackie	Trade Union and Socialist Coalition	Colne Valley	Ed Doveteon	07917354959	edgarhd@ntlworld.com
Gunnion, Ray	Trade Union and Socialist Coalition	Motherwell and Wishaw			
Henry, David	Trade Union and Socialist Coalition	Salford	Steve North	07817 434 240	steven_north84@yahoo.co.uk
Hill, Dave	Trade Union and Socialist Coalition	Brighton Kemptown	Bill North	01273 679 189	wjn@ccb.ac.uk
Ireland, Daren	Trade Union and Socialist Coalition	Liverpool Walton	Roy Farrar	07951 497 909	royfarrar@blueyonder.co.uk
Kasab, Onay	Trade Union and Socialist Coalition	Woolwich and Greenwich	Roger Keyse	07765 298427	Roger.keyse2@btinternet.com
Lynch, Rae	Trade Union and Socialist Coalition	Bristol East	Stephen (known as Mike) Luff	07881 417218	mikeluff@mac.com
Metcalfe, John	Carlisle Socialist and Trade Union	Carlisle	Alan Stubbs	07896176501	ajsfema@aol.com
Nellist, Dave	Trade Union and Socialist Coalition	Coventry North East	Dave Griffiths	02476 555620 m) 07929 395884	rkid@griff57.fsnet.co.uk
Page, Ian	Trade Union and Socialist Coalition	Lewisham Deptford	Clive Heemskerk	07989360158	cliveheemskerk@socialistparty.org.uk
Tosh, Mick	Trade Union and Socialist Coalition	Portsmouth North	Chris Price	07901 882 557	chris_price_557@live.co.uk
Walter, Hannah	Trade Union and Socialist Coalition	Redcar	John Malcolm	07940 210 003	j.malcolm866@btinternet.com
Worthington, Lynn	Trade Union and Socialist Coalition	Wythenshawe & Sale East	Hugh Caffrey	07769 611 320	manc_sfe@hotmail.com
Bill Rawcliffe	Trade Union and Socialist Coalition	Doncaster North	Mary Jackson	01405 741337 07833 344837	
Jenny Sutton	Trade Union and Socialist Coalition	Tottenham			
Nancy Taaffe	Trade Union and Socialist Coalition	Walthamstow			
Paul Couchman	Trade Union and Socialist Coalition	Spelthorne			

RMT Parliamentary Group and other Labour candidates and contact details

Name	Constituency	Election Agent	Contact Details
Abbott, Diane	Hackney North & Stoke Newington	Eseoghene Okonedo	Pre-election 020 7219 4426; during 07909074340; dianeabbottelection2010@hotmail.co.uk
Clark, Katy	North Ayrshire and Arran	Gordon Mckay	01505 684127; gandjamckay@aol.com
Corbyn, Jeremy	Islington North	Mark Ferguson	07772 364925/0207 272 3889 islingtonlabourorganiser@googlemail.com
Davidson, Ian	Glasgow South West	Tommy Morrison	07825 521269; thomas.m.morrison@btinternet.com
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Hopkins, Kelvin	Luton North	Francis Steer	01582 730764 francis@kelvinhopkinsmp.com
McDonnell, John	Hayes and Harlington	John Holmes	020 8569 0160; jholmes1946@btinternet.com
McGovern, Jim	Dundee West	Jenny Marra	07973982283, jennymarra@hotmail.com;
Platts, Nancy	Brighton Pavilion	David Arnold	07790 453458 davidcsarnold1@yahoo.com
Prosser, Gwyn	Dover & Deal	Martyn Errington	01304 201199; martyn@doverdeal-clp.new.labour.org.uk contact@doverdeal-labour.org.uk
Riordan, Linda	Halifax	Martin Burton	07979 715524; martinburton143@btinternet.com
Singh, Marsha	Bradford West	Paul Meszaros	07745 860599; marsha4bradwest@yahoo.co.uk 01274 402220; 3rd Floor, 76 Kirkgate, BD1 1SZ
Smith, Geraldine	Morecambe & Lunesdale	Phil Farrell	01772 321879(h)/01524 411368(w); philip.farrell423@btinternet.com
Turner, Karl	Kingston Upon Hull East	Howard Flitton	07852925120; howardflitton@live.com
Sarah Evans	Hampshire North West	Alan Lotter	07941 227 757; sarah.evans54@btinternet.com
John Morgan	Rutland and Melton		

THE PEOPLES CHARTER

The Royal Bank of Scotland was estimated to be the biggest bank in the world in 2007. According to 'The Banker' magazine it was worth \$3.8 Trillion. It lost 91% of its assets by the end of the crunch in 2009. To stop its managers crashing the bank, New Labour bought up its shares and now we own 84% of it.

We own it - and last financial year (2008/9) RBS made £1 billion profit. It is paying out £1.3 billion in bonuses to its managers.

Richard Lambert the Director of the CBI quoted figures from Income Data Services at the end of March. Chief Executives of Companies went from 47 times average pay in 2000 to 81 times average pay by 2010. (They have a way to go. In the US in 2008 Chief Excecs were paid 319 times average wages.)

Now the election has started with an argument between the three main parties about how

hard and how fast to cut worker's wages and squeeze the public sector (Except, it seems, the public sector's latest members, the managers of Northern Rock, most of RBS and half of Lloyds TSB.) This is madness.

It would be laughable if it were not a declaration of war on every aspect of working class life.

When RMT and the FBU led the way to setting up the Peoples Charter in November 2008, we wanted to help create a mass movement that could argue for, campaign about and come together around a set of mainly economic principles - which show how a fair society could be built.

Today there was never such a desperate need. The situation could not be clearer. Instead of using the new resources that the state has had to take over to lead the creation of a new economy, the main parties want

a return to the bad old ways as soon as possible. In 1945 when Labour took over the failing industries of coal, rail, transport, steel etc., they did not plan to hand them back. These were the drivers of Britain's future economy. They were obviously unsafe in the greed merchant's hands. The same is doubly true now of Britain's finance industry. The managers of Britain's finance industry led the international charge that nearly tipped the world off a cliff last year. And New Labour, the Tories and the Liberals want to restore the status quo as quickly as possible.

In order to return to the status quo everybody else, except the bankers and the super rich, will have to pay. A vast shift of wealth, including social wealth (pensions, health etc) is to be shifted to the rich in order to set the economic clock back to 2007. This will be the biggest robbery of the poor in a century.

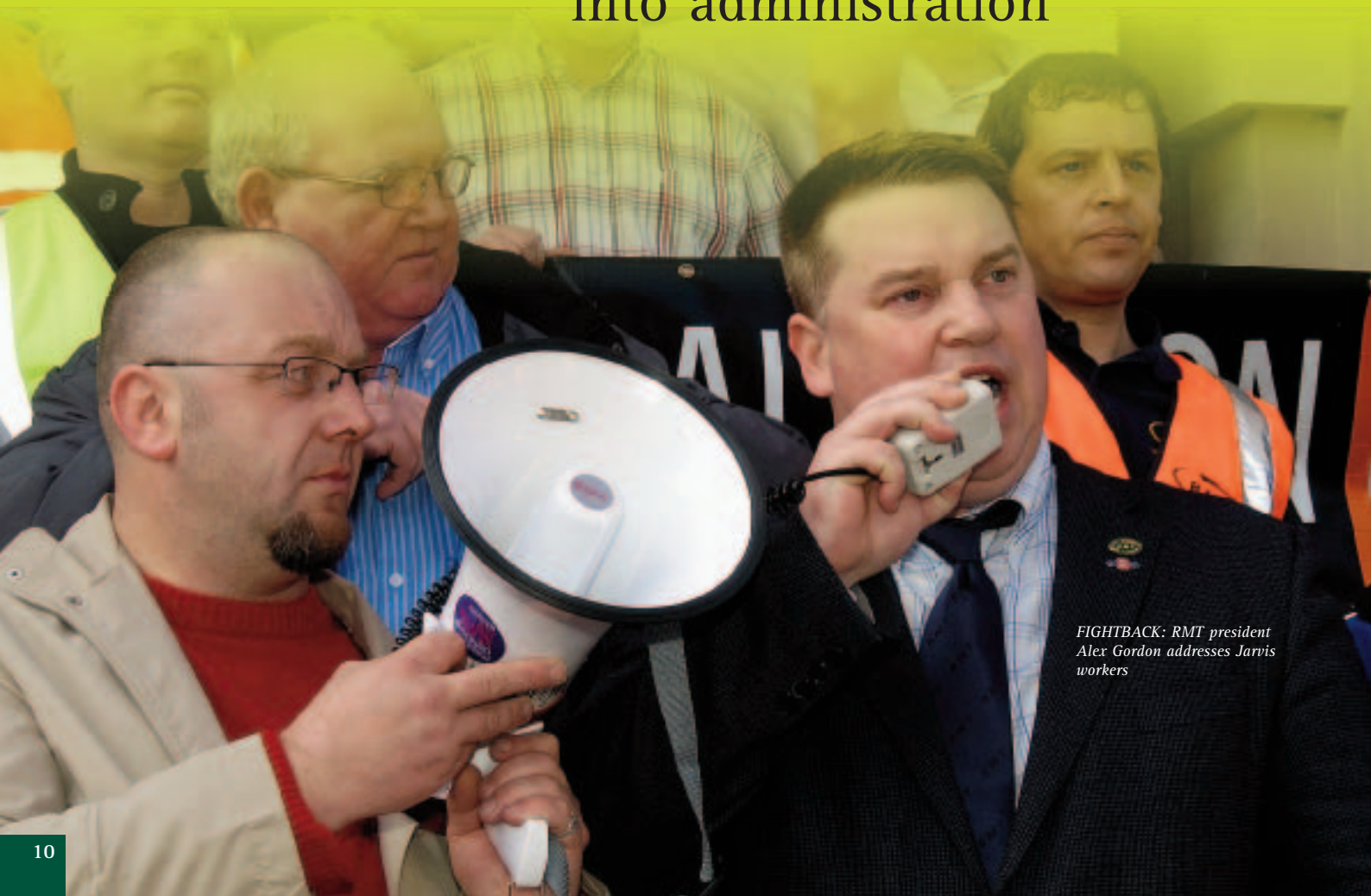
The Charter sets out guidelines for a new economy. It can bring together all those who now have to battle for their jobs, living standards, to keep hospital wards open and to stop polluters. The Charter is designed for all those who have to fight back so that they can make common cause - so that they can see that there IS an alternative. The Charter is a potential home for those inside and outside the unions; for those who are battling with the rise of the BNP to those who fight to protect their pensions. Our campaign for a new economy will help feed the struggle for the new politics we desperately need.

We aim first for a million signatures. Use the website 'thepeoplescharter.com'. Join every left union, the TUC and thousands of activists; sign up today - and find out how you can get more involved.

Pat Sikorski ■

VOTE JUSTICE4JARVIS WORKERS

Justice4Jarvis Workers campaign to stand in the general election in Doncaster after 1,200 skilled rail workers are thrown out of work and the company goes into administration



FIGHTBACK: RMT president Alex Gordon addresses Jarvis workers



SOLIDARITY: TSSA organiser Brian Brock says Jarvis actions worse than Maxwell

Hundreds of Jarvis workers and their supporters marched through Doncaster and York earlier this month to demand that the government launch a rescue package to save 1,200 skilled jobs at failed rail privateer Jarvis.

On the steps of Doncaster town hall RMT president Alex Gordon announced, to huge cheers, that RMT member Bill Rawcliffe will be standing in the general election on May 6 on a platform of Justice 4 Jarvis Workers.

Jarvis and its two rail companies, Jarvis Rail and Jarvis Fastline have been placed in administration, following the decision of government-backed Network Rail to defer thirty per cent of rail renewals work last year.

Bill Rawcliffe, who will be standing against government minister Ed Miliband in Doncaster North, told the protest that it was another hammer blow to the rail industry in Britain not just linked to Network Rail's 'slash-and-burn' cuts programme.

"This is a new round of cuts which means that no rail engineering job is safe.

"It is a callous and calculated attempt to weaken the

bargaining power of workers by throwing people on the dole and employing on worse terms and conditions," he said.

Network Rail even launched an astonishing insult by saying that sacked workers forced into taking day-rate work for labour-only agencies at a fraction of their former pay would "rather be doing the work than sitting at home watching Trisha".

The company is allowing Babcock Rail, a rival contractor, to bring in agency workers, putting the health and safety of workers and passengers at risk.

Some workers are travelling for hours before working 12 hour shifts for Specialist Engineering Services on a project in Hitchin, earning just £6 an hour.

TSSA organiser Brian Brock

said that the attack on Jarvis workers was worse than the Maxwell scandal 20 years ago.

"Maxwell only stole the pensions of thousands of workers Jarvis is stealing the jobs from workers and their families," he said.

RMT understands that under the terms of the Railways Act, Jarvis is a protected industry which means that the government, if it so wishes, can be a guarantor of last resort and protect the jobs, wages and pensions of the Jarvis workers.

The administrator had approached the Department for Transport to discuss what support could be made available but no response has been received from the government to date.

The accountancy firm Deloitte also met Network Rail to seek assurances on the continuation of existing Jarvis contracts. Yet Network Rail has rejected this approach from the administrator.

Network Rail has even rejected a request for a four week breathing space and instead informed the administrator that it will instead be asking other companies to bid for the work undertaken by

Jarvis.

Jarvis workers held a meeting in Doncaster Trades and Labour Club with Alex Gordon calling the callous and cynical way that the Jarvis workforce had been treated a "national disgrace".

"There is essential work for these staff to do and we are demanding that their jobs be transferred over to other contractors who are now bidding for the former Jarvis contracts. "We have legal advice that the Transfer of Undertakings (TUPE) regulations should apply," he said.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow said that the total cost of the administrators' Jarvis rescue package would be a tiny fraction of the many billions used to bail out the banks.

"It would be money that would be easily recouped by the Government and Network Rail. That perfectly viable rescue plan has been thrown out with callous disregard for the livelihoods of the Jarvis workforce," he said.

The union has written to the Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Transport to demand that they use the government's legal powers to intervene to protect the Jarvis rail workers. ■



VOTE BILL RAWCLIFFE ON MAY 6

Bill Rawcliffe is a sacked Jarvis worker standing in the general election on May 6 in Doncaster North constituency on the Justice4Jarvis Workers platform. Bill comes from a railway family and has worked in the rail industry for over 30 years.

"I have been asked to stand in this election as this Labour government is not prepared to intervene to

protect jobs at Jarvis.

"It would have cost around £19 million to secure the contracts for these workers yet it will cost the taxpayer much more in redundancy and pension payments.

"The bankers got hundreds of billions of pounds to secure their future yet workers are being treated with contempt," he said.

REMEMBER THE DEAD, FIGHT FOR THE LIVING

This year International Workers' Memorial Day on April 28 will be marked by the government for the first time

Each year more people are killed at work than die in wars.

Moreover, official figures bear little resemblance to the estimates made by the Hazards campaign, unions and Families Against Corporate Killing. It is thanks to such organisations that Workers' Memorial Day is now officially recognised.

The theme for this year's events is 'Unions Make Work Safer Everyday'. Research shows that unionised workplaces have half the number of fatalities of non-unionised ones. Having trade union representation in a workplace can help prevent deaths.

The Conservative Party has repeatedly attacked workers' rights and was responsible for the erosion of protection via anti-union legislation during the 80s and 90s.

Both David Cameron and Lord Young have recently made spurious claims against health and safety legislation, claiming that there is a culture of 'over-compliance'. Tell that to the hundreds of thousands of people injured each year at work.

The Tories plan to strip away health and safety legislation and in particular the laws on risk assessment. This is a very dangerous move as many companies do not even comply with current duties.

TUC general secretary Brendan Barber has said that anyone who believes that there is a culture of over-compliance needs some basic lessons in the reality of working life.

"Last year 30 million days were lost due to injuries and ill-

health caused by work and a quarter of a million people were injured at work.

"These were caused by employers failing to comply with health and safety regulations" he said.

The trade union movement believes that sentences proposed for organisations that negligently kill workers are too low. It is also astonishing that fines for breaches of legislation are not linked to the financial turnover as is the case for financial crimes. FACK (Families Against Corporate Killers) points out that financial crime such as fraud or anti-competition acts can be punished by severe penalties such as imprisonment of individuals and hefty fines up to 10 per cent of corporation's turnover.

"Yet, we are told, applying that link between fines and turnover in the case of killing someone is unworkable.

"Suggested fines of £500,000 for corporate manslaughter, or £100,000 for causing death, will be a minuscule fraction of one per cent of the turnover of a large corporation," it said.

Judging by Cameron's speech to last year's Conservative Party conference, the most brutal Tory attacks would be on existing Health and Safety legislation. Instead of strengthening safety reps' rights – which is what the TUC has been calling for since the Health & Safety at Work Act was first adopted – Cameron would remove the legal duty of employers to carry out risk assessments, remove the duty on local authorities to alert the

public to 'obvious hazards' and attack rights to compensation.

The TUC has put out a compensation myth-busting document which challenges every piece of misinformation circulated by the media and the Tories. The document also sets out three main points for addressing Employers Liability Insurance, which in the UK is the lowest in Europe:

- Good health and safety practices should be rewarded, where companies with poor accident and injury records pay higher insurance premiums.
- When someone is made ill or injured at work, the priority should be to allow the individual access to proper rehabilitation, greatly increasing the chances that they will make

a full or early recovery.

- Insurance companies should be more ready to admit liability earlier on to avoid running up costly medical and legal bills

Workers Memorial Day is about remembering those killed at work as well as fighting for the living. The Tories are keen to 'unburden' the UK of its protective legislation. Cameron says that health and safety legislation has come a long way since the days of pushing children up chimneys. With Cameron in power, we would be taking several steps back towards those dark days.

Commemorate Workers Memorial Day in your workplace on April 28 with two minutes silence at Noon. ■



DEALING WITH FATIGUE

The union's annual health and safety conference in Doncaster gets to grip with issue of fatigue at work

This year's RMT Health and Safety Conference in Doncaster again attracted an excellent number of delegates from across the sectors that the union organises.

The event ran under the banner "Fatigue – I'm sick and tired of it" and the guest speakers were chosen to pick up that theme.

Conference chair Gregg Hewitt and senior assistant general secretary Mick Cash opened the meeting and it was straight down to business with Michael Woods, Head of Operations and Management Research at the Rail Safety and Standards Boards opening up from the platform.

He outlined a range of projects and research that his organisation is involved in around fatigue management. He openly identified a flaw in his RSSB's approach in that not all of the project groups that they convene include full trade union representation.

Much of Michael's presentation focussed on work around sleep deprivation and approaches that were being taken to examine causes and solutions with the emphasis on drivers.

This was a point picked up by delegates who pointed out that tiredness and fatigue were also issues for guards, other members of the train crew, station staff and the infrastructure workforce.

Michael accepted that his organisation had done no work on fatigue as it affects OHL crew and Network Rail maintenance – a glaring gap and delegates left him in no doubt about the importance of making sure it is addressed.

Throughout the conference CIRAS – the rail industry's



confidential reporting system – ran a stall and their publicity material on how to use their services was well received – CIRAS can be contacted through www.ciras.org.uk

OFFSHORE

Next up was Rob Miles a principal specialist inspector at the Health and Safety Executive. Rob's specialist area is in offshore but he addressed a broad range of issues and even managed to incorporate RMT's taxi membership in his presentation.

Rob talked about the relationship between the long hours culture, tiredness and fatigue and inefficiency – having tired staff doing safety-critical jobs is not only dangerous but also doesn't get the best out of the workforce. He closed his speech by urging members to make sure that all incidents and potential incidents are properly reported.

With the issues thrown out for discussion the point was

made again from the floor that there is a massive contradiction in employers, like Network Rail, talking the talk on safety and fatigue while at the same time planning to get rid of 1,500 safety critical maintenance staff. Similar points were made on job cuts at the train operating companies and specifically attacks on the important role of the guard.

WELFARE

Conference moved on to motions from branches. Key decisions included unanimous support for a proposal to include the word "welfare" in the title of the Health and Safety conference and for a motion condemning Network Rail for expecting signallers to attend training the morning after they have completed a late turn.

BLACKLISTING

A crucial motion on the blacklisting of trade union health and safety representatives

kicked off an angry debate with widespread condemnation of organisations recently exposed for keeping data bases of trade union activists with the purpose of denying them employment. RMT members have featured on those blacklists.

Gregg Hewitt spoke in the debate – attacking those involved in the blacklisting industry and demanding proper punishments rather than the slaps on the wrist that have been handed out so far. The point was made that you cannot have effective health and safety without having effective trade union organisation and the blacklisting industry was designed to block exactly that.

The conference wound up with a motion on seafarers and the working time directive – an issue that RMT continues to campaign strongly on with a public and parliamentary campaign aimed at tackling the high levels of fatigue amongst our seafarer members. ■

ORGANISING THE KEY TO OFFSHORE SUCCESS

Members of RMT's newest section gathered in Aberdeen to discuss pressing industrial issues and how best to organise the offshore energy

Organising remains the key to winning advances for offshore workers in a notoriously anti-union industry, organiser Jake Molloy told delegates at RMT's offshore conference.

Offshore membership had increased by 1,300 in the 18 months since the historic merger of OILC with RMT.

Against the background of sharp recession, RMT diving members had accepted a three-year pay deal delivering RPI plus 1.5 per cent up to 2012 – the only agreement in North Sea which had secured an increase of any kind for the period.

Winning wider recognition remained the biggest hurdle to winning advances for offshore workers.

Nonetheless, RMT had influenced several issues, including successful campaigns against BP's plan to cut contract workers' terms and conditions, and to ensure that transfer of undertakings (TUPE) protection was applied to transferring contract workers on Apache operations.

The union was campaigning against Salamis' refusal to allow RMT representation and unfair deductions from pay, and battling to establish the right to paid holidays among catering staff.

Representation of more than 80 members in disciplinarys and grievances had resulted in winning close to £300,000 in compensation for offshore members treated unfairly.

The union had also recovered over £600,000 for members in personal-injury compensation.

RMT had played a high-profile role following the tragic helicopter events of the last year, calling for tighter safety controls, and had had discussions with helicopter manufacturers and operators and regulatory bodies.

Jake contrasted the situation for UK offshore workers with that of Norwegian colleagues.

"They have the law on their side, they put people before profits and that is why they have recognition – we have neither," he said.

Lack of recognition remained the biggest stumbling block, and despite the difficulties it was essential to revive the inter-union offshore committee, said national secretary Stevie Todd.

The 1977 memo of understanding for union access to offshore facilities, under which offshore access was agreed, urgently needed to be revived.

The need was stark, not least as raft after raft of legislation had excluded seafarers and offshore workers from protection.

"We pay the same taxes and we have the right to the same protection," said Steve.

A special offshore organising conference could map out the industry and put a detailed plan in place, suggested general secretary Bob Crow.

It was essential that such a plan, covering all offshore sections, came from those involved at the sharp end – it was the members who should be shaping offshore organisation.

It was certain that workers



would face increased attacks on jobs, pay and conditions by employers seeking to protect profits by cutting costs.

Workers needed to be organised to resist them – and the aim should be for every member to be an organiser.

RMT's offshore needs sufficient resources to intervene effectively in the sector and organise 20,000 potential members, delegates agreed.

It was essential to develop a clear strategy for getting RMT officials offshore to visit facilities and to "get in the face of the oil companies", said branch secretary Neil Rothnie.

"Without the right to organise the companies will have succeeded in banning unions offshore," Neil said.

Divers' representative Derek Moore pointed out that recognition meant that he was able to take on cases – and recalled the dramatic pay victory for divers in 2006, which had seen the divers win a three-year 44.7 per cent increase after ten days' solid strike action.

Effective communications was also essential with members spread across many different vessels and facilities, and divers were in regular touch through an effective email tree and a divers' blog.

Branch chair Mike McCaig agreed that it wasn't just about money, but about structure and organisation.

- The union should convene a meeting involving RMT MPs and offshore workers to develop a policy to secure the UK's oil and gas resources for the benefit of the people of the UK and see that they are exploited rationally to ensure effective transition to green energy.
- Work-permit protection under the 1971 Immigration Act should be extended to cover the offshore industry, to prevent super-exploitation of overseas workers, and offshore workers should have the right to join company pension schemes.
- Delegates declared complete support for BA cabin staff striking to defend jobs, pay and conditions and agreed to offer any practical help that Unite might require.
- Delegates condemned an attack on RMT and its members working for DB Schenker circulated by the Unite trade union, which falsely accused RMT of 'sweetheart' trade-unionism, and urged the union to step up efforts to end sweetheart deals in the North Sea.
- Delegates discussed options for the offshore conference, and agreed to establish a working party aimed at ensuring maximum participation. ■

DEFENDING JOBS AT P&O FERRIES

Since P&O Ferries announced its intention to withdraw the *Pride of Bilbao* vessel from the Portsmouth to Bilbao route from September, RMT's priority has been to ensure that there are no compulsory redundancies and that no member is forced into a position which is unacceptable to them.

Following a meeting between RMT organisers and on-board representatives and P&O, the company looked at redeployment opportunities available at other locations within the fleet and this exercise has now concluded.

The company stated that the overall



number of displaced staff largely matched the currently, or soon to be vacant positions.

Therefore, with a small number of exceptions to be dealt with separately, all seafarers employed by P&O Portsmouth

will be retained in suitable positions throughout the fleet.

It has not yet been finalised whether members on the *Pride of Bilbao* will move individually or as a whole crew to another sector.

RMT has advised the company that further discussion will be required regarding any compensation for extra travelling time incurred by members.

The union is also opposed to any members relocating to another sector on their original terms and conditions where the areas existing terms and conditions are more advantageous. ■

SECURING SEAFARING JOBS AT DOVER

RMT has secured the continued employment of ratings after the union learnt that the *Norman Spirit* vessel was to be withdrawn from the Dover to Boulogne route and replaced by another vessel called the *Norman Bridge*.

The *Norman Spirit* is crewed by Clyde Marine Ltd but the *Norman Bridge* would be crewed by Meridian Marine so the union pointed out that RMT members are not redundant and should be TUPE transferred to the new vessel.

Clyde Marine, LD Lines and Nautilus International agreed with the union's opinion and legal advice. Meridian Marine

claimed it was not a TUPE situation but that members would be welcome to apply for jobs on the *Norman Bridge* as new employees. As required by law, we then received a redundancy notice from Clyde Marine, however, this did include a clause stating the company believed members should be transferred.

At this stage, we advised the Companies that we find the situation totally unacceptable and that our members are understandably very angry and confused and considering action. LD Lines as the operator advised that it would be holding meetings with both Clyde Marine and

Meridian Marine to try and find a satisfactory solution for all concerned.

Meridian Marine still did not accept that a TUPE transfer should apply but a proposal was tabled offering vacancies to those members currently employed on the *Norman Spirit* and Clyde Marine would suspend these members employment until the *Norman Leader* replaced the *Norman Spirit* in November or December this year.

At this time, members would be re-employed by Clyde Marine on the *Norman Leader* with their original continuity of service

protected. The companies agreed to give the union a written assurance that this would happen, including a commitment to pay any liability in the event of circumstances beyond their control.

RMT national secretary Steve Todd said that as a result there would be no redundancies and no need to argue whether TUPE applied or not.

"The time it would have taken to pursue a claim for unfair dismissal, non-payment of redundancy or TUPE would most likely be longer than the proposed temporary transfer as proposed," he said. ■

DEFENDING JOBS AT STENA LINE

Stena Line recently announced plans to replace the *HSS Stena Explorer* with another fast craft, the *Stena Express*, on the Holyhead to Dun Laoghaire route during off peak periods in 2010.

The union received an assurance from the company that there would be no job losses and that everyone should be accommodated. There would be a reduction in the number of OBS (Catering) positions on both vessels due to the reduction in the number of passengers but redeployment opportunities

were available on the *Stena Adventurer* and *Stena Nordica*.

RMT national secretary Steve Todd met RMT reps, Gary Mason and Karlson Lingwood to discuss concerns including the use of low-paid foreign labour, such as those staff employed by Northern Marine on the *Fishguard* route.

RMT advised the company that introducing social dumping on more of their routes would be a departure from normal practice.

"A constructive and successful meeting was held

with the company where they gave an assurance they would not use non-UK labour in operational roles on the *Stena Express* or *HSS*.

"A small number of foreign ratings will be used when the vessel is in port at night but these positions will be reviewed regularly with a view to phasing out the practice," he said.

As a result of this reorganisation, RMT members will be asked to work up to 13 hours a day for 10 weeks of the year while the vessels are double-tripping. When divided

by the two crews, this works out as each member working 35 extra hours over five weeks.

In exchange for the above flexibility, for the remainder of the year when there is only single trips, RMT members will work a 10 1/2 hour day.

All individuals who would have been displaced as a result have now or will be accommodated. A small number of staff who couldn't be accommodated due to personal reasons will be offered enhanced voluntary redundancy. ■

DEFENDING SUPERVISORY AND CLERICAL JOBS



The supervisory, clerical and other salaried grades conference meeting in Great Yarmouth called for the defence of jobs and against service cuts

Over 60 delegates from 22 RMT branches attended this year's annual supervisory, clerical and other salaried grades conference meeting in Great Yarmouth, the largest number of delegates for many years.

Speaking for the union's executive, EC member Garry Hassell said it was a momentous conference due to the large numbers attending.

He paid tribute to retiring secretary John Hemsley for the hard work he had put in building the conference over the years.

"This year we are having elections for positions and debates about how we organise ourselves.

"This reflects John's important work and the attacks on jobs and services we are experiencing," he said.

He said the main job of the union was to protect jobs, wages and conditions of RMT members in the face of attacks from private employers seeking to shut ticket offices and curtail services.

"Where members have been balloted and decided to stand and fight by taking or threatening to take industrial action we have won in defence of jobs, victimised members and services," he said.

Assistant general secretary Pat Sikorski said that £800 million was being taken out of the rail sector by privateers and the banking crisis had increased the attacks on jobs.

"There is an endless process of job cuts and safety cuts which is continuing with 800 jobs threatened on the Tube and 1,500 on Network Rail maintenance," he said.

Chris Smart, Manchester South called on the union to a campaign to defend the jobs covered by the conference.

"In the current economic climate our

roles will be attacked as employers seek massive cuts in jobs.

"Our work is perceived as an easy target but the reality is that the work will still exist but there will be fewer of us employed to do it," he said.

Dave Rutland, Feltham said that there was a worrying trend of the use of part-time workers to cover full-time posts in ticket offices.

"South West Trains find it cheaper to use part time workers and what goes on in one train operating company will spread to others," he said.

Delegates agreed that part-time workers were being exploited because TOCs avoid costs by refusing to pay overtime rates for hours worked over and above contracted hours. They also avoid the extra costs, depriving part-time workers of unsocial hour's premiums, pension rights, holiday pay, redundancy payments, maternity rights and social security benefits, associated with employment.

Mark Steel, Waterloo said that gateline assistants were earning just £13,000 a year with little or no benefits.

"These workers are on poverty pay and should really be put on R02 pay.

"RMT must fight and negotiate for gate line staff to enjoy all allowances given to non restructured grades," he said.

Conference also opposed the centralisation of support functions by Network Rail to a centre in Milton Keynes.

"There is a mass of unemployed young labour in the location that will be fully exploited by the company

"It may be a 21st century building but there will be 19th century working conditions," said Chris Smart.

Conference condemned the bullying and intimidation carried out by supervisors based at Hull by forcing staff to carry out training of staff against their will.

Pete March, Hull Rail said that members were called in one by one without representation.

"Staff exercised their right not to be considered to carry out training and they were threatened with suspension," he said.

Conference called on the union to tell the employer that the carrying out of training of new staff was optional and that the bullying of staff to be made to do so would not be tolerated.

SOUTH WEST TRAINS

Conference deplored plans to slash ticket office opening hours on South West Trains and called on the union to lobby Parliament, Travel Focus, London Travelwatch and the Department of Transport to stop the proposals.

The company has already cut opening hours last year without risk assessments. Now it is seeking to make further cuts in what conference believed was a blatant attempt to cut costs despite the fact that franchise holder Stagecoach revealed an increase in profits.

SWT claims that an increase in the use of ticket vending machines and oyster cards justifies the cuts.

But RMT has warned that the cost cutting plans being will lead to a massive deterioration in customer service and will seriously increase the risk of assaults at stations at evening and weekends.

Last year Stagecoach announced pre-tax profits of £170 million and confirmed that they would be axing jobs and making other

cuts in a bid to maximise the returns to their shareholders regardless of the impact on services and passenger safety.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow has warned that the company has been itching to move to un-staffed stations with people replaced by machines because they see that as a way of pumping up profits.

"This is rail franchising in action –

profits are all that matters and they see staff and passengers.

"The threat of attacks at un-staffed stations is well documented and the government should be stepping in and taking action against these train operators who are prepared to leave the public dangerously exposed in the dash to line their own pockets," he said.

NEXT CONFERENCE

Delegates noted that next years grades conference, meeting in Bournemouth in March 2011, will take motions that seek to add, amend or change conference rules. Conference agreed that such motions should reach the conference secretary by December 1 2010 which will be circulated by December 15 2010. ■

RMT MEMBERS ELECTED TO NETWORK RAIL'S NATIONAL COUNCIL

RMT members elect three new reps to Network Rail's National Council to represent the interests of operations and customer services staff

Members who work at Network Rail are represented on the National Council for the next three years by Chris Smart, Phil Boorman and Doug Hill. All three were elected by rank and file members through a one member, one vote postal ballot. The purpose of the National Council is to represent all members whose terms and conditions are regulated by joint agreement with RMT.

The National Council is made up of around nine trade union representatives of which four are from RMT. Representatives attend meetings to negotiate pay and allowances, remuneration systems, grade structures and general conditions of employment such as promotion, transfer, redundancy and resettlement arrangements. Once matters have been agreed by the National Council they are referred to the Area or Local Councils for implementation.

It is also a forum for consultation on matters of mutual interest such as working practices, discipline, welfare and equal employment opportunities. The Council can also agree to changes to the collective bargaining procedure, the constitutions of Area Councils and the arrangements for Area level representation.

Meetings of the National Council are held whenever necessary and at least within 28 days of a request for a meeting. Members can also expect to see minutes of these meetings within 28 days.

Phil Boorman is a signaller working in Ashford IECC and is a RMT Area Council Representative (Kent Route). Phil joined the railway in 1983 when it was still known as British Rail. On his first day at work the area manager ensured that Phil signed his contract, joined the railway pension scheme and, most importantly,

joined the National Union of Railwaymen. His first RMT Representative position was as a health, safety and welfare representative.

"Why become a Representative? You get a much better understanding of the job and you get to help members.

"You meet and make friends with an excellent group of people – RMT members.

"I would encourage any RMT member to try and spare a little time to find out more about the union and talk to your Representatives. If you think they are not doing a good job, put yourself forward and give it a go!" Phil told RMT News.

Chris Smart is a roster clerk working in Square One, Manchester and is a RMT Area Council Representative (LNW Central). Chris started on the railway in 1990 as part of the railway training scheme. On the first week in the job he was recruited into the union by an organiser at Worcester. Chris has been a rep in many workplaces across the country from Cardiff to Swindon, Hereford to Manchester.

Chris told RMT News that

"the most important thing that any RMT Member can do is stand for election as a rep.

"Organising our workplaces is extremely important and wherever possible it should be 100 per cent RMT.

"The National Council Representative position is there to stand up for the Members, Local and Area Representatives, without your support we can not fight back and protect members," he said.

Doug Hill is a signaller working in Scotland and is also a RMT Area Council Representative.

The RMT National Council Reps look forward to representing members over the next three years and doing everything possible to defend their rights in their workplaces.

If you need any information about the work of the RMT National Council Representatives please contact Chris at tramssirhc@yahoo.co.uk with your question or query. RMT members should always contact their RMT local level rep first if they have any problems at work. ■

HEMSLEY BOWS OUT

Delegates paid tribute to grades conference secretary John Hemsley who has stood down from the position after 12 years in the post.

Wendell Drakes presented John with a gift on behalf of delegates and thanked him for all his hard work.

"When the conference met back in 1997 there were just ten delegates and today over 60 have come to debate issues affecting

them at work.

"Thanks John you will be a hard act to follow," he said.

John will still be around to help out the newly-elected conference secretary Rosalyn Fong and the committee will be relying on his experience during the handover period.

John now runs the Victoria Hotel in Great Yarmouth and invites RMT members to come and stay at reduced rates. ■





NO TO DRIVER-ONLY OPERATION

The Traincrew and shunters grades conference meeting in Newcastle saluted RMT members at Scotrail battling to prevent the introduction of DOO

The union's traincrew and shunting grades annual conference meeting in Newcastle was dominated by the very real threat of a growing drive towards driver only operation and the brave battle being waged by RMT members on Scotrail fighting attempts to bulldoze through DOO on the new Airdrie-Bathgate route.

Conference bitterly condemned Scotrail for its cynical mobilisation of a "scab-army" of managers from First's transport operations the length and breadth of the UK who had been drafted in at huge expense in a desperate effort to break the strike.

Executive committee member Craig Johnson launched a savage attack on the "conspiracy" between First Scotrail and Scottish Government politicians which had not only stitched up the plans to axe the guards in secret but which had gifted £300,000 in taxpayers money to "bankroll the scabbing operation".

Scottish regional organiser Ian MacIntryre brought fraternal greetings to the conference direct from the Scotrail dispute and, along with Scottish delegates who spoke about the rock solid loyalty of our members in the teeth of outright intimidation, received a standing ovation that shook the room.

Assistant general secretary Pat Sikorski took the conference through the current position with regard to the defence of the role of the guard and where the battle lines have been drawn with the Train Operating Companies as the national "Keep the Train Safe – Keep the Guard on the Train" campaign is rolled out.

Pat warned that the TOC's are at the start of the process of ripping up the 2001 agreement on DOO and that "what is

happening at Scotrail today will hit the rest of the country tomorrow". Pat also picked up the theme about the strike-breaking tactics of the First Group and the very clear parallel with BA's strategy for trying to break their cabin crew staff in their dispute.

The latest phase of RMT's "Keep the Train Safe" campaign has seen a letter sent out to the vast majority of the TOC's setting out a firm timetable for them to come back to the union with concrete assurances that they will abide by existing agreements on DOO and reinforce their commitments to the retention of guards.

Pat Sikorski told the conference that if the companies fail to give those assurances there will be an aggregated ballot for action with one ballot paper and the same questions the length and breadth of the country.

"The message from Scotrail is clear – they are coming for us all.

"But our response is that the guards are here to stay and if that TOC's don't like that they can take a long run off a very short plank," he said.

A motion from Liverpool 5 branch, condemning a deal done by the ASLEF on Merseyrail over the move to DOO was also carried unanimously.

Delegates angrily attacked the ASLEF organisation for "selling out guards jobs for a few quid" and for actively putting RMT guards out of work whilst at the same time trying to recruit guards into membership. It was agreed that this matter would be taken up by the union at national level.

RMT President Alex Gordon set out the wider-ranging priorities of the union and talked about the significance of the dispute with Network Rail over the attack on jobs

and safe working practices for all grades.

Alex spoke about the horrific situation facing our members at Jarvis who were facing the prospect of the dole as their employer slid into administration.

"That is why it is so important that this union continues to develop strategies to resist the attacks on our members wherever they come from.

"The situation at Scotrail, Jarvis and on Network Rail also reinforces the importance of RMT as an industrial union, equipped to support all workers in our industry," he said.

Other motions dealt with issues through from adverse weather payments through to cuts to services on the East Coast Mainline and the prospects for extending electrification.

The common theme was the continuous penny-pinching by the train operators as they strive to jack up their continuing profits and shareholders dividends from rail privatisation.

A motion on the abuse of CCTV equipment by employers as a weapon to attack their staff was carried unanimously.

Delegates from across the country told the conference how CCTV, which was originally introduced as a tool in the fight against crime and for staff and public safety, was now being routinely abused as a way of threatening and disciplining staff.

CCTV is also being used as an excuse to get rid of actual staff rather than being seen as a supporting system in the fight for safety.

The motion called on the union to stamp out the misuse of CCTV by the TOC's and the platform confirmed that RMT will take the issue up nationally. ■

STAFF OUR STATIONS

RMT members working on London Underground are being balloted for strike action to stop the planned 800 job cuts on the Tube

RMT is balloting members working for London Underground for strike action and action short of a strike after bosses failed to withdraw the threat of axing 800 staff, closing ticket offices and undermining public and staff safety.

The ballots comes as vacancies are left unfilled, and staff shortages hit home, the prime terrorist target of Heathrow Terminal Five on the Piccadilly Line was left unstaffed last month with the one member of crew due to be on duty pulled away to a briefing session with LU managers.

RMT also launched the Staff Our Stations campaign with John McDonnell MP after the union revealed concrete evidence that the company was already leaving stations unstaffed, or with just one member of staff, without any consultation.

"That is a scandalous dereliction of duty and it is only a matter of time now before TfL and Boris Johnson have a tragedy on their hands as a result of their cavalier disregard for public safety.

During his election campaign, London Mayor Boris Johnson pledged to "put the commuter first...by halting the proposed Tube ticket office closures, and ensuring there is always a manned ticket office at every station".

And during his election

campaign he signed a petition opposing ticket-office closures and calling for those already closed to be re-opened.

In his election manifesto, said: "I will also defend local ticket offices... I will stop the planned ticket office closures, and focus on increasing the number of Oyster outlets in outer London so local people have greater access to Oyster".

The Tube Lines cuts are bound up with the £1.7 billion funding row with the Mayor and TfL and jobs, and the essential works on Piccadilly, Northern and Jubilee Lines, must not be written off as collateral damage in a political war over the failed tube privatisation experiment.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow said that the union would not sit idly by while the Mayor, his transport officials and Tube Line's drive down tube staffing levels to dangerously low levels.

"We gave LU and Tube Lines an opportunity to pull back from these cuts but they have decided to plough on leaving us with no option but to organise ballots," he said.

For Tube users the cuts will mean fewer visible staff on stations, less security and a less safe transport network, longer queues and more difficulty finding help in an emergency.

For Tube staff it would mean more lone working, increased workload, more stress and greater risk of assault.



UNION BUSTING

RMT has released a leaked internal document from London Underground maintenance containing a secret strategy for bulldozing through the cuts and taking on their workforce.

The leaked document, from an LU maintenance "Strategic Planning and Performance Day" seminar talks in derogatory terms of an "ageing and entrenched workforce" and the need for wholesale staffing reductions and how "recession helps, now is time to make changes".

Alongside the undermining of health and safety, the document advises "getting in position to positively take on a strike".

Amid the threat of outsourcing maintenance, in a return to the failed Private Public Partnership, the management agenda also involves ignoring consultation procedures with the union and "planning for a strike and preparing people for it".

Bob Crow said that Tube bosses were clearly planning to try and break the strength of the organisation that can stop their

attacks on jobs and safety – RMT.

"It is a scandal that London Underground is wasting time on conspiracies aimed at breaking RMT while stations are being left dangerously understaffed and safety standards are under threat right across the Network," he said.

YOU can help stop these dangerous cuts

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Fill in the RMT postcard available from your branch secretary and return it by FREEPOST – we will pass the cards directly to the Mayor
- Write to London Mayor Boris Johnson directly at mayor@london.gov.uk, or at City Hall, 110 The Queens Walk, London, SE1 2AA asking him to honour his election pledges
- Write to your MP asking him or her to defend Tube safety and oppose job cuts.
- Ask your local councillors to tell the Mayor that these staff cuts are unacceptable.
- Check for campaign updates at www.rmt.org.uk.



RAIL SAFETY PIONEER FIGHTS FOR HIS JOB

Award winning signalling expert Nigel Hitchcock (right) talks to RMT News about his pioneering work and the threat to his job

"The crashes at Southall and Ladbroke Grove in the late 1990s had a big impact on me and made want to do something about rail safety," says Nigel Hitchcock, Bristol Branch, who works on track and signal projects for Network Rail in the West Country.

Nigel is the pioneer of possession boards, signalling diagrams which map out the rail system in his region. It is these diagrams – and their development over 10 years – that has seen his work used in rail offices from Paddington to Penzance. Whenever a track needs to be shut off for work to be carried out, the local section manager's office uses one of Nigel's diagrams for planning and implementing the track possession.

In spite of Nigel's immense contribution he was recently informed that he faces compulsory redundancy in Network Rail's latest round of cutbacks.

"My job is non-standard and doesn't fit their template, so now it's under threat," Nigel says. This is in spite of the fact that he has letters from senior project managers, among others, requesting new possession

boards for track and signalling remodelling over the next six years.

CAREER

Nigel began his career on the railways on 1981 when he joined British Rail, working on the Bathampton Permanent-Way as a trackman. He joined the union when he first started working on the railways because "I always believed in being in the union because it offers protection in the workplace".

Since then he has worked his way up through a variety of jobs, which has given him a thorough knowledge of the railway system in the West Country.

"When I was at school the teachers said I had an engineering mind," Nigel says. It is his interest in engineering that means that he has long been inspired by one of the greatest engineers of them all, Isambard Kingdom Brunel.

In 1833, Brunel was appointed chief engineer for the Great Western Railway and work began on the line that linked London to Bristol. Brunel designed the network of tunnels, bridges and viaducts for the Great Western Railway.

Impressive achievements during its construction included the viaducts at Hanwell and Chippenham, the Maidenhead Bridge, the Box Tunnel and Bristol Temple Meads Station.

Brunel is also noted for introducing the broad gauge in place of the standard gauge on this line. While working on the line from Swindon to Gloucester and South Wales he devised the combination of tubular, suspension and truss bridge to cross the Wye at Chepstow. This design was further improved in the bridge over the Tamar at Saltash near Plymouth.

It is easy to see why Nigel is inspired by Brunel's achievements, when he is working on the same line that Brunel oversaw the construction of. Nigel was heavily involved in the commemorative events that marked the 200th anniversary of Brunel's birth in 2006.

Nigel's knowledge and experience led to him being chosen to work on the testing train that covered the Bristol division from the mid 1990s until 2002.

In the mid 1990s Nigel discovered that all the old British Rail track diagrams for

his region were going to be thrown out when the British Rail Civil Engineering Dept was sold off. He single-handedly saved them from being destroyed.

"In 1999 I started working on track and signalling diagrams in my capacity as a technical officer. It was to give the PICOPS (Person in Charge of Possession) something to work from", Nigel says.

While producing each diagram is labour intensive, requiring great attention to detail, their strength is in the fact that they are very simple to use. The finished product consists of the diagram, mounted on a magnetic board, with a transparent plastic covering to seal and protect it.

These diagrams have come to be known as possession boards. Usually mounted on an office wall – although they are portable – PICOPS can use the boards to monitor trains throughout their possessions and see exactly where they are relative to signals, tunnels, points and level crossings.

During the period of each possession red magnets are added to represent detonator protection, and magnetic

worded strips added to mark each item of machinery and to name each piece of work that is being carried out.

As well as being used for when work is being carried out on the track the boards are used for training and briefing staff – particularly contract staff – who may be unfamiliar with a particular location or worksite. They are also used during the design, management and integration of renewal projects and for incident management, recovery and investigation.

FROM RECOGNITION TO REDUNDANCY

"I designed the possession board system for use in Bristol, but while I was working for Carillion I spread my system to Gloucester and the Wales Marches area. "I was then subcontracted by Network Rail to complete similar work in the Exeter and Reading areas. These now cover the whole of the Great Western Zone," Nigel says.

The boards can take anything from 5-10 days work, depending on how complex the area of track is that is being covered. It took Nigel four years to cover the entire Great Western Zone and ever since then he has been maintaining and amending the diagrams as necessary.

As well as being simple to use, a big advantage of the possession board system is how cheap it is to produce. The track is represented by black vinyl tape, while stationery labels are customised to represent trackside equipment. "I work with an easel, in the same way as an artist works," Nigel says.

Nigel's work has been much commended and he has received numerous awards for it, including a Carillion Values Awards, a Use Your Initiative Award, and one from the National Safety Recognition Scheme.

In the face of the redundancy threat, Nigel is unbowed and intends to fight for his job. "My ambition is to expand the possession board system across the network to make it standard for Network Rail," he says. ■



THE GUARDIAN DOESN'T LIKE TRADE UNIONS

RMT members are fighting to defend railway safety, jobs and standards against Network Rail's cavalier attempt at 21 per cent 'efficiency savings' demanded by a government-appointed rail regulator, which recently provided safety validation for its own pre-ordered cuts.

Now you might think this may be a dangerous conflict of interest, perhaps one worth investigation by a serious newspaper. But *The Guardian* claims this strike was not "the right way of ensuring that staff grievances are properly addressed". We know this newspaper share offices with Network Rail, but it now appears to be sharing its editorial line as well.

The Guardian editorial ('Rail strike: sharp end of the law', Friday 2 April 2010) celebrates Kafkaesque anti-union legislation that led the High Court to grant an injunction against RMT strikes in our continuing safety dispute with Network Rail.

It described RMT general secretary Bob Crow as "trigger-happy" and "characteristically belligerent" - a distortion of the truth. It is 16 years since the last national rail strike. These comments says more about downward competitive pressures in the broadsheet newspaper market than about our patience with Network Rail.

More seriously, by asserting that "No union that conducts ballots properly according to the reasonable requirements of the law would be in danger of being injuncted", *The Guardian* misleads its readers. Were newspapers required to give seven days' notice of publication of reports into powerful vested interests, or provide judges with a database of their readership by occupation and location to allow the subject of investigation to make arrangements,

there would be neither a 'free press' nor 'reasonable' law. To editorialise that "Bringing the trade unions under the rule of law was one of the great struggles of the 20th century" is a caricature of which any Thatcher-era union basher would approve.

Winning democratic rights for workers to join trade unions and withdraw their labour, despite class-ridden, arbitrary and opaque legal systems, is the great struggle waged for over two centuries. Trade unionists in Britain do not enjoy positive rights, but rather limited and shrinking protection from the law, a situation *The Guardian* seems happy with.

Britain's anti-union legislation, like her libel laws, are scandalous anachronisms that protect the rich and powerful from being accountable to the rest of society.

Mrs Justice Sharp's judgement in Network Rail-v-RMT actually increases the scope of anti-union laws by invoking 'proportionality' (a remarkable new development in UK law imported from recent European Court for Justice judgements, allowing judges to assess effects of strike action) since Network Rail emphasised the disruption rail strikes will cause.

This will have massive repercussions for public sector workers opposing post-general election spending cuts and is a Trojan horse to outlaw by subterfuge effective strike action to defend key services.

The ability of workers to protect their interests and the public interest (particularly with recession and public spending cuts) through joining trade unions to withdraw their labour, remain hallmarks of a democratic society. RMT will continue vigorously to defend your interests in delivering a transportation network safe for workers and the travelling public. ■

Alex Gordon

CAMPAIGNING AGAINST SEXISM

RMT's annual women's conference meeting in Sheffield discussed sexism in the transport sector

Conference chair Mandy Evans, Swansea No.1, welcomed delegates to this year's Women's Conference, held in Sheffield last month. The two-day conference, held on International Women's Day, combined plenary, workshops and guest speakers.

Becky Crocker, Camden No. 3, proposed a motion on sexism in the transport sector, calling for the council of executives to carry out a survey amongst women members to get a picture of the experiences that they face. Based on the survey's findings the motion instructs the union to train all RMT Reps on how to challenge sexism at work.

"I would like to see a national campaign against sexism, with the union behind us," Becky told delegates.

Supporting the unanimously endorsed motion cleaner rep Clara Osagiede, Camden No. 3 said that the issue was of particular importance to her colleagues.

"Cleaners face discrimination as women, managers get away with sexually abusing women, who are invariably migrant workers. Reps should be trained on how to tackle this," Clara said.

Women's safety in the workplace was high on the agenda with a motion on the wearing of name badges.

Gemma Brady, Central & North Mersey, explained that frontline staff can be put in danger by a passenger with a gripe, long after an incident has passed.

"You can easily look someone up if you have a grudge against them. If you feel that your personal safety is at risk then you shouldn't have to wear a name badge," Gemma said.

Conference condemned the fact that this winter's adverse weather conditions meant that employers required staff to take unpaid leave if they were unable to get to work. The issue disproportionately affected women, as they more likely than men to have childcare responsibilities. Schools were often closed because of the snow and many women were forced to take unpaid parental leave.

A number of guest speakers addressed the conference. Local MP, Ann Cryer, talked about women's rights' issues that she had fought for in parliament. She explained how, as the MP for Keighley, a town with a large Asian community, she had come to be a leading campaigner on the issue of forced marriage.

"When I was elected 13 years ago nobody talked about forced marriage, but I had Asian women coming to see me saying that they had been tricked into



marriage" Ann said.

Ann told conference about the new legislation that she had pushed through parliament last September which now protected women against forced marriage, with 100 women making use of the Act so far.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow gave a roundup of the union's current work and campaigns. He said that the economic downturn was far

from over and that union members need to be prepared for the times ahead.

"Big attacks will take place after the election. There will be attempts to make cuts. Either the Tories will bring in quick cuts or Labour will bring in slower cuts. In Ireland public sector workers have already had pay and pension cuts and they are trying to impose the same thing in Greece," Bob said,

referring to recent demonstrations there.

Bob explained that in the forthcoming general election the union will be supporting MP's who form the union's parliamentary group. Beyond that the union was also receiving requests to support other candidates. Bob explained RMT's election strategy and said that each request for the union's support would be looked at on an individual basis to see if the policies and track record of the prospective candidate complemented that of the union.

Carolyn Jones, director of the labour movement think tank, the Institute of Employment

Rights (IER), spoke about the background to her organisation and how RMT has been associated with the IER since it was inaugurated in 1989.

Carolyn said that there was a need to change the climate from the current emphasis on individual employment rights, which tend to be rights on paper. "Rights need to be enforced collectively," she said.

The IER is playing a key role in promoting a Trade Union Rights and Freedom Bill, Carolyn told the conference. "It is a bill that will protect striker, simplify balloting procedures, restrict use of injunctions by employers, allow solidarity

action and prevent agency workers replacing strikers," she said.

Carolyn also called on conference delegates to sign up to the People's Charter for Change. The Charter is a response to the current economic crisis and calls for a new model for the finance industry, an end to privatisation, and for previously publicly owned companies to be taken back into public ownership.

It also calls for a massive building programme of new affordable social housing and sets out a radical agenda to end the waste of lives and billions of pounds of taxpayers' money on

Wars and weapons.

Finally, it recognises that there will be no economic justice without social justice, with a demand for fairness and equality for all our citizens – equal pay for women and an end to racist scapegoating, an end to City super-bonuses and the payment of proper pensions. The charter calls for free childcare for all, better youth facilities and free education at all levels.

Two lively workshops were held on women's health and safety and young women members.

Next year's conference will be held in Cheltenham Spa. ■

TUC WOMEN'S CONFERENCE 2010

RMT Women's TUC delegate Ann Joss reports on this year's conference in Eastbourne

Over the two days of conference 43 resolutions were passed on everything from the women, anti-BNP campaigns, equal pay issues, women's safety, violence against women, International issues such as our own resolution which was "sexual violence against women as a weapon of war".

The TUC women's conference is made up of almost 200 delegates from a wide variety of trade unions, with the aim of debating all the resolutions submitted and then voting on one only to go forward to congress. This year the one going forward is from "Unite the Union" headed "A workplace agenda for women".

RMT delegate Mandy Evans from South Wales was nominated by RMT as a committee member on the women's TUC for 2011. Unfortunately, her nomination was not successful. This is the third year in a row we have failed to get a seat on the

committee. We were given the opportunity to ask questions to guest speakers and I asked Harriet Harman MP the following:-

"What is your policy on the Driver only operation on the Bathgate line in Scotland, to protect the roll of the guard and the safety of the travelling public? Where do you stand on the proposed 1500 job cuts within network rail maintenance and the effect that will have on safety and finally where do you stand on the issues concerning the operational staff, the removal of detonators to protect men and women working on the line, or do you intend to sit back and do nothing until we have another Grayriggs, Hatfield or Potters Bar which would affect every woman at this conference directly or indirectly?"

Needless to say I got a very well worded reply about the proposed high speed link between London and Edinburgh.



TUC delegates Mandy Evans and Ann Ross

YOUNG MEMBERS MEET

First time delegate Nathan Singh, Kings Cross branch gives his impressions of the annual young members conference meeting in Liverpool

The conference was a first for me with regard to union activities as for the four and a half years I have been a member I have never played an active role.

The meeting opened with an address from the regional organiser Andy Warnock Smith, who mentioned that the Adelphi hotel where we were staying carried a strong trade union association with the union and hotel staff were members.

Andy brought us up to date with the dispute with Network Rail and the importance of solidarity on this issue of safety. He said that it was vital that MPs and passengers alike are made aware of this in the fight to win this struggle.

He also explained to the delegates that the RMT in comparison to other unions is a member-led union with elected officials rather than a union that appointed them, a fundamental difference than other unions.

RMT regional council secretary Darren Ireland outlined why RMT is an all-grades union, uniting all transport workers for the common good. He said that there should not be sectional unions in the transport industry. He gave the example of the success of the campaign for train cleaners in the North West

which led to a 50p raise in their hourly rate. For me, this was particularly interesting to learn all the different workers we support as a union.

Young member Jo Parry outlined the benefits for young members such as the entry to music festivals such as Glastonbury and the proms with some free camping food and beer. Volunteers work for five hours at the events and the money raised gets paid to the RMT young members' fund which can fund event for young members.

Jo also talked of the young members' course which takes place this year in along side the AGM each year, this year in Aberdeen, which young members may attend once and is a great education for young members, I intend to go this year.

Dave Marshall of the organising unit informed us that over the past eight years the union has increased its membership by 30 per cent. As young members it is important to recruit new members to continue the union for years to come.

Groups of us discussed ways to retain existing members, recruit new members and to educate members that branch meetings are for all and not just for experienced reps. During the



feedback session we have resolved to produce a welcome pack for new members.

A representative from Thompsons solicitors explained the benefits to unionised workers such as free will writing and legal assistance. There was a brief workshop explaining unfair dismissal and how the union works with Thompsons to fight the case.

Guest speakers included workers from Vesta in the Isle of Wight. RMT supported these workers in their plight. Despite the fact that government minister Ed Milliband had pledged to create 500,000 new green industry jobs by 2010, these 600 vital jobs building wind turbines in the area were axed. The union backed the Vesta's workers in their campaign, which included a sit-in. RMT general secretary Bob Crow argued that RMT protects the workers who maintain the blades on the windmills, why not the workers who produce them?

The union supported the workers by all means possible, and when they embarked on their occupation of the factory activists concealed food in

tennis balls to be sent over to the workers.

For me this really was such an interesting conference as a young member and to hear how our union supports its members regardless of their grade and industry. To know that the support and solidarity is there from day one when you join your job and regardless of whether you join as part of an agency or have a rolling contract.

I would recommend that if you are a young member that you speak with your branch secretary and arrange to attend the 2011 young members' conference in Plymouth and see for yourself just how diverse our union is. ■

**The Young Members Advisory Committee is currently in the process of election, The Full committee will meet and discuss organising activities and would like the opinions of RMTs Young Members in how the committee can focus on recruitment, activism and organising Young Members. If you would like to be emailed an update of what young members are doing in your area, please email rmtyoungcomrade@googlemail.com OR visit RMT JUNCTION and search for YOUNG MEMBERS"*

TRADE UNION SOLIDARITY

The Trade Union Coordinating Group (TUCG) organised its first delegate convention recently to address the unions' agenda during and beyond the general election.

Around 70 delegates attended from each of the TUCG member unions: BFAWU, FBU, NAPO, NUJ, PCS, POA, RMT, and UR TU. Another 10 organisations were admitted by special invitation.

The morning session focussing on 'Crisis, Cuts and Resistance' was chaired by BFAWU General Secretary Joe Marino and the afternoon session addressing 'a progressive social agenda' was chaired by NUJ General Secretary Jeremy Dear.

Resolutions were submitted from unions included a demand that workers should not be made to pay for the economic crisis through job cuts, pay freezes and attacks on terms and conditions and called for co-ordinated industrial action to defend rights.

RMT General Secretary Bob Crow moved the RMT motion calling for a special conference to be convened after the election to discuss the fight back. RMT assistant general secretary Pat Sikorski presented the case for the Peoples Charter. Executive committee member Olly New used his contribution to urge full support for the national march to defend the welfare state and public services.

Other resolutions passed

included a call for extra resources for the Health and Safety Executive, repeal of the anti-union laws and the creation of an information network to help build the trade union case for a fight back against unemployment.

All RMT delegates were able to speak and there was a range of invited guest speakers. Graham Turner of the Left Economic Advisory Panel (LEAP) spoke about the economy; PCS NEC member Zita

Holbourne spoke on equalities; Professor Keith Ewing spoke on trade union rights; and Will McMahon of the Centre for Criminal Justice Studies spoke on criminal justice.

The consensus was that the day was highly productive with vibrant discussion and contributions from the floor from delegates as well as representatives of Hope Not Hate, Unite Against Fascism, Stop the War Coalition, and Defend Council Housing. ■



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RMT TO FIGHT THE PEDICAB BILL

Stan Marut of London Taxi branch makes the case against the use of pedicabs or rickshaws in London

The London Taxi branch have fought the "Pedicab Bill" currently going through Parliament with protests on the streets of the capital.

Clause 19 of the London Local Authorities and Transport for London (2) Bill 2009 is the second presented to Parliament in the last five years and has sought to legitimise the use of pedicabs or rickshaws on the streets of London.

Some think of these operations as a tourist gimmick without fully understanding the safety issues which abound.

The provision of taxis (hackney carriages) has been controlled by the Public Carriage Office with strict rules regarding the character of taxi drivers and the safety of their vehicles.

The licensed taxi trade in London has to meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act in making all taxis wheelchair accessible. Not only that but all drivers must undergo a three year regular

check with the Criminal Records Bureau before being re-licensed.

A previous Bill which would have allowed the Licensing Authority to license these "trikes" as Hackney Carriages was defeated at the Select Committee stage of the Bill on the basis that these "vehicles" could not be available for immediate hiring as this would make them a hackney carriage within the definition of the law. Vehicles licensed as taxis in London have to meet certain safety criteria which pedicabs most certainly did not and there was also the vexed question of how do you vet itinerant workers from other countries without the possibility of character and criminality checks before letting them loose on the public. Not only that but also consider the fact that these

people can charge what they like and do not publish any regular fares for any journey they carry out.

The thrust of the current Bill was to give Local Authorities the power to bring pedicabs under some sort of control by way of a voluntary system of registration and control by way of issuing Penalty Charge Notices for offences under the Road Traffic Acts.

There is no doubt that these uncontrolled vehicles provide a disproportionate amount of congestion which hinders the legitimate work of bus and taxi drivers in the already congested streets of the capital, particularly at night. The RMT Taxi branch is against any controls and want to see these dangerous vehicles banned outright and confined to the

dustbin of history.

RMT members are the only taxi trade activists campaigning on this very important of issue of transport and public safety. Clause 19 cannot be allowed onto the statute book as this would open the door for all manner of other gimmicky vehicles and undermine the legitimate trade of regular hackney carriage drivers and make a mockery of the whole rigorous and systematic checks and controls currently imposed on licensed taxi drivers by the Public Carriage Office, the Licensing Authority for London Taxis.

The branch urges all RMT members visiting London to consider their safety before embarking on the hazards of pedicab rides.

Through the auspices John McDonnell MP, the London Taxi branch will endeavour to ensure that Clause 19 is kicked firmly into touch. ■

TAXI: From left to right John McDonnell MP for Hayes & Harlington, John Mason Director of Taxi/Private Hire, Stan Marut compliance officer, David Vidgen branch secretary.



A VOICE AND A VOTE

John Kennedy vice chair RMT London taxi branch reports on the activities of a growing part of the union

RMT London taxi branch members held a protest outside Westminster City Council on St Patrick's Day to demand Martin Low, head of transportation for the council, to honour pledges of rest bays for the capitals taxi-cab drivers, a more relaxed regime of parking controls and better planning of the road network EG taxis need roads not kerbs to navigate.

With parking a real issue in this central London borough taxi-cab drivers gathered under the banner and along with three RMT council of executive members Craig Johnson, Pete March and Owen Herbert made some noise outside the council offices.

I would like to thank Dizzy, the chap who produces those posters/banners (we are still laughing now at the humour) with the help and facilities of Unity House and its staff. Also committee member Mick Tinnion's organisational skills are impeccable but then again he was a former guardsman.

Well done to Mike Fitzpatrick the chap with the bass drum, who really did top off a good humoured demonstration.

So much so that Martin Low appeared from the building and held a robust but polite conversation with me and other members of the branch and agreed to meet with the union. He will be invited to attend a RMT London taxi branch meeting where you the membership set the agenda and not others who haven't driven a taxi-cab in years.

The union has come under sustained attack from a friendly society known as the Licensed Taxi Drivers Association (LTDA). We are not here to go to war with fellow taxi-cab drivers but we are here to protect our collective right to ply for hire, to campaign to ban pedicabs



TAXI! From left to right John McDonnell MP for Hayes & Harlington, John Mason Director of Taxi/Private Hire, Stan Marut compliance officer, David Vidgen branch secretary.

from the streets and roads of the capital, to seek the ending of the greatest threat to our existence which is the satellite mini-cab office and it's illegal ranks and touting that follows.

RMT will stand up for your rights like no other trade union or friendly society. We aren't afraid to protest and we are always prepared to talk to find solutions to the many issues that blight our trade.

A day before the successful Westminster protest, John Mason Director of Taxi and Private Hire met with myself, David Vidgen branch secretary, Stan Marut and RMT political officer James Croy and John McDonnell, MP for Hayes and Harlington and RMT parliamentary group convenor.

I have to say that John Mason is a man of his word and back in December he agreed to meet on a regular basis with the union and include us in all formal consultations that affect you the London taxi-cab driver.

So I'll ask the editor of TAXI newspaper to check his facts before he goes to print in future for it seems he's made a rather silly mistake. But then again this is the same friendly society that states it wants to ban Pedicabs but is happy to let a bill progress through parliament that would give Pedicabs parking bays/ranks on the public highway.

Following detailed discussions with John Mason, we questioned him about the retest fee that TFL/PCO will introduce this month. It turns out that the LTDA were informed of the plans in November 2009. Now if this is the case we must ask the question why is the LTDA asking for an urgent meeting with TFL/PCO regarding the retest fee when it knew of these plans back in November?

Now on a much more positive note we can report to the wider trade that many issues were discussed with John Mason

ranging from Pedicabs, M4 bus lane, Satellite mini-cab offices, Richmond station rank, illegal hackney carriage ranks, communications, misinformation, other trade groups/bodies and the relationship or not with RMT, the lack of any planned future for the taxi trade, reform of the PCO, bullying at Heathrow Airport and a hell of a lot more.

I am pleased to say is that this trade has a director of Taxis and Private Hire that is open, honest and forthright with his views. Moreover, RMT will be right there at the front seeking views and opinions of its ever growing membership at the best attended branch meetings amongst any trade body here in the capital.

Remember when you join RMT you get a voice and a vote but not an air freshener, welcome to democracy, welcome to RMT www.rmt.org.uk ■

ALABAMA THREE AND RMT

Alabama Three are currently re-recording their hit single 'Woke Up this Morning' (the theme music for The Sopranos) as a special download for RMT members with 'RMT lyrics'.

They have also produced their eighth studio album 'Revolver Soul'. Bob Crow and Alabama Three lead singer Larry Love asked each other a few questions:

Larry: What is the point of joining RMT?

Bob: The only way workers can protect themselves is to join a strong union like RMT. We are currently engaged in major battles in order to save thousands of 'safety critical' jobs.

Private companies want to maximise their profits off the backs of our members. We can't let that happen. The breathtaking greed and obsession with making huge profits should never replace safety.

Larry: How do you sell the concept of a union to young people?

Bob: We have over 11,000 young members in RMT and we have seen recent examples where our ability to organise young workers has improved.

Our starting point is to listen to what young members say and then give them a voice in their union. RMT is a fighting union that appeals to young and old.

Larry: Why is culture important in the development of a socialist organisation?

Bob: The late great union leader, Jim Larkin, said 'We want bread, but we also want roses too'.

What he meant is that workers rely on their

union to fight for 'bread and butter' issues like pay and conditions.

However, just because you weren't born with a silver spoon in your mouth shouldn't mean you are deprived of cultural things.

We would like to think we can help improve all aspects of our members' lives and that means helping access creative things like music, theatre etc.

Larry: How can RMT combat the rise of the far right and the BNP?

Bob: Our union has a very proud history of standing up for equality and fighting all forms of discrimination. We abhor racism and the damage that organisations like the nazi BNP does to our society.

RMT will always play a vital role in opposing racism and helping to educate people.

Bob: How important is it for your music to make a statement on what's going on in society?

Larry: Our lyrics reflect our take on society and we strongly condemn racism. Our latest album 'Revolver Soul' has a track called Vietnamistan which is about the horrible sight of mainly young men returning to their families in body bags and draws parallels with what happened when the US waged war against Vietnam.

The way I see it is the RMT is a union that fights for its members but for human rights too. It's great if our music can help inspire RMT members to keep on fighting.

Bob: What is your famous song 'Woke Up This Morning...' about?



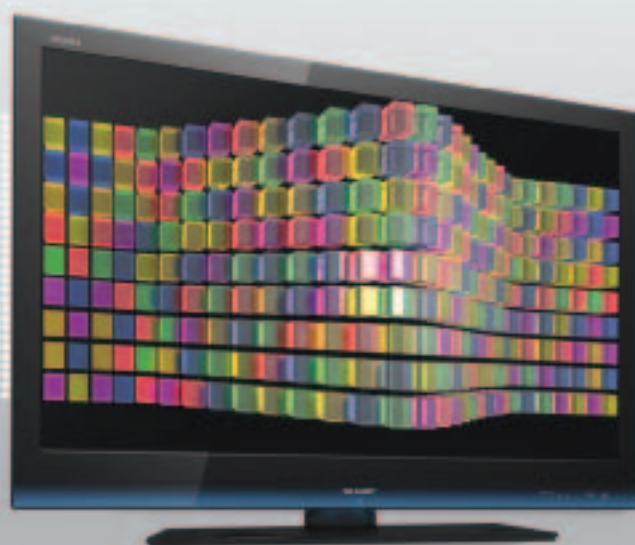
Larry: Yes, it's about a woman called Sarah Thornton who had been battered for many years by her policeman husband. Her case successfully changed the law after it went to the European Court of Human Rights. Her defence argued extreme provocation as a result of systematic abuse that led to her waking up one morning and killing her abusive husband.

Bob: A3 and RMT share common ground - not least support for Miscarriages of Justice Organisation (MOJO). Why do you support MOJO?

Larry: MOJO helps innocent people who have been jailed as a result of a miscarriage of justice. We have supported MOJO and are only too happy to do benefit gigs. We've now sampled Paddy Hill, Gerry Conlon on previous albums. We have even sampled Bob Crow. So we'd love it if all our fans put up posters of Paddy, Gerry, Che, Malcolm X and Bob Crow - coz they're the real pop stars. ■

A promotional poster for the Alabama Three album 'Revolver Soul'. The top left features the band's name 'ALABAMA 3' in a stylized font. Below it is a circular graphic with the text 'New Album released: 03.05.10'. The central image shows a person in a dark suit and sunglasses, with a red star graphic above their head. To the right, the text reads 'Reverend D.Wayne Love's MAYDAY CALLING TO RMT MEMBERS'. Below this, a paragraph states: 'RMT Members that purchase Revolver Soul in its first week will be able to download a new version of our hit single 'Woke up this morning' exclusively rewritten with RMT Lyrics, from our website. All you have to do is buy the album, follow the red star on the website and type in the albums catalogue no. to receive YOUR new song supporting YOUR rebellion'. At the bottom, the album title 'REVOLVER SOUL' is on the left and the website 'WWW.ALABAMA3.CO.UK' is on the right.

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Other LED TVs have a single row of LED lights along the edge of the screen, whose light is reflected onto the back of the picture. Sharp LED TVs, on the other hand, have hundreds of individual LED lights that sit behind the entire screen, from corner to corner. As a result, the blacks are richer and deeper and the colours brighter and more vibrant. Sharp's LED TV technology uses up to 40% less energy than traditional LCDs and is mercury free.

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SH[^]ARPER TECHNOLOGY.

REGISTER NOW AT WWW.SHARP.CO.UK/PAGE/RMT

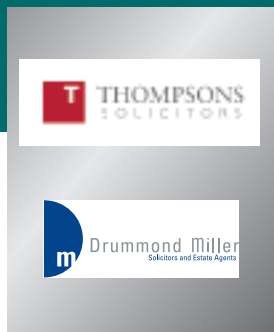
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PROTECTING AND PROMOTING OUR MEMBERS' INTERESTS



AVID READER

Two year old Max Finning, son of long-standing RMT member Steve Finning, scans RMT News to uncover the mystery of what Daddy actually does all day.



A TRIBUTE TO THE "PONTY OLD GUARD"

Stalwart RMT members of the RMT were honoured at the March meeting of Pontypridd Branch, with full time union officials Brendan Kelly and Phil Boston in attendance.

Jim Fenly, Mike Rees and George "Jock" Harper have been long serving members of the union, but have recently retired or are about to retire.

As a "thank you" for their loyalty and commitment to the trade union cause during their

many decades of railway service, the branch made a presentation of RMT polo shirts to the departing members.

Jim Fenly was also presented with an engraved silver watch in recognition of his sterling work as local P-Way representative, Health & Safety representative and Branch Chair.

Pictured left to right are Brendan Kelly, Phil Boston, Jim Fenly, Jock Harper and Mike Rees. ■



letters

THANK YOU RMT

Dear Editor,

I would like to express my sincere thanks to some significant people who have helped me throughout the last few years in my personal injury claim against Network Rail and subsequent employment issues. RMT rep Gary Weston and regional organiser Phil Bialyk were both instrumental in the process, advising and pointing me in the right direction. Both displayed considerable understanding of the nature of my case and showed empathy and professionalism at all times. The advice and support I received throughout from both Gary and Phil was unequivocal and I am very grateful to them both for all they did in the early stages of my case. They directed me towards Edwards Duthie Solicitors and my Solicitor, Malcolm Cherry, who later moved, with my case to Thompsons Solicitors. Malcolm was approachable and very supportive throughout my case and kept me up to date on the progress via letter, telephone and meetings. I felt able to trust his knowledge and judgement and felt confidence in the service he provided.

My case has now been resolved and I am very happy with the result. I want to express my sincere gratitude not only to Gary Weston, Phil Bialyk and Malcolm Cherry but to any other people that were involved in my case behind the scenes.

Having the support of a union such as RMT has been incredible and I would urge people to join, as you never know when you may require help in the future. Without the assistance and kindness shown to me by these individuals, I would not have had the satisfactory ending to this case and for that I am truly grateful.

Yours Sincerely

S McCurdy

BNP SNOOTS IN THE EU TROUGH

Dear editor,

As candidates in last years European elections, standing on the left wing No2EU:Yes to Democracy slate, we warned electors not to be duped into voting BNP, not just because of the vile racist policies of that organisation, but it was obvious that Nick Griffin, was more interested in claiming huge expenses than he was in representing the North West of England.

Now we know the true extent that his snout has been in the trough. On top of his £82,000 MEP salary, in less than a year he's already claimed £175,000 for staff costs, £31,000 in 'office' costs, £18,000 in consultancy fees and £10,000 in agents fees.

Despite his promises of transparency, he's not yet revealed how much of his £270/day tax free subsistence allowance he's claimed.

Apart from peddling the policies of hatred and division, riding in the European Union gravy train seems to be his main objective. Such is his commitment to the North West of England that he's now abandoning those constituents to pursue a parliamentary seat in the South East.

If anyone took the BNP to be a political party with any sort of credibility, then this exposes them as greed-fuelled bigots.

John Metcalfe and Craig Johnston,

No2EU-Yes to Democracy Candidates,
2009 Euro elections.

POLITICAL SCHOOL REPORT

Bus worker Julia Hitchon of Camborne branch reports on the union's political school

We were warmly greeted by Barbara Collinson the manager of the union's education centre in Doncaster. Barbara showed us to our comfortable rooms and we had a really tasty buffet supper in the lounge which gave us the chance to get to know each other.

Political officer and course co-ordinator James Croy gave us an overview and introduction to the course.

RMT president Alex Gordon opened the course on the history of the union and its relationship with the politics of the labour movement. His words brought back memories of the heroes who helped shape our past and being a RMT member I am acknowledging those heroes that fought for our hard-won rights.

As with every session photocopied notes were given to each delegate so it was not necessary to scribble down copious notes.

Professor in Industrial Relations Roger Seifert introduced us to the three factors of production i.e. land, labour and capital and dealt with the Labour Party and its relationship with the trade unions.

Professor Seifert turned this potentially mundane topic into a roller coaster debate which made us all contribute at some stage.

We joined the civil service union PCS picket line outside Doncaster Job Centre and later listened to Marion Lloyd of PCS. At this point I started to

understand the notion of the 'race to the bottom' for wages and conditions. Unions must look to each other for support also as we will all suffer equally.

A visit to the local Trades Club to witness a Doncaster rail branch meeting was an opportunity to share my Cornish bus driving experiences, including our £8.20 an hour salary.

A session on international solidarity included Philippines Solidarity speaker Daniljo Borjal, who showed us a very disturbing film about the dangers for his people trying to set up trade unions. A showing of a Justice for Colombia film also underlined the need for support for unions in that country.

Derek Kotz of RMT's communications department showed us examples of the bias in the newspapers. I confess I struggled with his role-play exercise because I could not be unbiased.

Ian Davidson MP gave us a

potted history of the European Union and how it promoted privatisation and liberalisation.

Brian Denny, nominating officer of the *No2EU: Yes to Democracy* electoral coalition which stood in last year's euro elections, spoke about how the EU is creating it's own race to the bottom. This all triggered memories of the "No to the Lisbon Treaty" DVD produced by RMT so my mind was made up, off to Lille on April 13 to protest against EU rail directives. So here I am, three days in Doncaster and an international activist.

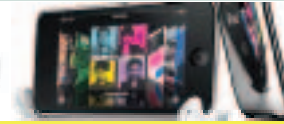
James Croy and Craig Johnston of the RMT executive outlined the Hope Not Hate campaign against the BNP. We were glad this issue had been tackled head on as working class disillusion with politics and New Labour had been raised so many times in the week.

On to Parliament to be met by Simeon Andrews, RMT's Parliamentary group co-ordinator and John McDonnell MP to learn about how Parliament works. This was very constructive, particularly learning of how our Parliamentary group works and the need to get these particular MPs re-elected.

Before setting off for home, we joined our brothers and sisters of RMT and TSSA outside Network Rail head office for the Rail Cuts Cost Lives picket. A great conclusion to the week that underlined the message that if we can stand together like our ancestors stood together then we can perhaps change things for the better. ■



Julia and fellow students join an RMT demonstration outside Network Rail head office



RMT JUNCTION IPOD WINNER

Fernando Engelbrecht of Three Bridges branch has won an ipod, kindly donated by UIA Home Insurance, after joining RMT members on RMT Junction, the union's social networking website

Similar in concept to websites like Facebook, RMT Junction assigns users to groups based on their branch,

region or workplace etc. Users are free to also set up their own groups relating to anything they like – all within a secure online environment.

Users are also able to “friend” others on the network, allowing them to keep tabs on what new materials acquaintances have posted or groups they have

joined etc.

Just like Facebook, RMT Junction will only really function at its optimum as more people sign up to and use it. It is RMT members themselves who will populate the site with their contributions.

As an RMT member you can sign up and get active on

the network straight away.

Simply visit www.rmtjunction.org.uk to register. You will need your RMT membership number (which can be found on your membership card) and your national insurance number (usually found on your wage slip).

You will need your RMT membership number and National Insurance number to do so but it should be stressed that the website does not store your NI number, merely checks it against the central RMT database.

It is hoped that in time RMT Junction can become a powerful organising tool in the struggle to win decency and fair pay at work for the union's 80,000 members.

While RMT Junction aims to provide a secure online environment, members should always exercise caution about any material they post online – particularly if it includes criticism of their employer.

No on-line system can guarantee itself 100 per cent watertight against a determined hacker. Caution should be the watchword before posting content. ■

RMT £25 PRIZE CROSSWORD

No. 59. Set by Elk

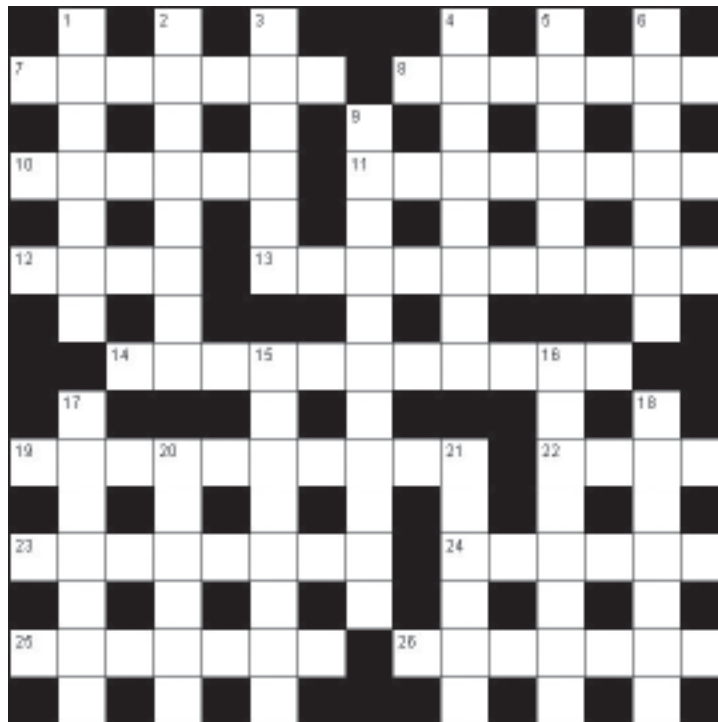
No. 58 solution...



The winner of prize crossword no. 58 is Vince Horrigan of Weston Super Mare.

Send entries to Prize Crossword, RMT, Unity House, 39 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD by May 11 with your name and address.

Winner and solution in next issue.



ACROSS

- 7 Speedily (7)
- 8 Wanted (7)
- 10 US-style restaurants, or the people in them (6)
- 11 Spectator, witness (8)
- 12 Molten rock (4)
- 13 Highly surprised (10)
- 14 They ran to court over safety dispute (7,4)
- 19 The people we carry (10)
- 22 Tubby bear with liking for honey (4)
- 23 Certificates, especially of learning (8)
- 24 Scared (6)
- 25 Grown in fields, eaten for breakfast (7)
- 26 Such a strike held in 1926 (7)

DOWN

- 1 Principal city or big letter (7)
- 2 Type of terrier (8)
- 3 Biggest US state, bought from imperial Russia in 1867 (6)
- 4 Native of German 1 (8)
- 5 Young or under-age folk (6)
- 6 Shrank back, became more distant (7)
- 9 Noisy, restless spirit or ghost (11)
- 15 Building with sails (8)
- 16 Brought in from abroad (8)
- 17 Seafarer (7)
- 18 Time off or away (7)
- 20 Precious metal, AG (6)
- 21 Climbed (6)

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RMT CHRISTMAS CLUB

SAVE FOR CHRISTMAS THE EASY AND SAFE WAY WITH THE RMT CREDIT UNION

Saving for Christmas can be a real headache. Take some of the stress away by saving over the course of the year with the RMT Christmas Club. We'll add a little extra to your savings and pay out the money ready for your Christmas shopping spree. This account is designed for people who want a secure savings account that helps them to save for their Christmas spending.

It's based on the traditional Christmas Club principle of saving a fixed amount each month that is not accessible until the payout date. Many people like the discipline of a regular savings programme where they are not able to access the cash!

Even a small amount saved each month soon adds up. Saving is made easy by Direct Debit either monthly or 4-weekly to suit your pay cycle.

For our Christmas Club, the maturity date will be 14th November each year. We will add a bonus dividend at the maturity date and pay the money direct to your bank account. There are no vouchers or

hampers or anything of that kind – you decide how you want to spend your money.

The bonus will be added to your savings if you complete all of your regular payments. Last years bonus was 2%, and we hope to improve this in subsequent years as the Christmas Club grows.

As all of your Christmas Club money will be paid out each year it will be kept separately from your regular credit union savings and cannot be used against credit union loans.

There is also a summer savings club account on the same basis and principle with a payout date of mid-June, so that you can have ready access to summer holiday spending money.

If you want to open a Christmas Club account and are already a credit union member simply complete the form below. If you are not already a credit union member you will have to complete the form below and the credit union membership application opposite.

Completed forms should be returned to our freepost address.

TERMS & CONDITIONS – IMPORTANT INFORMATION - WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT RMT CHRISTMAS CLUB

- You need to be an RMT Credit Union member to open an RMT Christmas Club Account.
- You have to save at least £5 per month into a regular RMT CU account in addition to your RMT Christmas Club Account.
- You pay a monthly or 4-weekly Direct Debit consisting of your nominated Christmas Club payment (min. £10) plus at least £5 per month to your main RMT CU account.
- Christmas Club accounts have to be opened by the end of April. Late applications commence the following November.
- As an RMT CU member you build up regular savings with a yearly dividend (3.75% in 2008) and you can apply for low interest rate loans.
- Your Christmas Club money is separate from your regular savings account. That means you will have a guaranteed sum available for Christmas maturing every 14th November, plus a savings account growing with time.
- The Christmas Club secures your money so it's there for the Christmas period. This means that your money is locked-in and you can make no withdrawals until 14th November when all of your money, plus dividend will be paid out.
- If you make all of your payments we will endeavour to add a dividend bonus of 2% p.a. as accrued through the year
- All of your money will be paid to your bank account on the first working day after 14th November.
- If you cancel your payments the 2% dividend is not applied and you cannot withdraw your money until after 14th November. If you think you will need access to your money before 14th November, this account is not suitable for you.
- The Christmas Club will continue year-on-year, so payments after 14th November start the next year's account. Of course if you wish to cancel your payments you are free to do so at any time.

Your savings are fully protected for up to £50,000 by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme

Cut here

RMT CHRISTMAS CLUB APPLICATION

RMT Credit Union Account Number (if known)							
Surname			Address				
Forename(s)							
Home phone							
Mobile							
email			Postcode				
Date of birth			NI Numb				
Employer			RMT Branch				

Do you save monthly on 28th?		Or 4 - weekly (Fri)?		You can save by calendar month or 4 - weekly	
How much do you save in your RMT Credit Union Account?			£	min. £5 per month	
How much do you wish to save in your Christmas Club Account?			£	min £10 per month in £5 multiples	
The total each period for both accounts on my Direct Debit is			£	the total month/4 -weekly	
This is the total amount you wish to save by Direct Debit monthly on the 28th or 4-weekly					

Remember that if you have a loan with us your regular Direct Debit will also include that repayment

DECLARATION

I understand the Terms & Conditions of the RMT Christmas Club Account and that membership of the RMT Credit Union is a condition of holding an RMT Christmas Club Account. I understand that my monthly savings into the RMT Christmas Club cannot be withdrawn until the maturity date which is on or after 14th November each year.

Your Signature			Date			/			/				
----------------	--	--	------	--	--	---	--	--	---	--	--	--	--



RMT CREDIT UNION LTD.

Finance Department, Unity House, 39 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD

MEMBERSHIP NUMBER

RMT CREDIT UNION APPLICATION FORM – please complete your application along with the attached Direct Debit.

Please use **BLOCK CAPITALS** and **black ink**.

1 PERSONAL DETAILS.

Surname		Address	
Forename(s)			
Home phone			
Mobile phone		Postcode	
Email address			
Date of Birth		National Insurance Number	

2 **Marital Status** married ☐ partner ☐ single ☐ divorced ☐ **Drivers Licence No.**

3 Your Employment.

Employer		RMT Branch	
Job Description			

4 **Mr** ☐ **Mrs** ☐ **Ms** ☐ **Miss** ☐

5 Membership Status

RMT TU Member ☐ Retired RMT TU Member ☐ RMT Family Member ☐

6 **How much do you wish to save £** This is the amount you wish to save by Direct Debit monthly on the 28th ☐ or date you next get paid weekly ☐ if 4 weekly (Fri) ☐ date here.....

7 Normally your payments are made once a month (28th) to RMT Credit Union Ltd.

8 **Next of Kin**

Address

.....

.....

9 **I undertake to abide by the rules now in force or those that are adopted.**

Your signature

Date

We are checking new member identification electronically. To do this, we now carry out searches with credit reference agencies who supply us with relevant detail including information from the Electoral Register. The searches will not be used by other lenders to assess your ability to obtain credit.

I agree to my identity being checked electronically ☐

If we cannot verify your identity and address by this method, we will ask you to provide paper documentation instead. Full details of these can be supplied to you by calling 020 7529 8835.



Instruction to your Bank or Building Society to pay by Direct Debit



Please fill in the whole form including official use box using a ball point pen and Send to: RMT Credit Union Ltd., 39 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD

Name and full postal address of your Bank or Building Society

To: The Manager	Bank/Building Society
Address	
	Postcode

Name(s) of Account Holder(s)

Bank/Building Society account number

Branch Sort Code

Originator's Identification Number

Reference Number

FOR RMT CREDIT UNION LTD OFFICIAL USE ONLY
This is not part of the the instruction to your Bank or Building Society.

Instructions to your Bank or Building Society.

Please pay RMT Credit Union Ltd Direct Debits for the account detailed in this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with RMT Credit Union Ltd, if so, details will be passed electronically to my Bank/Building Society.

Signature(s)

Date

Banks and Building Societies may not accept Direct Debit Instructions from some types of account

This guarantee should be detached and retained by the Payer.

The Direct Debit Guarantee

- This guarantee is offered by all Banks and Building Societies that take part in the Direct Debit Scheme. The efficiency and security of the scheme is monitored and protected by your own Bank or Building Society.
- If the amounts to be paid or the payment date changes, RMT Credit Union Ltd will notify you 10 working days in advance of your account being debited or as otherwise agreed
- If an error is made by RMT Credit Union Ltd or your Bank or Building Society, you are guaranteed a full and immediate refund from your branch of the amount paid
- You can cancel a Direct Debit at any time by writing to your Bank or Building Society. Please also send a copy of your letter to us.



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