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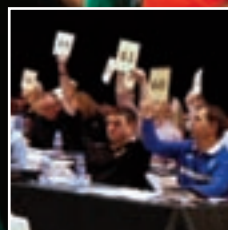
INSIDE THIS ISSUE



**TUBE DRIVER
REINSTATED**
PAGE 6



1911 RAIL STRIKE
PAGE 12



AGM REPORT
PAGE 17



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NATIONAL UNION OF RAIL, MARITIME & TRANSPORT WORKERS

Unity House, 39 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD



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contents

Page 4

HEATHROW EXPRESS WIN

Page 5

THOUSANDS RALLY AT DURHAM GALA

Page 6

HEATHROW EXPRESS MEMBERS TO TAKE FURTHER ACTION

Page 7

TUBE DRIVER ARWYN THOMAS RE-INSTATED

Page 8

SAVING BOMBARDIER JOBS!

Page 9

PARLIAMENTARY COLUMN

Page 10

NO TO UNSAFE RICKSHAWS CLOGGING UP CENTRAL LONDON

Page 11

STOP GOVERNMENT PLANS FOR LONGER LORRIES

Page 12

1911-A STRIKE FOR LIBERTY

Page 14

STATE OF THE UNION

Page 16

COUNCIL OF EXECUTIVES

Page 17

AGM REPORT

Page 22

UNION LEARNING AT FORT WILLIAM

Page 23

REMEMBERING SLAVERY

Page 24

SERIOUS NORTH SEA OIL AND GAS SPILLS-EVERY WEEK

Page 25

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Page 26

ORGANISING CATERING WORKERS

Page 28

BRANCH SECRETARIES MEET IN GREAT YARMOUTH

Page 29

DEBATING DISABILITIES

Page 31

THE BOXER WHO WAS SCARED OF NOBODY

Page 32

FROM CLEANER TO HEALTH AND SAFETY ADVISOR- A LEARNING JOURNEY

Page 33

CROSSWORD

Page 34

CREDIT UNION -

OPEN A JUNIOR DEPOSIT ACCOUNT!

EDITORIAL



BOMBARDIER SCANDAL

This government's collusion in the destruction of the train-building industry in this country by awarding a £1.4 billion Thameslink contract to the German transnational Siemens instead of Derby-based Bombardier has exposed the rotten nature of this coalition.

It now appears that the consultancy firm MVA which advised the government on the deal was the same one used by Siemens to help it win the contract over Bombardier.

Siemens is well known for its murky business practices and it has now emerged that one of partner firms in the deal, 3i, has close links to the Prime Minister and the Business Secretary Vince Cable.

This Lib Dem/Tory lash up has been exposed as a government that slavishly follows the needs of corporate power at the expense of the UK jobs and, ultimately, the economy.

The magnificent protest in Derby should be the start of a campaign to demand that the government stops hiding behind European Union procurement rules and starts defending our industries.

It is time that the politicians were held to account and stopped this industrial vandalism.

As Derby County manager Nigel Clough has pointed out, it is not too late to reverse this scandalous decision and give thousands of workers in the town a future.

If you want to see what happens in society when you remove the hope of a job, an education, a home and a future just look at what is occurring in our inner cities.

Years of decline in our manufacturing base, social dumping and growing joblessness combined with education cuts create a toxic mix that can spark the sort of mindless anti-social behaviour as seen recently on our TV screens.

Yet the McNulty report on the future of our railways is recommending even more privatisation and fragmentation that has already decimated the transport sector here and, now, across the EU.

Despite this RMT has successfully forced Liverpool councillors to drop their bid to privatise and take control of track and signalling from Network Rail, as recommended by McNulty, and hand them over to Merseyrail.

The next step in the campaign will be the Save Our Railways lobby of Parliament on October 25 at Methodist Hall in Westminster. Try and be there and remember that attendance is a legitimate item for branch expenditure.

RMT members at Heathrow Express and Mitie have successfully fought for well-deserved pay increases and Tube driver Arwyn Thomas has joined fellow driver Eamonn Lynch in winning reinstatement.

Road freight members at DHL Coventry have also won an improved offer which has been put out for referendum following the threat of strike action.

These victories would not had been won without the solidarity and unity created by organisation at the workplace where it matters.

This will also make the difference in the bus sector where First Devon and Cornwall members are fighting the axing of staff transport and at Webberbus which has reneged on implementing a pay deal agreed last year.

For offshore workers safety is still an issue with serious oil and gas spills occurring every week. RMT is demanding more powers for safety reps and for companies to worry less about how to avoid paying tax and more about safety on the rigs.

The importance of political campaigning has been highlighted by the recent victory which will see seafarers and offshore workers included in the automatic enrolment provisions of the 2008 Pensions Act.

EC member Malcolm Dunning had noticed the exclusion of seafarers in the Act, raised the issue with John McDonnell MP, who did the business as usual and got that exclusion reversed.

However more work needs to be done on the shipping side as the Scottish government has announced plans to 'unbundle' ferry services to the Northern Isles, allowing operators to "cherry-pick" more profitable routes and harm services.

Rapacious and greedy capitalism is making a mess of the world economy so why should we believe that it would not do the same with lifeline ferry services?

All the best

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

HEATHROW EXPRESS WIN

RMT members working at Heathrow Express voted overwhelmingly for an improved offer from the company after taking rock solid 48 hour strike that forced the total closure of the Heathrow Connect service.

The union suspended further strike action and an overtime ban to allow for the referendum ballot of members on the improved offer.

RMT represents the vast majority of staff at Heathrow Express across all grades and

they had given the union an overwhelming mandate for strike action, on a huge turnout, in response to a company pay offer that fell well short of current RPI inflation and was loaded with strings.

Members backed a two-year deal which included a 4.9 per cent increase effective January 2011 with pension contributions amended accordingly and an increase of RPI plus 0.6 per cent or a minimum increase of 3.5 per cent in year two.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow said that HEX members deserved an offer for their hard work which had generated company profits of over £6 million on a turnover of £60 million.

"RMT was always ready to negotiate seriously to put in place a fair pay package that will take us through the Olympics period and recognised the contribution our members make to delivering a highly successful and profitable service," he said. ■



MITIE PAY VICTORY

RMT train cleaning crews employed by the Mitie company and servicing First Great Western trains voted overwhelmingly to accept an improved pay offer following the threat of strike action.

The entire workforce on the contract was balloted in a long-running dispute over pensions, payment of wages and a failure to communicate.

Cardiff and Swansea train cleaners' had already taken three days of 24 hour strike action in the fight for dignity at work.

Further strike action was suspended pending talks and a referendum of members which accepted a three per cent increase

backdated to April 2010 this year, a 3.5 per cent increase backdated to April 2011 and a three per cent increase effective April 2012.

In addition to the pay increase, management agreed to withdraw any proposals to move members from two-weekly paid to monthly paid. This would also put all new starters employed since the TUPE from ISS to Mitie from the beginning of the contract onto two-weekly pay.

The agreement is the first pay increase that the union has won on this contract and it will lift members' pay above the National Minimum Wage.

Mitie recently announced a massive 13

per cent jump in profits and the company brands itself as an "outsourcing specialist" mopping up facilities contracts in both the private and public sectors. Yet it had only originally offered 1.25 per cent pay rise for 2010 and no more than one per cent from April next year.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow congratulated the members for their resolve and continuing support during long and difficult negotiations.

"RMT representatives should also be congratulated for their commitment and hard work shown in negotiating the offer," he said. ■

THOUSANDS RALLY AT DURHAM GALA

RMT branch and regional banners were carried through the streets of Durham in early July as part of the huge Durham miners' gala which attracted over 130,000 people this year.

Heavy rain storms failed to dampen the spirits of those taking part in the 127th miners gala which included over 40 marching bands and over 100 hundred union banners.

Among the speakers was Carlos Bugueno Alrama, one of

the 33 Chilean miners rescued last year after spending two months underground.

Introducing Mr Alrama, Durham Miners Association general secretary Davy Hopper said that he would rather share a platform with him than Labour leader Ed Milliband who had pulled out of addressing the gala over the fact the RMT general secretary Bob Crow was also speaking.

Mr Hopper pledged support for the Chilean miners after

their government refused to pay them wages for the 69 days they were trapped underground.

Mr Hopper also called on the TUC to organise a co-ordinated fight back against Con Dem government cuts.

Bob Crow backed the call for co-ordinated action across the labour movement to defend jobs and public services.

"The Con-Dems have thrown down the gauntlet and we will not be found wanting," he said.



FIRST DEVON AND CORNWALL ACTION SUSPENDED

An overtime ban due to begin by bus driver members at First Devon and Cornwall has been suspended as the company has agreed to talks in a dispute over the axing of essential staff transport.

In May, the company announced that it was withdrawing its "Staff Trooper" service for employees and members voted overwhelmingly for action short of a strike.

The "Staff Trooper" was a bus operating in the early mornings to get staff to work and has been part of the working conditions since before the privatisation of services.

Members relied on the transport to get to work and the company had refused point-blank to enter in to dialogue with RMT to either change their decision or modify their proposals leaving no option but to ballot members at Plymouth.

The company has now agreed to enter into meaningful talks to resolve the issue.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow said that by standing shoulder to shoulder management had got the message that the union would not stand idly by while it stripped away long-standing terms and conditions.

"It is now down to First Devon and Cornwall to get back round the table and enter into meaningful discussions on the issue of staff transport," he said.





TUBE DRIVER ARWYN THOMAS RE-INSTATED

A second Tube driver at the centre of a series of strikes has been found to have been unfairly sacked by London Underground by a tribunal and has been re-instated.

The tribunal found that Arwyn Thomas, a driver at Morden depot with an exemplary employment record after 30 years of service, should not have been sacked.

Yet London Underground threw at least £250,000 at trying to defend its victimisation of Arwyn.

Sacked Bakerloo Line tube driver Eamonn Lynch had also earlier won his employment tribunal case for unfair dismissal on the grounds of trade union activities and was re-instated.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow said that London Underground knew in January that their case against Arwyn, like that against Eamonn Lynch, had fallen flat on its face when the interim tribunal judged that Arwyn had been sacked for his trade-union activities.

"Yet without the resolve shown by RMT members on London Underground and the strike action taken in defence of two victimised union reps they

would not have got their jobs back," he said.

Following Arwyn's dismissal, the union won an 'interim relief' Employment Tribunal which clearly ruled that LU sacked him for his trade union activities, and the Tribunal ordered LUL to pay Arwyn's wages until a full Tribunal was convened.

The chair of the Tribunal even took the very unusual step of asking LUL to take a fifteen-minute adjournment and consider reinstating Arwyn Thomas immediately which they refused.

RMT regional organiser Steve Hedley said that at the full Employment Tribunal Arwyn came across as a very straightforward and credible witness, in contrast to LUL managers who appeared disingenuous, contradicting themselves and each other and indeed were proven to be giving totally inaccurate information by the CCTV evidence produced.

The charges against Arwyn were that he abused a Tube Lines employee acting as a CSA at Morden depot.

However CCTV showed that Arwyn was pursued across the station and physically blocked

on at least two occasions and there has been absolutely no suggestion even in management's propaganda that any physical contact occurred.

A conviction against Steve Hedley that he had assaulted a worker during strike action in March was also overturned by a court of appeal after it was

revealed that police had not submitted all CCTV footage as they were required to do.

Steve said that the charges had been "politically motivated" and LU had used the conviction to ban him from LU offices.

London Underground has accepted the findings of the court and lifted the ban. ■

RMT REJECTS LATEST TUBE PAY OFFER

RMT has formally rejected the latest pay offer from London Underground as it was only a fractional increase to only 4.75 per cent which is still significantly below inflation, as the RPI figure for February was 5.5 per cent.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow said that members were currently experiencing significant increases in the costs of living, the latest being the outrageous price rises announced by British Gas.

"Moreover, LU's offer is for a five-year settlement which is too long duration, especially when the offer for

years two to five is only a small fraction above RPI.

"This would leave London Underground staff vulnerable to real-terms pay cuts in years when RPI underestimates the real rise in living costs, as it often does and would leave us unable to claim for further increases until 2016," he said.

LU has dismissed claim for a minimum flat-rate pay increase, which would benefit lower paid grades, and a reduction in working hours and offered little or nothing on our other claims for improved conditions. ■

STOPPING MCNULTY IN ITS TRACKS

RMT has welcomed the decision by Liverpool councillors to listen to the union and drop their bid to privatise and take control of track and signalling from Network Rail and hand them over to Merseyrail.

The move has been widely seen as a slap in the face to the Department of Transport and its controversial McNulty report which recommends, among other measures, the fragmentation of Network Rail and local 'vertical' integration.

Merseytravel, which operates Merseyrail and has floated the idea of taking over Network Rail work locally, revealed that the bodies that run the company – the Integrated Travel Authority and the Passenger Travel Executive – are to “discontinue negotiations regarding localism given the current uncertainty and union opposition”.

“Members don’t want Merseyside to be emblematic of the issues surrounding the implementation of Sir Roy McNulty’s report for reducing the cost of the UK’s railways,” a statement said.

Merseytravel transport chief, Labour councillor Mark Dowd, led the U-turn after heading up a £1.5 million campaign for

local vertical integration.

“We are better under government control,” he said.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow said that common sense had prevailed in Merseytravel and it was the first defeat for the McNulty proposals to break up Network Rail.

“What the train operators are calling vertical integration is nothing of the sort and would only amount to more dangerous fragmentation of infrastructure.

“The only safe and sensible way to achieve vertical integration is to re-unite all rail operations with infrastructure in a single publicly accountable structure,” he said.

RMT and TSSA also held a joint demonstration outside Liverpool’s BT Conference Centre recently when Sir Roy McNulty addressed a major railway industry conference.

Protesters warned that McNulty’s *Value for Money* report would have terrible consequences for every rail worker and every rail user as he wanted to slash jobs, impose pay freezes and reduce safety.

“The McNulty report is a recipe for disaster that will make staff, passengers and

the environment pay for the mess rail privatisation created.

“That’s why we are taking this protest right to his doorstep to make the case for public ownership – the solution to fragmentation and profiteering that Mr McNulty has totally ignored,” Bob said.

Bob Crow also led a delegation to the Railtex Exhibition where McNulty was speaking.

In the Q&A session, Bob pointed out that his report actually “persecutes” rail workers.

“The suggestion that hard working rail workers will be denied a pay rise in line with inflation will never be accepted by RMT,” he said.

He said that McNulty had failed to consult rail workers, their unions or the travelling public when he was putting together his report.

McNulty admitted that RMT had done a “terrific job” for its members by negotiating pay rises that average 15 per cent higher than expected since privatisation and finished by saying that this had to stop.

The union has produced a pamphlet on the McNulty Report, *Paying for Privatisation* available from Unity House. Email j.croy@rmt.org.uk ■





SAVING BOMBARDIER JOBS!

Over 10,000 march in Derby to demand that the government halts demise of train building in Britain

RMT general secretary Bob Crow demanded that MPs fight to save 1,400 train building jobs after the government handed Siemens of Germany the contract for 1,200 new carriages for Thameslink route instead of Derby-based Bombardier.

"It is time MPs were brought to account," he told over 10,000 protesters in Derby to huge applause.

"I have been told it would be 'protectionist' to build our own trains in this country, but the job of MPs is to protect our industries and our jobs," he said.

The union has destroyed government claims that they could not influence the outcome of the Thameslink contract and save the Bombardier train building plant in Derby.

In a Parliamentary question, Transport Minister Theresa Villiers was forced to admit that her government could have built in the wider economic impact of shifting the work overseas before awarding it to Siemens in the tendering process demanded by European Union rules.

The minister also admitted that over £15 million of UK taxpayers money was spent on advisers engaged in the tendering process.

"Throughout this carve up the government has claimed that their hands are tied, a claim

that has now been exposed by RMT as completely bogus," Bob Crow said.

He said that the loss of Britain's last train making company was the direct result of successive government's colluding with harsh EU 'public procurement', 'competition' and 'liberalisation' rules.

"The logic of all British governments since the Thatcher period has been to comply with EU demands for privatisation and the tendering out of public contracts to the lowest bidder regardless of the consequences," he said.

Meanwhile French and German governments have largely ignored these EU rules and loaded the contracts to take into account the economic and social impact locally.

"In the last three years nearly 100 per cent of train building contracts in both countries have gone to their own respective firms like Alstom in France and Siemens in Germany and, as a result, they now dominate the industry in Europe," Bob told protesters.

The union has also raised serious questions with the government about the business practices of Siemens.

The anti-union company was found guilty of paying €15 million to the chairman of a "non-traditional" union in

Germany and recently lost its appeal to get a fine of €400 million overturned for forming a cartel.

The *Daily Mirror* newspaper joined the 'battle for Bombardier' campaign backed by Derby County football club manager Nigel Clough and his players.

Bombardier workers and their children carried a huge banner onto the pitch during the first match of the season against Birmingham City and players wore *Save Our Rail Industry - Derby United* T-shirts.



Nigel Clough said: "We support the campaign to make the government think again.

"The contract won't be signed off until the end of the year, so there is still time to make a change".

NETWORK RAIL SIGNALS JOB LOSSES

Network Rail has announced that it intends to reduce dramatically the number of signallers it currently employs under its long term operations strategy.

Network Rail intends to reduce signallers from the current level of 6,000 to 2,000 over the next 30 years by centralising signalboxes and by use of new technologies.

It is also their intention to reduce the ECRO Centres from the current 13 to two and halve the number of ECROs they employ.

RMT has made it clear that it will not accept any compulsory redundancies and expects Network Rail to abide by the

current Promotion Transfer and Redundancy Arrangements (PTR&R) and in addition we will be seeking a shorter working week, increased annual leave and voluntary retirement at 55.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow said that the union would not agree to anything that compromises the job security, safety or standards of living of our members.

"We are not opposed to new technology but we are clear that any changes that may arise should be accommodated through a shorter working week, additional annual leave and the right to retire at 55 on full pension entitlement," he said.

JARVIS BOSSES OFF THE HOOK

RMT has called for tighter regulation of company directors after Paris Moayed, the boss of rail company Jarvis at the time of the Potters Bar disaster, floated a new "green energy" company on the stock market.

Not a single Jarvis director has received any punishment for their role in the seven deaths at Potters Bar even though the company was found partly responsible.

After Potters Bar, Jarvis subsequently staggered on under the leadership of former Tory minister Steven Norris before going bust and dumping hundreds of workers out of work and reneging on wages and pensions commitments which are currently subject to RMT legal action.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow said that it was outrageous that the Jarvis bosses involved in the Potters Bar disaster had not only got away without any punishment but were now floating new companies on the stock market.

"That shows just how lax the law is in this country when it comes to regulating company directors and we will be working with our Parliamentary group to demand tougher legislation.

"Hundreds of our members ended up out of work and owed thousands of pounds when Jarvis went bust and yet top bosses like Steven Norris walked away and straight into other well-paid work like chairing conferences on the McNulty rail carve up," he said.

Sacked Jarvis workers and former Jarvis employees who have seen their pensions destroyed held a vigil outside the Leeds Employment Tribunals where a case management hearing was heard, in order to set out the future conduct of unfair dismissal applications for over 500 of the 1,400 affected ex-employees.

Justice for Jarvis Workers co-ordinator Bill Rawcliffe said that Deloitte's Administrators had revealed that the then Labour government's decision to wash its hands of privatised rail workers employed by the company when it went bust resulted in workers being sacked without wages, with no proper redundancy payments and with over 3,500 pensions destroyed.

"It is a scandal that we have successive governments in the UK that refuse to take responsibility for their citizens and who have no interest in protecting jobs and skills in the UK rail industry," he said. ■

Parliamentary column



BACK BOMBARDIER

The government's complete disregard for our national interests was graphically demonstrated by its decision to award the Thameslink rolling stock contract to Siemens rather than Bombardier – the UK's last train manufacturer.

The extent of the Government's indifference was then highlighted in a parliamentary answer from the Rail Minister, Teresa Villiers, to a question tabled by my parliamentary colleague John Denham. The answer read as follows:

"Department for Transport officials confirmed the result of the procurement evaluation on an anonymised basis and made a recommendation, to a Department for Transport board sub-committee meeting on 4 May 2011. The Secretary of State for Transport, ...was asked to endorse this recommendation, with the bids still anonymised, on 12 May 2011. He was informed of the bidders' identities later that same day after he had endorsed the recommendation."

"Anonymised" means that the details of the bidder for this massive £1.4 billion train manufacturing and maintenance contract were hidden. In other words the Transport Secretary did not know when he endorsed the recommendation of his officials that he was awarding the contract to a German rather than UK-based company! The tragic reality is that rather than standing up for British manufacturing he was simply endorsing a box ticking exercise from his civil servants.

This madness has led to the announcement of over 1,400 job losses at Bombardier in Derby with the likelihood of further job losses in the autumn. The plan to build the Thameslink trains in Germany also threatens at least a further 12,000 jobs in the UK supply chain. The decision could adversely impact on the prospect of a UK-based train manufacturer bidding to supply trains

for Crossrail or for high speed rail. In short we could be witnessing the last stand of British train manufacturing.

Of course the government is trying to blame everyone else for the catastrophe. It claims the previous government was to blame because it drew up a contract that did not allow it to take into account the impact any decision would have on UK jobs. Complete nonsense. The government had more than a year to look at the contract and it has always been in its gift to change contract terms if it chose to. In fact there is a clause in the tender documentation that gave the Transport Secretary a large degree of latitude to keep this contract in the UK. The fourth paragraph on page 16 reads:

"The issue of this Invitation to Tender in no way commits the Secretary of State to award the Thameslink Rolling Stock Programme to any person or party. The Secretary of State reserves the right to terminate the competition, to award the Thameslink Rolling Stock Programme without prior notice, to change the basis, the procedures and the timescales set out or referred to in this document, or to reject any or all Proposals and to terminate discussions with any or all Bidders at any time. Nothing in this Invitation to Tender should be interpreted as a commitment by the Secretary of State to award the Thameslink Rolling Stock Programme to a Bidder."

Equally preposterous is for the government to blame EU law. In the last five years Germany has had 98 per cent of their trains built domestically, in France it is 100 per cent and in Spain it is 90 per cent. All that these countries do is legally frame their contracts so that the social and economic impact of any decision can be taken into account.

Chris Williamson MP,
Derby North

CALLING BUS WORKERS

RMT Parliamentary group convener John McDonnell MP has been pursuing the issue of security and monitoring equipment on buses with some success after the union failed to get adequate responses from VOSA and the Department for Transport.

The union has now established that there is no legal requirement to have a periscope on a bus. The only relevant requirement is regulation 33 of the Public Service Vehicles (Conditions of Fitness, Equipment, Use and Certification) Regulations 1981 (SI 1981/257) which states that: "Except in the case of a vehicle which has a seating capacity not exceeding 12 passengers, adequate means shall be provided in every vehicle to enable passengers on any deck to signal the driver".

This could be a periscope, CCTV or another device.

There is also no requirement for buses to be fitted with CCTV, although in London all buses must have CCTV as it is Transport for London specification to qualify for route bidding.

Buses must have windscreen wipers under Regulation 34 of the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986 (SI 1986/1078) which states that: "Every vehicle fitted with a windscreen shall, unless the driver can obtain an adequate view to the front of the vehicle without looking

through the windscreen, be fitted with one or more automatic windscreen wipers capable of clearing the windscreen so that the driver has an adequate view of the road in front of both sides of the vehicle and to the front of the vehicle".

Buses must be fitted with speedometers under Regulation 35 of the 1986 Regs: "Every motor vehicle shall be fitted with a speedometer which, if the vehicle is first used on or after 1st April 1984, shall be capable of indicating speed in both miles per hour and kilometres per hour, either simultaneously, or by the operation of a switch".

Any statutory requirement depends upon the equipment and in some cases upon contractual fulfilment. RMT's Parliamentary group has secured a meeting with the Bus Minister, Norman Baker where this matter will be on the agenda. It would be beneficial if the union could present some evidence of where these weak regulations have caused practical problems for our drivers.

Please email any information you have of instances where equipment is installed but not working properly and/or where there have been breaches of the regulations. You can email in confidence as your name and your employer are not required for this evidence gathering. Please email s.mackay@rmt.org.uk. ■

NO TO UNSAFE RICKSHAWS CLOGGING UP CENTRAL LONDON



CONGESTION:
Rickshaw
drivers clog
bus lanes

RMT Parliamentary convener John McDonnell MP has successfully objected to the TFL London Local Authorities Bill at Second Reading - specifically on the grounds that it would lead to the continued proliferation of unlicensed, unsafe rickshaws clogging up central London

The RMT Parliamentary group objection means that the Bill will have to be presented again for second reading on September 6 at which point RMT will keep objecting until the final debate on the Bill is given.

The union intends to use this breathing space to force TFL to negotiate on the revised content of the Bill and to take tough action against the unsafe and unlicensed spread of rickshaws.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow said that the union's taxi branch members didn't want the rickshaws as they see them as unsafe, increasing congestion and with no check on who is fit and proper to operate them.

"If John McDonnell hadn't

taken the decisive action on behalf of RMT taxi drivers to get this Bill knocked back it would have had dire consequences for passenger safety.

"The clauses that TFL were trying to bulldoze through made little or no provision for any statutory minimum standards to be applied or for any checks to be carried out on the rickshaws, their riders, or their operators.

"Nor would there have been any provisions for any training to be required or for compulsory registration.

"It is shocking that TFL have refused to negotiate on this issue and that instead they are ignoring the recommendation of previous Parliamentary Committees that a compulsory registration scheme for rickshaws/pedicabs should be explored.

"RMT and our MPs will continue to fight on this issue to defend the licensed taxi trade against this attack on their livelihoods," Bob said. ■

STOP GOVERNMENT PLANS FOR LONGER LORRIES

Philippa Edmunds of Freight on Rail calls on RMT members to help campaign against government plans to increase the length of lorries by seven foot

A campaigning coalition is asking people to lobby their MP to oppose the government's proposal for seven foot longer HGVs which would be a threat to road safety and the environment.

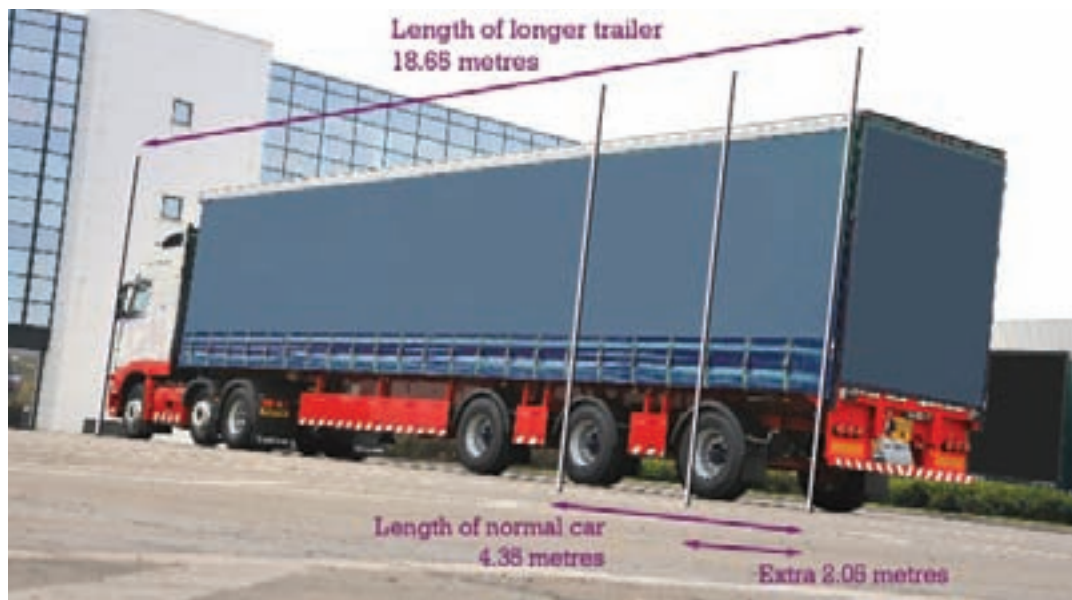
Freight on Rail, backed by the Shadow Secretary of State for Transport, Maria Eagle and a coalition made up of the Campaign for Better Transport, CTC - the national cyclists' organisation, Friends of the Earth, Living Streets, RoadPeace and Sustrans are warning that the plans could put small hauliers out of business, decimate consumer rail freight growth and lead to more collisions and more road deaths.

The government's claims that road operators will increase their share of goods traffic as a result of introducing longer lorries, despite its stated commitment to increase consumer rail freight which is backed by the public.

Consumer rail freight has both grown and increased market share for the eighth consecutive year and now outstrips coal traffic.

The government's own research shows that the introduction of these longer lorries would reduce domestic rail freight growth by two thirds by 2025, and fails to properly address the viability of the remaining traffic on rail.

Worse, the analysis goes onto state this reduction as a benefit



to the logistics sector, with some 84 per cent of the quoted cost savings associated with longer lorries coming from reduced rail costs.

The government's justification is based on the assumption that longer lorries will result in fewer road trips, but previous increases in length and/or weight have simply resulted in the same amount of lorries on the roads but with lower loads.

Government figures show that more than one in four lorries are driving around empty and almost half of lorries are neither constrained by weight or volume of cargo, ie partially loaded, so if they cannot fill existing sized lorries, why will they be able to fill bigger ones?

HGVs are already almost four

times more likely to be involved in fatal crashes on local roads than cars.

Despite this the government claims that that longer lorries would lead to a zero increase in fatalities by assuming that 85 per cent of collisions involving HGVs are unaffected by length. These conclusions are not credible as it is generally acknowledged that collisions are normally caused by a combination of factors. How can a seven foot longer lorry trailer that occupies 17 per cent more road space, acknowledged by the government to have greater tail swings and more susceptibility to cross winds, not increase road crashes.

While the big logistics operators tied to supermarket logistics will undoubtedly be

able to make use of the extra volume and therefore to increase their efficiency, the bulk of freight operators and users are not big companies or big hauliers, and these will lose out by having to buy and run new longer vehicles for general use, mostly not utilizing the extra capacity.

Small and medium sized hauliers who have been publically muted in their concerns about longer trailers for fear of jeopardizing relationships with their customers stand to lose up to £1.8 billion over five years in depreciation costs on their trucks, a figure that the DfT has not even attempted to calculate.

• For more details go to www.freightonrail.org.uk



1911-A STRIKE FOR LIBERTY

RMT president Alex Gordon marks the centenary of a strike that led three railway unions to put aside their differences and form the National Union of Railwaymen



August this year sees the centenary of Britain's first national railway strike. August 1911 was a turning point in trade union organisation, which created the National Union of Railwaymen (NUR), Britain's first industrial union in February 1913 and hastened the Labour Movement's awakening everywhere.

The causes of the 1911 strike are familiar today. Wage levels fell 10 per cent between 1900-1910, while prices rose and bosses used anti-union laws to stop workers taking strike action.

The August 1911 rail strike was one element in a huge upsurge of worker militancy between 1910-14 known as 'The Great Unrest'. Overall union membership doubled to 4.1 million. Numbers of strike days rocketed from two million in 1907, 10 million in 1911 and 41 million by 1912. The 'Triple Alliance' of miners, dockers and railworkers forged through industrial solidarity in 1913

became for a while the most powerful organisation ever created by British workers to fight for their interests.

The frustration and anger of railway workers built up from 1907 when the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants (ASRS) All Grades Movement to cut working hours, raise wages and secure union recognition was diverted into a 'Conciliation Scheme' that left pay and conditions unchanged.

Tom Lowth, of the General Railway Workers' Union (GRWU) said: "It does not look to me like a very satisfactory settlement" and he was right. By August 1910 Lord Claude Hamilton, Chairman of the Railway Companies Association boasted: "The union of course is not recognised in any way. Not a loophole as far as I can see has been left open for them".

The following month in September 1910 a full-scale, workers' revolt broke out led by the South Wales Miners' Federation against the Cambrian

Coal Combine.

On January 9, 1911 Liverpool ship-repairers struck for better pay and the National Sailors' and Firemen's Union held mass meetings in London, Cardiff, Bristol, Southampton, Hull, Glasgow, Grimsby, Dublin and Manchester under the slogan 'War Is Now Declared: Seamen Strike Hard and Strike For Liberty on 14 June 1911'.

A 72-day national seamen's strike began in Southampton on 9 June 1911 and spread like wildfire around British ports. In Liverpool, Tom Mann the charismatic leader of the National Transport Workers' Federation (NTWF) was invited to chair the strike committee. Mann arrived at Liverpool docks on 14 June 1911, while the government sent 3,000 troops to occupy the city and anchored a Royal Navy gunboat in the Mersey.

The ASRS leadership tried to negotiate a return to work by rail workers. However, the rail companies were intransigent

against demands for a two-shillings per week wage increase and a reduction from 60 to 54 hours per week. Unofficial railway strikes continued to spread from Hull, Bristol, Swansea and Manchester through June and July.

On 'Bloody Sunday' August 13 1911 a mass strike meeting at St George's Plateau outside Liverpool's Lime Street station was attacked by police from Birmingham. The Liverpool strike committee declared a general strike from midnight August 14.

Tom Mann announced: "A strike of all transport men of all classes; of railway workers, passenger as well as goods men, drivers, stokers. It will mean all connected with the ferry boats, tug boats, river tender men, Dock Board men, Overhead and underground railways, flatmen, bargemen, dockers, coal heavers, crane men, elevator men, warehouse workers, carters, and in fact every conceivable section and branch of the great

transport industry in Liverpool will down tools until this business is settled”.

The strike initiated by seamen drew in 66,000 transport workers of all sectors who brought the Port of Liverpool to a standstill.

The following day August 15 a joint meeting of the Executive Committees of four rail unions (ASRS, GRWU, UPSS and ASLEF) made a joint call for a national rail strike unless the railway companies agreed to immediate negotiations.

The government offered rail bosses ‘every available soldier in the country’ and on 17 August unions declared a national rail strike in the famous ‘liberty telegram’, which proclaimed: “Your liberty is at stake. All railwaymen must strike at once. The loyalty of each means liberty for all”.

Around 200,000 rail workers took strike action. Organised attacks on parts of the rail system included 1,000 workers besieging a working signal box at Portishead, Bristol. Tracks

were ripped up and telegraph systems damaged. In Derby troops ordered to defend the railway station fixed bayonets and charged unarmed rail workers leading to pitched battles. In Long Eaton strikers impounded trains and it took 100 troops to release them. Chesterfield station burnt to the ground.

The most violent scenes took place in Llanelli, South Wales. Strikers blocked the South Wales mainline stopping the Irish Mail. Magistrates read the Riot Act as strikers and their supporters sang ‘Sospan Fach’ (‘Little Saucepan’) the song of Llanelli Rugby Club. Troops then opened fire on the crowd killing two workers who supported the striking railwaymen.

On August 18 the government offered a Royal Commission to discuss industrial relations and union leaders immediately called the strike off, although it took days for workers to return to work in Manchester, Newcastle and other centres.

RMT Charles Watkins Memorial Lecture September 7 2011 18.00 hours

Mander Hall, NUT offices, Hamilton House, Mabledon Place, London

The guest speaker to deliver this year’s RMT Charles Watkins Memorial Lecture is leading academic Colin Waugh, author of ‘*Plebs: the Lost Legacy of Independent Working Class Education*’, free entry.

The Royal Commission reported in November and failed to meet any of the strikers’ demands. However, the significance of the strike lay in its demonstration of the industrial power of transport workers acting together across shipping, docks, railways and road transport sectors.

The events of 1911 also demonstrated the willingness of railway workers of all grades to act together in solidarity to achieve their aims and undermined the grip of craft sectarianism, which the railway companies relied on to divide and rule their workforce.

Most importantly the 1911

strike pushed leaders of three railway unions (the ASRS, GRWU and UPSS) to put aside their differences and to have the courage to start merger talks, which led in just over 12 months to the National Union of Railwaymen, one of the largest and most important trade unions in 20th century British labour history. ■

FURTHER READING:

Pulling Together: A Popular History of RMT (available free to RMT members from b.denny@rmt.org.uk);

Philip Bagwell, *The Railwaymen: The History of the National Union of Railwaymen* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1963);

Bob Holton, *British Syndicalism 1900-1914: Myths and Realities* (London: Pluto Press, 1976)

PULLING TOGETHER

A Popular History of RMT

New free union publication gives an insight into the struggles, defeats and victories of members over 150 years

Pulling Together gives members an engaging and colourfully illustrated window on the history of the union up to the present day.

It tells the story of how the union developed under very difficult circumstances against very powerful opponents and maintained itself as a democratic, fighting organisation that today

represents members in all sectors and grades of the transport industry.

Pulling Together is available free to members from Unity House, 39 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD with a stamped, addressed envelope or by e-mailing bdenny@rmt.org.uk



STATE OF THE UNION

RMT president Alex Gordon interviews general secretary Bob Crow about the state of transport sector and future possibilities for building the union

At RMT's Annual General Meeting in Fort William recently, Bob Crow warned delegates that the McNulty Review was the biggest attack on railway workers since the 1960s when Dr Beeching axed a third of the rail network.

Meanwhile this government is putting train manufacturing in Britain on death row by handing the Thameslink contract to German company, Siemens. So I asked Bob Crow why these attacks were happening and what the union can do to defend transport workers now and in future?

"The McNulty Review is being used as an instrument by both the Con Dem government and the Labour Party that commissioned this report to break up the railways, emasculate trade unions, get rid of jobs wholesale and attack the terms and conditions of workers.

"Putting the Thameslink contract out to Siemens in Germany is further evidence of their desire to de-industrialise Britain and to dilute the strength of the trade union movement without a democratic mandate to do so," he says in his usual direct manner.

The AGM was also abuzz with talk of a possible merger with sister rail union TSSA to create a new all-grades union.

TSSA general secretary Gerry Doherty has invited RMT for formal talks so the only question really is where do we go from here?

"I hope we have a full-blown merger.

"The only question to ask about a trade union merger is: "will it increase the strength of the workers?

"And the answer is yes, that's why the bosses' right-wing press are attacking the idea.

"We will go into talks with TSSA on a positive note and RMT members will have the final say on any proposed merger between our unions in a secret ballot," he says.

Bob is clear that the benefits of a merged industrial union will include the fact that where TSSA and RMT members work alongside each other, the bosses won't be able to divide them.

"It will mean all of the resources we have between both unions can be used for one purpose - defending workers against the bosses and improving their pay and conditions," he says.

RMT and TSSA members working for Network Rail, Train Operating Companies and London Underground already have a good history of campaigning together against cuts in recent years.

Moreover a larger industrial

union would help other transport workers including for example bus, taxi and road freight workers, shipping and offshore energy members all of whom face cuts to public spending, wages, pensions and jobs.

"It has been proved that by TSSA and RMT campaigning alongside each other trust and faith in each other's abilities has come about.

"We are two specialised transport unions, so other groups of transport and energy workers will naturally fit into what is already well-known as a fighting democratic union.

"This unity will increase our industrial strength as well as our political clout as the size of our Parliamentary group of Labour MPs will increase along with our political influence," he says underlining the theme of unity that has marked out his tenure

as RMT general secretary which is in its tenth year.

The last decade under Bob's leadership has certainly been memorable and RMT has won a reputation as a union that stands up for its members.

What is the key RMT legacy that can make a new merged union a success for transport workers?

"I think over the last ten years I have tried to get unity in the union.

"That does not mean not being able to have disagreements.

"But it does mean respecting other people's views that you disagree with and uniting behind decisions of the majority.

"I think if smaller, but effective unions like ASLEF, Nautilus and URTU could come together with TSSA and ourselves, we could all leave a legacy of a stronger union defending workers and improving life in general for good, honest working men and women," he says.

During the same period attacks on seafarers, bus, rail and transport workers are increasingly linked to European

Union transport 'liberalisation', state aid and 'public procurement' rules.

Earlier this year Bob met EU Transport Commissioner Siim Kallas over his new EU White Paper on Transport, which includes a ban on the right to strike by transport workers. What lessons are there for transport workers from this neo-liberal EU agenda?

"The EU Transport Commissioner demonstrated in his White Paper that the EU has always been and continues to be a vehicle for privatisation.

"The White Paper sets out a vision for wholesale privatisation of all transport services in Europe; rail buses, docks, ferries and aircraft, coupled with swingeing new anti-trade union laws, which mean a minimum service must be provided whenever there is strike action.

"Basically, EU anti-union laws aim to defeat the purpose of taking strike action, since the trade unions would be required to allow workers to cross their own picket lines.

"This must be resisted by every transport trade union

across Europe.

"As our motto says, 'Unity is Strength' - that is another reason why these merger talks have come at the right time," he says.

Bob's straight forward and effective message has clearly energised RMT members and given them the confidence to

stand up and be counted, defend themselves and win victories. It has also inspired a new generation of trade unionists to believe that trade unions exist primarily to represent their members and their class and that is an outlook and a legacy we can all be proud of.

SAVE OUR RAILWAYS RALLY AND LOBBY OF PARLIAMENT

12.30pm Tuesday October 25 2011

Methodist Central Hall, Westminster, London

The government is producing a Rail White Paper this autumn and if it decides to implement the McNulty report, it would further fragment the railway and shift even more power to private train operators. This is the biggest attack on passengers and rail workers' jobs, pay and conditions since privatisation.

Every available RMT member should attend this meeting and stand shoulder to shoulder with your colleagues on October 25 to Save our Railways. Branch Secretaries should note that attendance at the Rally is a legitimate item for Branch expenditure. Further details and dedicated publicity to follow.

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JANUARY 2009 TO DECEMBER 2011



REGION 2

MANCHESTER AND NW ENGLAND

CRAIG JOHNSTON

RECENTLY ELECTED REGIONAL ORGANISER



REGION 3

NW ENGLAND AND NORTH WALES

ALAN TYRRELL

JANUARY 2009 TO DECEMBER 2011



REGION 4

NORTH EAST

MICKY THOMPSON

JANUARY 2010 TO DECEMBER 2012



REGION 5

YORKSHIRE AND LINCOLNSHIRE

PETE MARCH

JANUARY 2010 TO DECEMBER 2012



REGION 6

MIDLANDS

PAUL WALKER

JANUARY 2011 TO DECEMBER 2013



REGION 7

SOUTH WALES AND WEST

OWEN HERBERT

JANUARY 2010 TO DECEMBER 2012



REGION 8

SOUTH WEST

DAVE LETCHER

JANUARY 2010 TO DECEMBER 2012



REGION 9

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GARRY HASSELL

JANUARY 2009 TO DECEMBER 2011



REGION 10

LONDON AND ANGLIA

MICK LYNCH

JANUARY 2009 TO DECEMBER 2011



REGION 11

LONDON TRANSPORT

JANINE BOOTH

JANUARY 2010 TO DECEMBER 2012



REGION 12

WESSEX

SEAN HOYLE

JANUARY 2011 TO DECEMBER 2013

SHIPPING & OFFSHORE GRADES

All terms of office are January 2009 to December 2011



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MALCOLM DUNNING



Region 2

TONY LLOYD



Region 3

MARK CARDEN



Region 4

ANDY GORDON



OFFSHORE

JAMES LAING

RECENTLY ELECTED ASSISTANT
SHIPPING SECRETARY

AGM 2011 FORT WILLIAM

A webcast of RMT's AGM can be viewed in the members area of the union's website



Delegates to RMT's annual general meeting in Fort William resolved to fight the McNulty report, which recommends huge job cuts fragmentation and more privatisation in the rail industry, pledged to defend bus services, pensions, publicly-owned ferry services and to oppose anti-union laws, social dumping caused by EU rules and the victimisation of trade unionists around the world

NO TO MCNULTY

The union called for a powerful alliance of unions and rail passenger groups to oppose Sir Roy McNulty's controversial new report on the future of rail.

The government-commissioned study recommends a 30 per cent cut in rail funding to be paid for by:

- Pay freezes and longer hours
- Inferior conditions for new entrants
- Cuts in infrastructure and signal workers
- Driver Only Operation
- De-staffing of stations and ticket offices
- Outsourcing of labour
- Attacks on railway pensions
- The breakup of Network Rail
- The further attack on the freight industry
- Reduced safety standards

- Increased fares
- Greater commercial freedom for the TOCs
- Threats to regional and rural lines

RMT general secretary Bob Crow warned the government not to implement the report, telling delegates the union would fight every step of the way.

He said that the union had already started to campaign against McNulty, producing a briefing to activists and a booklet for all activists and all members to explain McNulty in more depth.

"We are going to hound the government and McNulty down in every single town and every single depot.

"We are going to put a lot of resources into this he won't know what's hit him.

"We are going to stop these attacks on working people and we ask you to join us," he said.

Bob acknowledged that the

McNulty report had highlighted many problems that the union had consistently raised in recent years, including the expense of franchises, fragmentation and growing public subsidy, which has risen to £4.6 billion annually.

But he added: "McNulty doesn't even consider nationalisation whatsoever in his report.

"Yet you can take back the franchises and it won't cost you a penny.

"All you have to do is wait for the franchise to be over, say thanks very much and take the keys back," he said.

He said that McNulty was a declaration of a war against railway workers.

"We have to unite with passenger groups and other unions to defeat it," he said.

David Gott, Bassetlaw said that McNulty was "more, pure, undiluted, Thatcherite policies.

"We have been here in 1982,

with a report that some people may have heard of, the Serpell Report.

"Under the Serpell Report, if they'd have had their way, you would have had an East Coast Main Line, a West Coast Main Line, a line going off to Exeter and that would have been your lot.

"They might hide it under different names, whether it is a Serpell Report, whether it is a McNulty Report or whatever, the fact is, the railway would never be any good until you put bloody railwaymen in charge of it because we are the only people that have got the knowledge about our industry," he said.

Labour MP and RMT parliamentary convener John McDonnell MP slammed McNulty as a recipe for "further fragmentation of the railway network and cutting jobs".

"We've done a job of exposing McNulty but

AGM 2011 - FORT WILLIAM

government will still try to implement it.

"It will mean job cuts and lowering conditions, all for more profit," he said.

McDonnell noted that the Labour front bench was opposing the breakup of Network Rail.

But despite this success he warned that the trade union movement had been left with no choice but to "bring down the government" before the next election.

"They are systematically dismantling the welfare state before our eyes.

"Our role now is to bring down the government, we cannot wait," he said.

FIGHTING THE CUTS

Conference called on the TUC to organise protests in every major city of the country against the Con Dem government's austerity measures and for a campaign for investment in services and people and to oust the government from office.

Mick Tosh, Portsmouth said that the country had a government with no majority and no mandate, yet it had launched an ideological war against the working class.

"The huge protest on March 26 was a fantastic experience but it was quickly followed up by the Lib Dem Business Secretary Vince Cable dismissing the demonstration by announcing "we aren't going to change policy because of that."

He said that the trade union movement needed a rolling

campaign to bring the message to the streets all the time.

Peter Pinkney, Teesside said that the TUC leadership should be listening to people and carry on and show leadership.

"I want you to go back to your Trades Councils and other groups and get them involved and send a clear message to David Cameron: Stuff your cuts, stuff your big society and stuff your 'We're all in this together'!", he said to applause.

Defending pensions

Conference backed calls for an increase in the basic state pension and for the retention of the second state pension to be linked annually to average earnings, the Retail Price Index or 2.5 per cent – whichever is the highest.

The uprating of state, public and many private pensions in line with the Consumer Price Index (CPI) instead of the Retail Price Index (RPI) is motivated by a desire to drive down the value of pensions.

The CPI is consistently lower than the RPI, meaning that pensioners will see a long-term decline in the real value of their pensions, estimated by Lord Hutton in the Interim Report on the Public Service Pensions Commission as a total loss of 15 per cent of retirement income for every individual pensioner.

Conference agreed that Britain already had one of the lowest state pension rates and to reduce it further by linking it to CPI would drive more people, particularly women, into poverty.

Dave Gilbey, South Devon Bus said that pensions were deferred wages.

"We need a decent pension across the board for everyone in this country," he said.

Dave criticised Stagecoach for gambling its pension scheme on the stock exchange.

"You are gambling with deferred wages and if there is a collapse in the market you get nothing," he said.

Jackie Darby said that the government's raising of the pension age for women to 66 is "outstandingly bad".

"Our state pension is pitiful and it is wrong for well-fed politicians, who will get a fat pension whenever they choose to retire, to tell us that we have to work longer, pay more and get less when we are eventually able to stop work," she said.

NO TO EU SOCIAL DUMPING

The union backed a campaign against a proposed trade agreement being secretly negotiated between India and the European Union, due to be agreed in December, that will allow transnational corporations to bring in cheap labour to work in the UK on extremely low rates of pay.

Moving the motion, Gary Abbott, Bristol pointed out to shocked delegates that the controversial deal would hurt workers in Britain many of whom would be RMT members as well as workers in India yet no-one is being told it is even being discussed.

"You share your lack of

knowledge with most of the elected members of both the British and European Parliaments.

"The reason for this is the few senior government figures that know the details have kept it secret as it is too sensitive to be in the public sphere.

"It is about the irreversible trade commitments allowing transnational corporations to bring in cheap labour from outside the EU and allow these workers to work within the EU.

"The UK is the main and very willing target for these corporations and it will undermine UK labour conditions and displace UK workers.

"Indian labour will be flown in and they will be paid at Indian rates.

"These workers will not be classed as immigrants and the company will be holding their visas," he said.

If the new trade deal is agreed would see Indian firms such as TATA who operate in the UK transferring India's highly skilled IT, technical and financial workers to Britain at minimum rates of pay and without collective bargaining protection, legally paying them below the rate of the job and undercutting workers in Britain.

In return Western capital would have unprecedented investment opportunities into the Indian economy, particularly in the financial and retail sectors, threatening millions of jobs in India.

Gary said that as part of the deal was the Indian state able to



AGM 2011 - FORT WILLIAM

Bob Crow

have 'Mode 4 access' to the EU-allowing the transfer of cheap non-unionised labour to Britain.

He said that the World Trade Organisation claims 'Mode 4' is not immigration, but rather 'temporary labour movement'.

"Union basher Vince Cable is aware of Mode 4.

"It's the politics of the mad house and will do irreparable damage to manufacturing and service industries," he said.

General secretary Bob Crow said that sister rail unions in India were opposed to Mode 4 and the India-EU free trade deal as it would have a detrimental effect on their members and India's own manufacturing base.

"It's social dumping - plain and simple," he said.

Mick Stubbs, Southampton shipping said that Mode 4 was not going to create a single job for any person in the UK.

"All it is going to promote is the UK as a sweatshop of Europe and the race to the bottom starts here with 'Mode 4'," he said.

DEFENDING TRADE UNION RIGHTS

Conference reaffirmed the union's demand for the removal of anti-trade union laws and pledged to oppose any new legal threats proposed by the

Con Dem Coalition.

Delegates noted that the Coalition government, encouraged by the CBI, the Institute of Directors and right-wing pressure groups like the Taxpayers Alliance and Policy Exchange, were demanding still more draconian measures against trade unions.

These include banning strike action, higher ballot turnouts, removing collective bargaining rights, extending the qualifying period for unfair dismissal from one year to two and introducing fees Employment Tribunals.

Jackie Darby said that it was to RMT's great credit that it had won significant victories in spite of draconian anti-union laws.

She called for an alliance of organisations to fight to remove the anti-Trade Union laws and re-establish our hard won rights.

"The big advantage in the alliance with the National Shop Stewards Network is in its co-ordinating role.

"The NSSN is not subject to sequestration and other legal curbs and, working together, the TUs and the NSSN can galvanise the movement, that time has now come," she said.

Antony, Rowntree, East Ham said that the government and London mayor Boris Johnson was being extremely hypocritical calling for proposals that say at least 50 per cent of the eligible electorate must vote in favour of a strike.

"He is not talking about 50 per cent of those who vote, he is on about 50 per cent of the membership and it certainly wasn't 50 per cent of the electorate of the people of London who put him in office.

And, out of the people who did vote for Johnson, a significant number of them are regretting the day that they did," he said.

DEFENDING REPS

Two sacked Tube workers who were recently reinstated following a long fight by the union formed a focal point in

the debate on protecting members from management attacks.

Trade union activists Arwyn Thomas and Eamon Lynch were sacked earlier this year on spurious grounds.

However managers agreed to give them back their jobs following industrial action.

Mick Tosh said that RMT members were coming under attack "because we are an effective trade union".

Insisting that the union must come to fore to defend reps who get picked on by managers, Mr Tosh recalled the second time he was sacked and the "great support" he had received from the union.

Assistant general secretary Pat Sikorski hailed the pair's reinstatement as a "tremendous victory for the union.

"Eamon and Arwyn were clearly sacked because of their trade union activities on London Underground," he said.

DEFENDING WOMEN

Delegates agreed that government cuts the disproportionately affected women and single mothers in particular and agreed to oppose refuge closures.

Moving the unanimously backed motion, Janet Cassidy, North Clyde pointed out that women were more exposed to the cuts due to childcare responsibilities and low-paid work.

"Women are typically poorer than men and they make up

most of the single parents," she said.

She expressed solidarity with public-sector workers going on strike on June 30, adding: "Sixty-eight per cent of the half-million jobs due to go in the public sector are done by women".

Delegates also drew conference's attention to mass closures of women's refuges across the country.

"It's the biggest social issue affecting women today - it can take life and ruin many lives," said Mandy Evans, Swansea.

"I urge the union to politically campaign to raise awareness and help stop the closures of these facilities."

Thandiwe Mabidoko, Surrey and Hants said there should be no hiding place for abusers.

"We all have brothers and sisters and if you see someone being abused don't keep quiet," she said.

FIGHTING FOR DECENT WAGES

LU Engineering branch successfully presented a motion calling for wage increases to keep pace with the real level of inflation, especially from companies that continue to impose inflationary price rises, make monopoly profits and hand out inflationary dividend payments.

The motion also called for higher taxation on monopoly profits, and a clamp down on tax evasion and avoidance, to help fund state pensions, benefits and public services.



Gary Abbott

AGM 2011 - FORT WILLIAM



Joe Todd

Jackie Darby called for concerted action in a wages offensive against the huge vested interests of business and profit.

"The measures promoted here must be a starting point in restoring decent living standards and fairness.

"Large corporations pay a pittance in tax compared with the workers who create their wealth," she said to applause.

Backing the motion, Bob Crow asked why was it that when energy bills and the price of raw materials the employers pay it, but when it comes to workers' wages they say, "Hang on a minute, we can't afford that cost any more"?

"Our job as a trade union is to maintain our members' living standards and improve them because we want to share the wealth of the company.

"We make most of the wealth and therefore some of that wealth should be fairly distributed," he said.

INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

A number of sister transport unions attended conference and brought solidarity greetings from around the world.

Canadian trade union leader Bob Kinnear brought RMT delegates to their feet after he

declared his willingness to go to jail for his members if they employer gave him no choice.

Bob, the president of the Local 113 Amalgamated Transit Union in Toronto, exploded the myth that the city was "progressive".

"If you think Toronto is a city that is pro-labour your view is out of date," he said, pointing out that the union is not even allowed to strike.

"Our job is not to be popular with the public or the media, it is to be a strong advocate for the members," he said. "And man do working people need strong advocates.

"We will maintain the fight and if it means going to jail for taking strike action then we will do it," he said.

VIVA CUBA

Cuban trade union leader Juan Jose Polo Vazquez told RMT delegates that only the system of "socialism" is capable of dealing with the world's problems.

Mr Vazquez thanked the union for its solidarity with Cuba in frustrating the United States continuing illegal blockade.

"I bring my thankfulness for all RMT solidarity, against the blockade and for the liberation

of our brothers the Miami Five," he said.

He said that the Cuban government was "investing in transport" and described how "we as a union are carrying out strategy to assimilate members with new technology".

Contrasting the role of trade unions in Cuba with the situation in Britain, Mr Vazquez said that Cuban workers were "fully consulted" on government policies and developments in the economy.

"All unions are involved in this process at the neighbourhood level and eight million Cubans are giving their input.

"Only in a socialist system can we win and defeat all difficulties," he said.

Cuba Solidarity Campaign spokesman Bob Oram added: "You have within your RMT rulebook the commitment to socialism.

"And the Cuban system offers an alternative to the world," he said.

NEW YORK

US Transport Workers Union Local 100 president John Sammuelsen, representing workers on the New York subway, brought solidarity greetings to conference.

Mr Sammuelsen, whose union represents 38,000 transport workers in New York City, explained to the delegates that his union and other "militant unions" had been dodging the "red bullets" from the media and employers in the US who are determined to keep labour standards at low levels.

"Employers and their mouthpieces in the Rupert Murdoch media empire gladly throw out the commie label to try and divide us and pit us against one another.

"As the famous former leader of our union and founder Mike Quill said: 'I'd rather be a red than a rat.

"We have been accused of being radical, intractable and malcontent.

"Just like Quill, we would plead guilty to all those charges.

"The dictionary defines radical as one who favour drastic economic or political reforms, and I would imagine that is everyone in this room," he said.

He said that circumstances for transport workers in New York were still dire and he went on the offensive against subway transit boss Jay Walder.

"He's called me intractable in the press because our union refused to sell our members jobs in favour of a whole bunch of concessions.

"TWU 100 is never going to fold to people like Jay Walder who look at us like we are a bunch of pond scum," he said.

But he said they had successfully reinstated over 900 workers who had originally been sacked by Walder.

Detailing the union's fight strategy against attacks from Walder, Mr Sammuelsen said: "We're considered malcontents because we stand up for basic rights on the job.

"We enforce safety in the workplace even if it means we shut down work to achieve it.

"The labour movement has ceded our greatest weapon the work stoppage.

"But there are so many laws now that if you breathe the

AGM 2011 - FORT WILLIAM

word strike there are potential fines and jail time.

Union leaders don't want to jeopardise themselves or their organisations and members jobs.

But he insisted that simply investing in politicians in the US to convince them to see it "the workers way" was not enough.

"It's a grave error and one that TWU 100 is looking to get away from rapidly.

"The US labour movement could learn a lot from you folks in the UK.

"The money needs to go into organising members to put ourselves into a position where we can fight.

"Taking RMT's lead would be considered radical but to the TWU 100 it makes common sense," he said.

Bringing an extended standing ovation, Mr Sammelsun added: "We're looking to follow RMT in a more internationalist outlook in the trade union movement, which is increasingly important".

KIWI RAIL WORKERS FIGHT TO SAVE JOBS

It will be depressingly familiar to UK rail workers, but their brothers and sisters in New Zealand are fighting to keep alive rail workshops threatened with extinction by a right-wing government that has turned its back on local skills and placed a huge rolling-stock order in China.

The outgoing president of New Zealand's Rail Maritime and Transport Union, Jim Kelly, was at RMT's AGM, bringing greetings alongside general secretary Wayne Butson, and building support and solidarity for the campaign to save the country's train-making industry.

Ironically, Jim left his native Scotland in the early 1980s to escape the ravages of the Thatcher government – only to find that the New Zealand government privatised its rail network even before John Major sold off Britain's.

After years of seeing the assets sweated and starved of long-term investment by privateers, and after intense lobbying by RMTU and other unions, Helen Clark's Labour government renationalised a re-branded KiwiRail, alongside ferry services, in 2008 and earmarked NZ\$500 million for new rolling stock, with more for electrification.

That drew a massive sigh of relief – but the election of a National Party government in 2008 saw the new premier, 'smiling assassin' John Key, announce that the vast bulk of the investment would be spent overseas.

"It makes no economic sense at all to have these trains built abroad, when New Zealand has the skills and the capacity to do the job," says Jim.

"The government is investing half a billion dollars in new

JOHN COGGER YOUTH AWARD



Emma Baldwin receives her award from Bob Crow

The winner of the 2011 John Cogger youth award was Emma Baldwin of Willesden branch. Emma was a delegate to last year's AGM at the age of 23 following a rule change in 2009 to lower the term of membership to become a delegate.

"I am proud to be a member of a fighting union and this is what first attracted me to the RMT. "Joining the railway at 16 was a daunting experience and it is thanks to Watford branch and Stuart Cameron that I have become the activist I am today,"

she said.

Emma attended the 2008 annual young members' course attached to the AGM in Dublin and attended various courses and activities, one of the most memorable was being on the Solidarity Brigade to Cuba in 2008.

"To say this was an experience of my life is definitely an understatement.

"I will never forget being in Revolution Square on May Day and watching a million Cubans celebrate International Workers Day with such passion," she said.

rolling stock, yet KiwiRail has given notice that nearly a quarter of the skilled workers at our workshops in Dunedin and Lower Hutt are to lose their jobs.

"Not only are they turning tax-payers into benefit claimants, but they will be hitting the private sector because all of that investment, the workers' wages, the lot, will be spent overseas, and not in Dunedin and Hutt.

As with the Thameslink contract here in Britain, the NZ government took no heed of the social and wider economic consequences of exporting the order.

"With no new orders on the books we know that unless there is a change of heart the future of both workshops will be bleak."

But with a close eye on the election due in November, and with Labour committed to clawing the contracts back, Jim

remains upbeat.

"We need to pile the pressure on and we have been working hard to win support for the campaign, with public meetings, Facebook and Twitter campaigns and online petition, and the response has been great."

RMTU promises that the arrival of the first tranche of wagons would be greeted with pickets, blockades and other direct action, with support promised from sister unions.

Politically, the campaign has won massive backing from ordinary people who know the importance of the workshops and the jobs, it has also been backed by chambers of commerce – which recognise that the workshops are worth NZ\$30 million in local trade – and by local media.

It seems, as with Derby, that everyone is lined up against the government.

"We can win this," said Jim.



Thandiwe Mabidoko

UNION LEARNING AT FORT WILLIAM

Mike Sargent of the RMT Union Learning Fund addressed a fringe meeting at AGM to explain the role it plays in the union

An RMT AGM is always a special occasion with activists coming together from all over the country to take on the running of our union as its supreme governing body.

This year the RMT Learning team organised a fringe meeting as part of the proceedings to familiarise delegates with the work carried out by union learning reps and to ensure that the benefits of the learning agenda is well understood.

This is why RMT Learning has annually held ULR conferences, seminars for branch secretaries and attended grades conferences and advisory conferences in order to build an understanding of the work of ULRs and support for what they do.

The meeting included a

presentation about the learning agenda, case studies illustrating the benefits to members and a very interesting and robust question and answer session around ULRs within our union.

The question and answer question was key. It was a chance for delegates to really ensure they understood ULRs and what the learning agenda can do for the members, and the union, as well as why employers would buy in.

The Union Learning Fund (ULF) was set up in 1998 in response to a government report that highlighted the skills gap between the UK and the rest of Europe. It was felt that the people best placed to address the issue were workers themselves and in order to achieve this trade unions were asked to promote and support a

new kind of workplace representative the Union Learning Representative (ULR).

In 2002 ULRs, under the Employment Relations Act, gained statutory recognition. Since this time ULF supported projects, such as RMT Learning, have together trained 22,000 Union Learning Reps, covered over 700 workplaces and created more than three quarters of a million learning opportunities

I became a ULR within my company South Eastern Trains, elected and supported by my branch, and not long after I obtained full time seconded release to work in the project.

Over the years I have worked through one project after another, funded by the ULF, to raise awareness, persuade employers that staff

development is worthwhile, recruit ULRs and generally support members to learn.

Three years ago, RMT submitted a bid to set up the RMT Learning project with the help of ULF funding and, through running events in workplaces, RMT Learning has found solid support throughout the union.

The RMT Learning Team who put on the fringe meeting were; Graham Chesters, Development Worker (North), John Dougherty Development Worker (North), Mike Sargent, Shipping Development Worker, and delegate Ivor Riddell Development Worker (South East). Thanks to fringe chair Peter Pinkney and all the many delegates and guests that attended.



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REMEMBERING SLAVERY

The National Maritime Museum in Greenwich holds events every year to mark International Slavery Remembrance day on August 23

The transatlantic slave trade was responsible for the forced migration of between 12-15 million people from Africa to the Western Hemisphere from the middle of the 15th century to the end of the 19th century.

The trafficking of Africans by the major European countries during this period is sometimes referred to by African scholars as the *Mafa* ('great disaster' in Swahili). It's now considered a crime against humanity.

The slave trade not only led to the violent transportation overseas of millions of Africans but also to the deaths of many millions more. Nobody knows the total number of people who died during slave raiding, transportation and

imprisonment or in horrendous conditions during the so-called Middle Passage, the voyage from Africa to the Americas.

August 23 has been designated by UNESCO as International Slavery Remembrance Day. On that day in 1791 the first successful slave uprising in the western hemisphere took place in Haiti. This event led to the island's independence and was a major step towards the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade.

The National Maritime Museum in Greenwich has marked the day for the past 10 years to highlight transatlantic slavery as a maritime history. It has now evolved into a well-established day of workshops,

talks, walks, young people's activities and gallery tours culminating in a unique commemorative ceremony by the River Thames.

This year's events will explore the museum's vast collections relating to the transatlantic slave trade as well as focussing on the many local connections to be found in the Greenwich World Heritage site.

On the day young people can take part in David Neita's very popular *Power of Poetry* workshops where they can create their own verses 'to move the masses'. There will also be a workshop where parents and children can contribute to a giant display of family treasures.

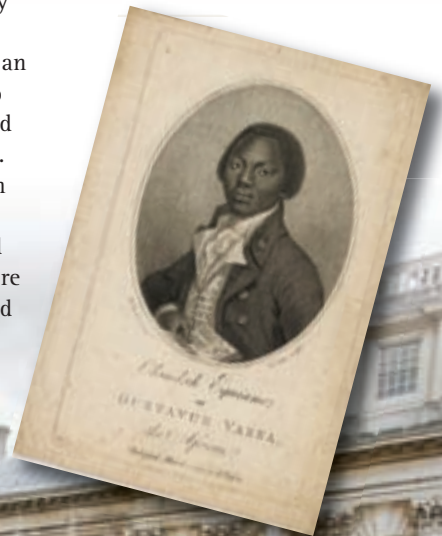
Enter our archives and uncover true stories of slavery and resistance from rare and revealing documents. Join in an Ethnovox gospel workshop to learn the real messages behind some of our best-loved songs.

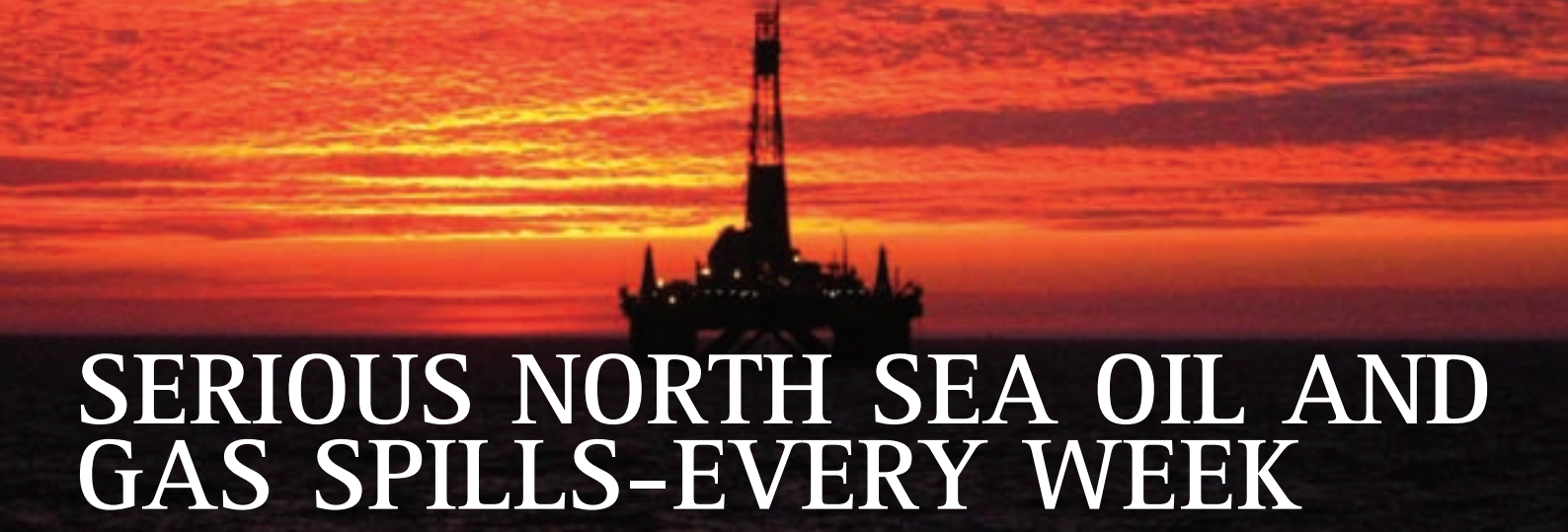
Join SI Martin on a hidden history trail around the museum, Greenwich Park and the waterfront to find out more about writers like Equiano and

Sancho as well as the lives of hundreds of sailors from Africa and the Caribbean over the centuries.

To find out about the history of human bondage throughout history, listen to Professor Jeremy Black give his first public talk based on his forthcoming book '*Slavery - A New Global History*'.

Gallery tours around the Slavery, Trade and Empire gallery will be led by the actor, Burt Caesar, who will also be the Master of ceremonies for the day. There will be an additional tour of the Queen's House, where you can unlock the hidden stories behind the collections in this stately house. All events are free and family friendly. All are welcome. ■





SERIOUS NORTH SEA OIL AND GAS SPILLS—EVERY WEEK

Union calls for prosecutions following more than 100 potentially lethal North Sea platform oil and gas spills in two years

Leaked documents have revealed that serious spills of oil and gas from offshore North Sea platforms are occurring at the rate of one a week, undermining oil companies' claims to be doing everything possible to improve the safety of rigs.

Documents obtained by *The Guardian* newspaper reveal leaks voluntarily declared by the oil companies to the safety regulator, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), in a database set up after the Piper Alpha disaster of 6 July 1988 which killed 167 workers.

RMT offshore organiser Jake Molloy welcomed the "naming and shaming" of offenders and called for 'rogue operators' to be prosecuted.

"We need the veil of secrecy and anonymity lifted.

"Hiding behind a clause in the Health and Safety at Work Act that makes releasing such material commercially sensitive does not serve the industry well.

"We have learned lessons from Piper Alpha and I believe the likelihood of another Piper is remote as long as we don't have rogue operators prepared to take chances," he said.

Shell has emerged as one of the top offenders despite promising to clean up its act five years ago after a large accident in which two oil workers died.

They reveal for the first time the names of companies that have caused more than 100 potentially lethal and largely unpublicised oil and gas spills in the North Sea in 2009 and 2010.

The documents, released under freedom of information legislation, record leaks classed by the regulator as "major" or "significant", which, if ignited, could cause many deaths.

The HSE documents also undermine claims by the major oil companies that last year's Deepwater Horizon explosion in the Gulf of Mexico that killed 11 workers was unlikely to ever happen to them.

Jake Molloy said that Deepwater Horizon showed that "even the most up-to-date, cutting-edge safety technology can go wrong if it is not maintained properly and not operated by competent people.

"We have been very lucky in the UK that we have not had another major incident with multiple fatalities.

"We have come very close on several occasions, very, very close.

"It is more luck than good management in some cases and some operators don't give a damn.

"Because of the high price of oil, they are cutting corners and some of them are overdue for prosecution," he said.

The two rigs with the most frequent oil spills are owned by Shell and the French conglomerate Total, yet Shell regularly claim in public that safety is their most important commitment.

The Shell-run platform responsible for the most spills, Brent Charlie, first began pumping oil in 1976 from its location 115 miles north-east of Scotland.

The documents record seven leaks on it over the two-year period, with the worst happening on 26 April last year when four tonnes of leaked gas from one of its columns led to a shutdown of production.

On another occasion, on September 30 2009, safety inspectors ordered Shell to stop producing oil from Brent Charlie after gas leaked from its ventilation system.

The HSE has formally threatened to close down some operations on Brent Charlie within two weeks over undisclosed safety issues. Since January this year, Shell has stopped exporting oil from the rig and three others in the Brent oilfield as the company struggles to put right safety problems.

Critics say the oldest rigs, built in the 70s when oil was found in the North Sea, are the most dangerous and fear safety is neglected as the platforms come to the end of their productive commercial life.

Shell came under intense criticism over

its safety record in 2006 when a judge ruled that it could have prevented the deaths of two men if it had properly repaired a hole in a corroding pipeline on a platform in the Brent field. In the same year, one of Shell's own safety consultants, Bill Campbell, alleged that safety procedures in the North Sea had been ignored for years.

Shell's then chief executive, Jereon van der Veer, admitted in a private email at the time that the company had a second-rate safety record and pledged to spend substantial sums of money to improve it.

Other major oil companies which are high in the spills league include the Danish conglomerate Maersk and Canadian firm Talisman, which both have a rig with five leaks. Four spills came from a rig known as Mungo Etap, which is owned by BP.

Whistleblowers also told *The Guardian* newspaper that the list of spills recorded in the documents is the tip of the iceberg.

Other accidents are kept quiet because workers fear they cannot report them in case they lose their jobs. One said that although everyone is formally told to report anything that goes wrong, staff adhere to an informal code to remain silent to avoid a halt in drilling that loses money for the companies.

The disclosures have provoked criticism of the government over its claims that regulation of the oil industry in the North Sea is one of the toughest in the world. Energy secretary Chris Huhne, a Lib Dem MP, claimed earlier this year that the UK's safety and environmental regime was "one of the most robust in the world".

But Labour MP for Aberdeen North Frank Doran said that Chris Huhne needed to have a rethink. "There is a continuing problem, of particularly gas leakages, and that is a sign that the infrastructure in the North Sea is ageing and that maintenance and investment is still not sufficient to ensure the safety of offshore workers.

"There is still a long way to go," he said.

PENSION VICTORY FOR SEAFARERS AND OFFSHORE WORKERS

RMT has won a significant victory that will see seafarers and offshore workers included in the automatic enrolment provisions of the Pensions Act 2008.

The victory, confirmed in a letter from Pensions Minister Steve Webb to RMT Parliamentary Convenor John McDonnell confirmed that: we are proposing in broad terms that the Pensions Act 2008 provisions should apply to seafarers and offshore workers in the same way that they apply to land-based workers.

"With this approach the location of the employer would not be a key determining factor in deciding whether an individual is ordinarily working in GB, nor would their nationality or place of residence, or indeed the country of registration of the ship".

RMT executive committee member Malcolm Dunning had noticed the exclusion of seafarers while investigating the possibilities of gaining pension provision for seafarers working for shipping companies where there was no pension scheme, using Norfolk Line [DFDS] as an example.

"Many seafarers have no pension provision at all and there are significant numbers who have been in the Merchant Navy scheme but have moved to companies that don't have provision who face a void in their pension entitlements.

"I trawled through the Act to find that seafarers and offshore workers were, once more, actually exempt despite the fact that there had been no consultation with the union," he said.

RMT's Parliamentary group raised the issue with the government and John McDonnell MP secured a meeting with Pensions Minister Steven Webb who confirmed that it would be possible to change the legislation but it would be "complicated".

On July 13, while the union was meeting to consider asking seafarers to come forward as examples of the effects of this exemption, the minister confirmed in writing that seafarers and offshore workers would be now included in the auto enrolment provisions.

"This is a rare victory for shipping which could have a big impact within the industry and it is a great example of how effective our Parliamentary group is," said Malcolm. ■

President's column



DEFENDING WORKERS AND DEMOCRACY

Working people all over the world in increasing numbers are turning again to their trade unions, which are gaining renewed relevance by fighting back against attacks on workers' rights and freedoms, the policies of austerity and wage cuts, which it is promised will restore profitability to a tired and bankrupt political and economic system.

Global capitalism recycling the dogmas of 'neoliberalism' – an ideology that has prevailed in the UK now for 35 years – is mounting a frontal assault on the welfare state. Monopoly capitalism's British enforcers Cameron, Clegg, Osborne and Cable are redoubling their attacks on our class by threatening trade unions with further anti-union legislation if we dare stand up to defend our members.

Yet have just received the welcome news of the reinstatement of our loyal members, Eamonn Lynch and Arwyn Thomas by London Underground and I know that you will join me in extending warmest solidarity greetings to all trade unionists taking strike action on June 30 to defend pensions in the largest coordinated strike movement in this country for many years.

It is a disgrace, however, that the leader of the Labour Party, Ed Miliband saw fit to attack the strike.

The so-called leader of the opposition can barely lead his own party and he certainly isn't leading much opposition to this illegitimate and unpopular government. In fact the pension attacks at the centre of the current dispute were designed by John Hutton, a minister in the previous Labour government, who was appointed to carry out his pensions review by that government, as was Sir Roy McNulty who recently published his "Value for money review of GB rail".

This Con-Dem coalition lacks even the legitimacy of a general election victory for its policies, which amount to implementing the austerity diktats of the finance capitalists, the banks, the monopolists of the EU and the IMF.

Today democracy itself is now an impediment to the policies of privatisation and wage cuts, which

they advocate as a solution to the crisis of their economic system. In Britain the great victories of our forefathers and mothers are all under threat from a new feudal era, where power is exercised by technocrats on behalf of finance capital.

No social or political gains can now be taken for granted. Capitalism in its current phase is a decadent system in decline, which has no more use for democratic legitimacy. No electorate in the world ever voted for railway privatisation. Yet, no matter, whatever the financial markets demand, they must have.

Rail privatisation is now being extended across the European Union – as RMT has predicted – as part of the EU's new 'Single European Railway Area', to appease PFI profiteers, 'outsourcing' rackets and other financial interests and against the wishes of workers and voters. Capitalism now stands in opposition to government by consent and defends arbitrary rule by unelected technocrats. We will continue to fight to make governments accountable to those they rule over.

Our fighting, democratic trade union stands in irreconcilable opposition to finance capital's attacks on democracy. What is a trade union after all? It is the distilled experience of day-to-day democracy practised by working people. In our branches and regional councils week after week we teach and relearn the importance of democratic debate and decision-making and above all of collective responsibility.

To all delegates to this the parliament of our union, especially to all first-time delegates, I remind you all of your great responsibility. We will at all times be guided by our Rule Book and our Standing Orders, which are binding on all of us. Myself and all the officers and staff are here to assist you in making your decisions. I wish you all good luck.

*This is an extract from the president's address to the 2011 RMT AGM. See the full speech on RMTv:

www.rmtv.org.uk/video/video90/index.html

Alex Gordon

ORGANISING CATERING WORKERS



Alan Pottage, head of RMT's Organising and Education outlines the union's campaign to recruit Rail Gourmet and Select Service Partners workers

Activists from the union's catering grades conference met with assistant general secretary Pat Sikorski, regional organiser Brian Whitehead, the organising unit and the national executive recently to work out a strategy that would see organisation amongst catering workers greatly improve.

The workforce employed by Rail Gourmet and Select Service Partners have been prioritised because as it has been a difficult area to organise these workers in the past.

One big problem is the high turnover of staff. After all, that's what happens in a low pay sector. Many workers don't hang about when a slightly better job becomes available. Incidentally, RMT always argues that improving pay and conditions is the best way for an employer to avoid a high turnover of staff. If you pay your workers a decent wage and treat them with dignity and respect then off course they will not want to leave.

It should also be remembered that the union has members within the catering industry with over thirty years RMT membership so there is definitely still a hard core of catering workers who have worked since the days of British Rail and Travellers Fare.

WORKPLACE VISITS

It is obvious that the only way the union can make progress is to ensure that branches commit themselves to monthly activities in the various workplaces. One-off visits are less effective.

It's common sense really. RMT gets its strength from our

local members so it's vitally important that local branches commit to organising all workers within their area of responsibility.

We know high turnover is a problem. But the solution is not to give up and not attempt to build our organisation so we need to ensure monthly visits take place. If our branches do this we can conquer the problem.





So, the outcome of our meeting with catering workers was to agree a programme of workplace visits. A schedule was drawn up and each branch would meet the evening before the recruitment exercise in order to fix future organising dates in diaries and discuss any concerns they may have. Unfortunately we have experience of past failures where we have been unable to sustain regular workplace visits. Therefore we know that the only way this campaign will succeed in the

long term is if our local branches to keep speaking to the workers.

I am sure members reading this article will agree that it's always a good thing to see a high profile RMT presence in their workplace. The union has produced hundreds of different leaflets and posters over the years that allow our message to be put across on notice boards but nothing beats seeing RMT reps walking around the workplace communicating with the workforce.

The campaign started in Edinburgh in July and moved on to Newcastle, York, Leeds, Sheffield, Liverpool and Manchester, recruiting over seventy workers. More importantly, we now have a number of members prepared to become local representatives and another priority is to make sure these members receive training and support.

Our organising team consisted of Pat and Brian along with local reps Troy Burton(SSP) and Simona Bilanicova (Rail

Gourmet) supported by members of our organising unit. All of our local activists who turned out to help were a credit to the union, which leaves me confident that we are going to crack this.

It is a fact that the overwhelming majority of our members are recruited by an RMT local activist – normally the local rep. So it's very important we have reps in place in every single location. Most workers judge their union by the local activists too. So simply recruiting members into the union isn't enough. We also have to organise and that means filling vacancies for local reps.

We have made a very good start to the campaign and it shows that it is possible to organise in these companies provided we roll up our sleeves and get stuck in. The McNulty Review and the general mood of cuts means we are all under attack and the only way we can defend ourselves is to get organised. As one Rail Gourmet worker eloquently put it to her workmates: "On our own we are like grains of sand BUT together we can form a mountain!" ■

WHAT'S NEW ON RMTv

Catch the latest video updates on RMT's own on-line station at www.rmtv.org.uk



CHANNEL 1 – RMT IN ACTION
Save Bombardier jobs – thousands demonstrate in Derby

RMT takes McNulty protest to his doorstep – demonstration in Liverpool

CHANNEL 2 – NEWS BULLETINS
Bob Crow talks about the possible TSSA merger RMT

AGM 2011:

Bob Crow demolishes the McNulty report

John Samuelson: greetings from New York transport workers

John McDonnell MP: RMT parliamentary group report

Elaine Smith MSP: RMT Scottish parliamentary group report

Alex Gordon: president's address

CHANNEL 3 – HISTORY CHANNEL
The People's Flag – victory to consensus: third in the four-part documentary series on the history of the labour movement, by Chris Reeves

CHANNEL 4 – RMT EXTRA
Durham Miners' Gala 2011
Cuba Sil – Garden party highlights



BRANCH SECRETARIES MEET IN GREAT YARMOUTH

The annual conference of branch secretaries took place in Great Yarmouth this year, hosted superbly by Broadlands Branch Secretary Alan Brooks and the owner of the Hotel Victoria John Hemsley.

Conference president Peter Daniels welcomed delegates who were treated to a trip to a local micro-brewery and an entertaining visit to the Nelson Museum.

Peter Daniels invited the general secretary Bob Crow to give a state of the union address with questions.

A guest speaker from Unity Bank Laurie Bell outlined the role of the bank, which is specifically designed to service the trade union movement from national unions to branch accounts.

Mr Bell sparked a debate after outlining plans by the big banks to get rid of the use of cheques by 2018.

Peter Daniels said that many branch secretaries relied on the use of cheques to carry out branch business.

Tony Donaghey from the union's Credit Union said that the abolition of cheques was also a serious issue for pensioners and many people that did not use credit cards.

Peter Waters outlined developments in the union's

membership department.

He explained that increasingly hostile anti-union laws and legal judgements had made it harder to ballot members for industrial action.

Under these conditions any tiny discrepancy in the ballot could be exploited by employers to ban strike action through the courts.

Web resources for branch officials were being developed which would allow them to update web pages themselves.

He said that full training would be provided.

RMT solicitors Thompsons representative Simon Clarke revealed the union had won £5.7 million in damages for members last year.

However he warned that the government planned to attack the ability of unions to offer free legal representation with no deductions from their damages.

The Jackson review, announced by the Tory Justice Secretary Ken Clarke, would end the system of the losing defendant in a personal injury claim – usually an employer – having to pay towards a fund to cover costs.

Lawyers will instead be expected to deduct a proportion of those costs – up to 25 per cent – from claimant's compensation for the injury and

things such as loss of wages.

RMT will be working with its Parliamentary group and campaigning with other unions and injury victim support groups to fight these proposals.

Conference was slightly overshadowed by the sudden death of Angus McPherson from Drummond Miller Lawyers in Scotland. Angus had been a regular attendee to conference for over 20 years and his presence would be sadly missed.

Delegate Jim Philp said that Angus had he brought a different approach to the delegates attending conference with a Scottish aspect to the law. Delegates showed their appreciation to Angus and others who had passed away by

observing a minutes silence.

It was recommended that conference donate £100 to the memory of Angus McPherson for all the work he has done for this conference over the years. Tayside Mountain Rescue Association was the charity recommended by the family.

Steve Smart the Regional Organiser for the area was thanked for his contribution to conference and the Les Roberts Memorial collection for the Widows and Orphans fund raised £55.45p.

In closing conference president Peter Daniels invited all branch secretaries to attend next year's conference taking place in Bristol. ■

A GREAT YARMOUTH AWARD

RMT general secretary Bob Crow presented a 40-year medal to longstanding Broadlands branch member Jonathan Ward. Speaking at the union's branch secretary's conference in Great Yarmouth



Bob said he was pleased to make the presentation to John, a bus driver whose work had taken him from London to Great Yarmouth over the years.

DEBATING DISABILITIES

RMT delegate Janine Booth reports from the TUC Disability Conference which brings together hundreds of trade unionists

Government cuts and employers' attacks are hitting disabled people hard, as workers, service users and benefit claimants and the TUC's Disability Conference discussed the trade union response.

Many transport workers have disabilities, and many of us look after a family member or friend with a disability. Although our legal rights improved a little under the last government, we know from the frontline that employers often fail to give us the flexibility and support that we need. For them, it is profit first, people's needs a distant second.

As transport workers, we also know that disabled people need public transport that is physically accessible, and that

has staff available to help disabled passengers when needed. I spoke at the conference in support of a resolution from TSSA condemning cuts in station staffing levels.

Government cuts have also led to the scrapping of projects to improve accessibility, for example installing lifts on stations to ensure step-free access to platforms. Other attacks impacting on disabled people include cuts to: Remploy and other supported employment; NHS provision; and services funded by local councils. Cuts in jobs, benefits and services are driving many disabled people out of work and into poverty.

The government has introduced the Work Capability Assessment for benefit claimants, declaring that it is 'objective' when it is anything but. One conference delegate told of her son, whose assessment identified that he

had one arm and one leg that worked and could recognise the colour of a passing car, and so found him fit to work and stopped his disability benefits! Other speakers told of claimants left destitute by the withdrawal of benefits, even driven to suicide.

The assessments are carried out by ATOS Origin, the private company that brought us Avantix machines!

The ConDems, and their friends in the media, whip up hysteria about 'benefit fraud' in an attempt to justify benefit cuts, but such fraud runs at around £1 billion per year, a tiny figure compared with the £200 billion-plus ripped off by corporations and the rich not paying their taxes.

Speakers also illustrated how the portrayal of disabled people as 'scroungers' has led to a shocking increase in violent hate crime against disabled people. This media campaign is designed to get working-class

people to blame and scapegoat other working-class people for the economic crisis, rather than blaming the real villains: the bosses, the bankers, and their political backers. We should not fall for it.

Most of the resolutions to the conference were passed unanimously, reflecting the unity among delegates and across unions. But two proposals proved controversial. One advocated working with disabled staff groups, which some delegates found helpful but others to be a means of undermining unions. The other proposed working with the 'Time to Change' initiative from various disability charities, which was seen to be too concerned with addressing employers.

RMT will hold its own disability conference later this year. Maybe I will see you there? We will certainly have plenty to talk about. ■

WIN £500 of shopping vouchers!



UIA are pleased to offer RMT members and their families the chance to take part in our 2011 monthly shopping competition.

Simply let us know your home insurance renewal date and we will enter you into a free prize draw to win £500 worth of Love2Shop vouchers accepted at over 85 UK retailers including Boots, Waterstones, HMV, River Island, Ernest Jones, Iceland, House of Fraser plus lots more. Go to www.uia.co.uk/competition and take a few minutes to provide us with your details for your chance to win!

What's more you will only have to enter once and you'll have up to 12 chances to win as we'll be drawing a winner every month throughout 2011. Also remember to take a look at our competitive deals on home insurance for RMT members.

Remember to enter the free prize draw now at www.uia.co.uk/competition

See website for prize draw terms & conditions. For voucher terms and conditions please visit www.love2reward.co.uk.



RMT STANDS UP FOR ITS MEMBERS

If you have suffered an avoidable injury or illness, our team of expert lawyers can help you

The law says you're entitled to compensation for illnesses or injuries caused by the negligence of others. And because the RMT only uses expert personal injury lawyers, you can be sure of a service that is second to none.

Contact us now for fast and efficient advice – even for your family members.

FOR THE BEST LEGAL ASSISTANCE FOR RMT MEMBERS CALL FREE ON 0800 587 7516 (0800 328 1014 in Scotland). Lines open 8.00am-8.00pm Mon-Fri (except public holidays) and 9.00am-5.00pm Sat and Sun. For the 24 hour criminal law line call 0800 587 7530 (0800 328 1014 in Scotland)



PROTECTING AND PROMOTING OUR MEMBERS' INTERESTS



THE BOXER WHO WAS SCARED OF NOBODY

On March 31 1878 in Galveston, Texas, a man was born who was to have a profound impact not only on the sport of boxing but on US society. His name was Jack Johnson.

Being a black man in the US then was to be destined for a future of low income, menial jobs, the status of second-class citizen, and to be subjected to racism at the hands of dominant white society.

Worse was possible in the South, where the lynching of young black men was a regular occurrence.

Johnson's parents were former slaves, his father Henry of direct African descent, and both worked long hours to support their six children. Jack was their second child and the bulk of what little education he received came from his parents, who taught him to read and write at home. School he attended only sporadically until he started work on the docks as a labourer in his early teens.

Johnson's introduction to fighting for money came during this period, when he began taking on fellow workers and local hard men in specially organised match-ups for the money offered by spectators in return for a good fight.

It has also been suggested that he participated in what were known as 'battle royals,' a racist spectacle which involved several black men fighting one another at the same time in blindfolds.

The exact number of fights which Johnson had during his career remains under dispute, but the lowest number of fights cited for him is 77, with other sources stating he fought 100 times and more.

Considering that professional boxing bouts in the early part of the 20th century could go on for 30 rounds and more, there is

no disputing the immense physical ordeal he endured in a career which ended in 1938, when following the sad song of most former champions a TKO in the seventh round against an opponent who at one time would not have been fit to lace Johnson's gloves finally brought the curtain down.

But what makes Johnson, who went by the fighting name the Galveston Giant, such a major figure in US sporting and cultural history was not only his undoubted boxing ability but more a personality that brooked no deference to the prevailing racial hierarchy, one that expected blacks like him to know their place.

After spending years being denied an opportunity to fight for the heavyweight title due to the colour of his skin, Johnson's chance finally came against the Canadian holder Tommy Burns in 1908. Burns had taken over the title from Jim Jeffries, who'd retired and who as the champion had continually spurned Johnson's attempts to fight for his title.

Regardless, getting Burns to face him had involved two years of Johnson chasing the Canadian around the world taunting him in the press before he finally relented. The fight took place in Sydney, Australia, in front of a hostile crowd of 20,000 spectators.

In winning the title from Burns, even Johnson was unprepared for the wave of racial hatred that was unleashed throughout his home country. At the time the heavyweight title was deemed the preserve of white fighters, and Johnson attracted the enmity it seemed of every sector of society except his own.

Johnson was forced to fight a series of white contenders as the boxing Establishment set out to find a white contender who

would prove the physical and fighting superiority of the white man over his black counterpart. Of a series of such fights Johnson took and won in 1909, the one against Stanley Ketchel has gone down in history.

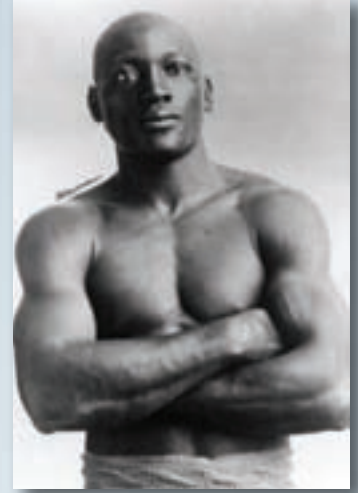
The fight lasted 12 hard rounds, until Ketchel connected with a right to the head which dropped Johnson to the canvas. As he got back to his feet, Ketchel moved in to finish him off. But before he could unleash another punch he was met with a right hand to the jaw from Johnson which knocked him out. According to legend, Johnson hit Ketchel so hard that some of his teeth ended up embedded in his glove.

In 1910 the biggest heavyweight fight in the history of the sport took place in Reno, Nevada in an outdoor arena specially built for the event. Billed as "The Fight of the Century," it saw ex-white champion Jim Jeffries come out of his six-year retirement, saying that "I feel obligated to the sporting public at least to make an effort to reclaim the heavyweight championship for the white race...I should step into the ring again and demonstrate that a white man is king of them all."

Johnson proved both Jeffries and the white Establishment wrong when he knocked the former champion down twice on the way to eventual victory in the 15th, when the referee stopped the fight.

The aftermath saw race riots erupt across the United States, with blacks being attacked at random and 23 killed. Meanwhile in black communities there were celebrations.

Thereafter, dogged by a white Establishment that was determined to put him in his place, Johnson's personal life saw him tried and convicted for



violation of the Mann Act, which prohibited the transportation of women across state lines for immoral purposes. Johnson, perhaps as a consequence of his being so maligned and rejected by mainstream society, was a man who sought solace in the company of prostitutes.

He was fined and sentenced to prison by an all-white jury, but instead of accepting his sentence he skipped bail and fled the country to Canada, before heading to France.

For the next seven years Johnson remained outside the US, moving between Europe and south America. In that time he continued to defend his title, which he finally lost to Jess Willard in Havana in 1915.

Returning to the US in 1920, Johnson was immediately arrested and sent to prison to serve out his sentence. A request for his posthumous pardon is currently under consideration by President Barack Obama. An earlier request during the previous Bush administration was turned down by the US Senate.

Johnson, who died at the age of 68 in 1948, married three times, on each occasion to a white woman. His last wife Irene Pineau was asked by a reporter at his funeral what she'd loved about him. "I loved him because of his courage," she replied. "He faced the world unafraid. There wasn't anybody or anything he feared." ■

John Wight

(This article first appeared in the Morning Star newspaper)

FROM CLEANER TO HEALTH AND SAFETY ADVISOR— A LEARNING JOURNEY

RMT member Vitalis Ndeda was recently, after a long learning journey, was presented with a regional individual award by David Attenborough in London.

At the ceremony Vitalis, who came to the UK as a cleaner, said that learning had empowered him to be in control of his destiny.

"This came about largely as a result of trade union learning where as a union rep

I started on a series of TUC courses.

"I soon became a Union Learning Rep (ULR) so that I could help others to access learning like I had," he said.

He said that he wanted to give people validation in the jobs they were doing and to help them move on through

promotion or into other jobs.

It gave him the confidence to negotiate with his employer to provide accredited training in-house which would be recognised elsewhere. The workforce really appreciated this as they could take their qualifications to other jobs in difficult economic times.

Health and safety became his speciality and he achieved NVQ level 4 in Occupational Health and Safety and also became an assessor/trainer and a professional health and safety advisor for the company.

His learning provided improvements in his life and work.

He did not sit back but continued in his trade union education until he had achieved a wealth of certificates. He is



currently completing his Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector and working towards the chartered membership of IOSH.

London Underground Engineering Branch secretary Paul Jackson said that Vitalis

was a great supporter of the union and a credit to the role of ULR.

"We hope that his success will be an inspiration to other members and encourage them to start their own learning journeys," he said. ■

SUN SHINES ON RMT GARDEN CUBA PARTY

Those attending RMT's ninth hugely successful annual garden party for Cuba in London recently enjoyed the usual sunshine as well as the tastes and music of the socialist island.

Speakers included Luis Marron of the

Cuban Embassy. He outlined the situation in the country, pointing out that the economic changes currently taking place were not 'liberalisation' characterised by Western investors taking over public services.

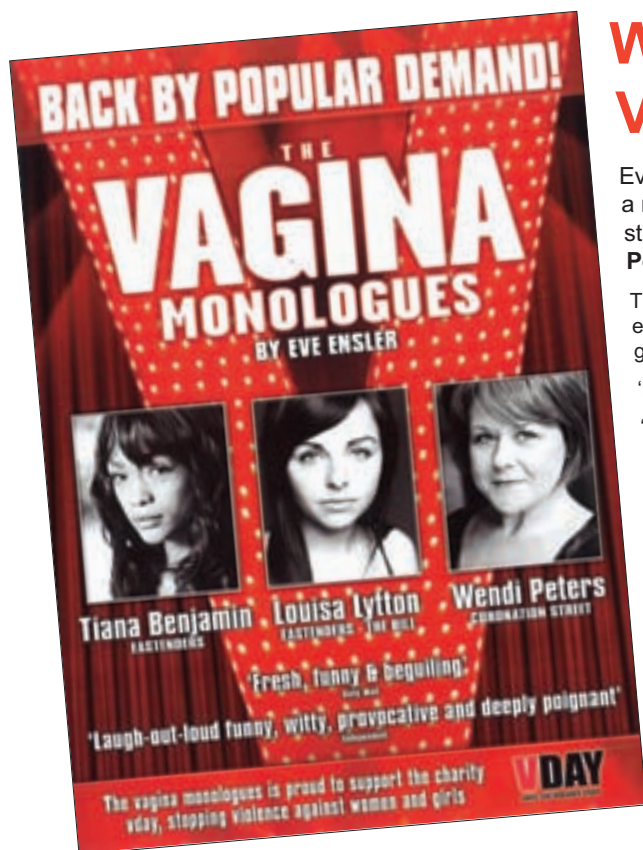
"The changes taking place are part of the

Cuban revolution which is an ongoing progressive process," he said.

Funds raised at the popular and packed event went towards the Cuba Solidarity Campaign. Music was provided by Cuban band Raises Cubanitas and The Alabama 3. ■

SOLIDARITY: L-R Unite general secretary Len McCluskey, John McDonnell MP, RMT president Alex Gordon, Sinn Féin MLA Gerry Kelly, RMT general secretary Bob Crow, Luis Marron of the Cuban Embassy.





WIN TWO TICKETS FOR THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES

Eve Ensler's hilarious Broadway and West End smash hit is back, featuring a new all star cast including the brilliant **Tiana Benjamin** (Eastenders), the stunning **Louisa Lytton** (Eastenders, The Bill) and the sensational **Wendi Peters** (Coronation Street, Celebrity Masterchef).

This hilariously witty and moving collection of stories is an unmissable show for every generation - bring your mum, your best friend, your sister or even your gran - this is the ultimate girls night out... trust us!

'Laugh out loud FUNNY,' *The Independent*

"Fresh, and funny" *Daily Mail*

'Eve Ensler's GLORIOUS show is WARM, OPEN, EXCITING, ENCHANTING and HILARIOUSLY funny! See it even if you haven't got one' *Sunday Times*

"Sex has never been funnier or more poignant" *New York Times*

The Vagina Monologues donates a percentage of revenue from ticket sales to V-Day benefiting women's charities across the world.

See www.vaginamonologues.co.uk for more details.

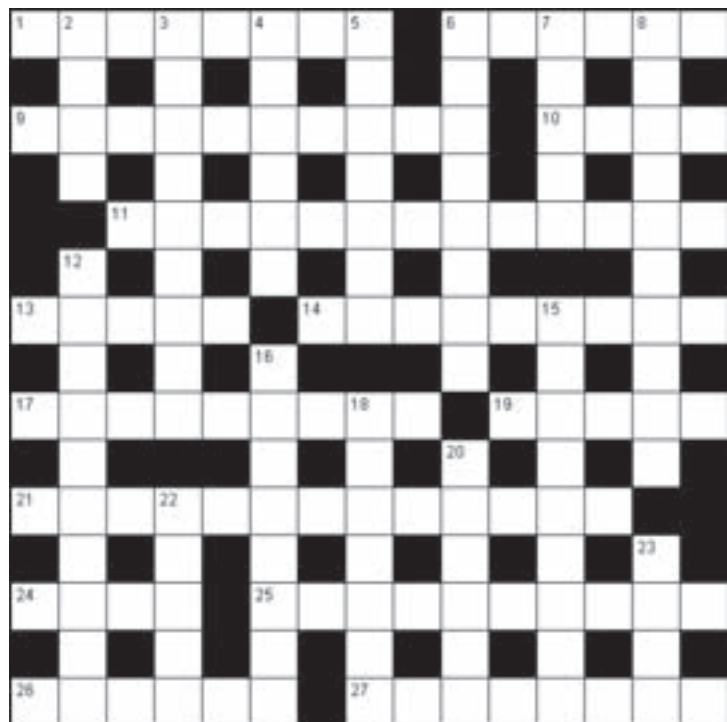
To enter this competition and win a pair of tickets please answer the following question: what is the charity that tickets for Vagina Monologues support?

Answers must be emailed to: competition@ejfentertainment.com with your name, address and contact telephone number.

The winner will be contacted to organise their tickets after the draw on the 1st September 2011.

£50 PRIZE CROSSWORD

No. 72. Set by Elk

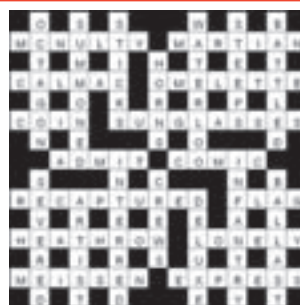


ACROSS

- 1 Spaces between tees and greens (8)
- 6 Place to place one's bets (6)
- 9 Train-maker threatened by exporting of Thameslink contract (10)
- 10 Shopping containers (4)
- 11 Letter- or report-writers (13)
- 13 Start (5)
- 14 Earnest; deeply held (9)
- 17 What one spends (9)
- 19 Home of 9 works threatened by export of Thameslink contract (5)
- 21 Can be broken down or rot naturally (13)
- 24 Oven for firing pottery (4)
- 25 One who sells, to the highest bidder (10)
- 26 Makes nocturnal noises? (6)
- 27 Bad verse (8)

DOWN

- 2 Basic unit of matter (until it gets split?) (4)
- 3 What you'll be doing if your computer freezes (9)
- 4 Pay and conditions should be, with the union (6)
- 5 Use paint brush or sponge to create dotted effect (7)
- 6 Officials who investigate deaths (8)
- 7 Curved-bladed sword traditionally used by cavalry (5)
- 8 Establishments for late drinking and dancing (5-5)
- 12 Make-over expert (10)
- 15 Medieval mercenary - or self-employed journalist (9)
- 16 two-dimensional symbolic representations; graphs (8)
- 18 Looked quickly; deflected (7)
- 20 Putting (animal) behind bars (6)
- 22 One who eats - or where one eats (5)
- 23 Brazilian former footballer - the greatest? (4)



No. 71 solution...

The winner of prize crossword no. 70 is Charlie Hicks.

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

Winner and solution in next issue.

OPEN A JUNIOR DEPOSIT ACCOUNT!

RMT Credit Union offers members the opportunity to open an account for their children to allow them to save for the future

Here at RMT Credit Union we know how important it is for family members to understand money even at an early age. We also recognise that parents and grandparents often want to set aside some money or build up a lump sum for their children or grandchildren to provide them with a good start in life.

It is never too early to start and the longer the savings are held, even when saving small amounts, with a regular dividend they soon mount up. With this in mind RMT Credit Union has developed a Junior Savings Account which can be tailored to suit your needs.

WHO CAN OPEN AN ACCOUNT?

The account needs to be opened by an existing RMT Credit Union adult member but it can

be opened for any child living at the same address. Accounts can be opened from birth, right up to the age of 16. The junior saver must be living at their parent or guardian's address and an original birth certificate must be produced to be able to join.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

The account is opened by the member on behalf of the junior saver. The account will be in the child's name but control of the account will remain with the adult.

HOW DO I OPERATE THE ACCOUNT?

Unlike full members, juniors do not have a regular income so the parent / guardian opening the account for the junior member will have to set up the account to save a minimum of £5.00 every month / 4 weekly or weekly. The savings is collected by Direct Debit from a bank account

HOW DO I KEEP UP TO DATE WITH THE ACCOUNT?

A statement is sent out to the junior members once a year around Christmas time and of course you are able to keep in touch via the usual methods such as phone and email. Your child will be able to view their own account online to see how much they have saved. Additional statements can be requested at no extra charge at any time.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THEY REACH 16?

At the age of 16, the junior account must change to adult status. At this point, the junior will now be considered an adult member and will automatically gain full control of the account. They will therefore have full access to any funds you have deposited in their account however, at this stage they may need to provide identification prior to withdrawing any funds.

ONCE 16, DO THEY HAVE TO SAVE REGULARLY EVERY MONTH TO KEEP THE ACCOUNT OPEN?

We recognise that they might be going on to higher education or may not even have left school at that stage. We do not want to lose them as a member, particularly as they may not be eligible to join again should they leave, so we are happy to maintain the account while they are in full time education. Don't forget that once they are 18 they gain all the benefits of being a full member and ability to use all the Credit Union's products.

HOW SAFE IS IT?

Just like all savings held with the Credit union they are fully guaranteed by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme up to £85,000.00.

You can apply for a membership form to join the Credit Union by writing to RMT Credit Union Ltd, Unity House 39 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD or downloading a form from the RMT website. ■





JUNIOR DEPOSIT ACCOUNT

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

MEMBERSHIP NUMBER

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

Please read and fill the Application Form carefully. **Remember to include the Junior Depositor's original birth certificate.** Please return the completed form to RMT Credit union, 39 Chalton St, NW1 1JD.

1 JUNIOR DEPOSITOR DETAILS.

Surname	
First name	
Middle name	
Date of Birth	/ /

2 PROPOSING MEMBER'S DETAILS.

Title (Mr/Mrs/Miss etc)		Home address	
First name			
Surname			
Home telephone		Postcode	
Mobile		Email	
RMT Credit union account number		Trade union membership number	
Relationship to Junior Depositor			

3 PAYMENT DETAILS (by proposing member)

The direct debit mandate below should also be completed and returned to the RMT Credit union office attached.

I wish to save (minimum £5.00) £ Date you next get paid

Monthly 28th ☐ Weekly ☐ 4 weekly (Fri) ☐

On behalf of the "Junior Depositor" named above.

4 TO HELP US FULFIL OUR LEGAL OBLIGATIONS, PLEASE ENCLOSE THE JUNIOR DEPOSITORS BIRTH CERTIFICATE WITH THIS APPLICATION FORM

I confirm that the Junior Depositor named above resides at my address. I wish to apply for Junior Depositors account on behalf of the above named person. I agree to abide by the rules of the RMT Credit Union Ltd and declare that the information given by me on this form is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Proposing Members signature

Date



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 accept instructions to pay Direct Debits.
- If there are any changes to the amount, date or frequency of your Direct Debit RMT Credit Union Ltd will notify you seven working days in advance of your account being debited or as otherwise agreed.
- If you request RMT Credit Union Ltd to collect a payment, confirmation of the amount and date will be given to you at the time of the request.
- If an error is made in the payment of your Direct Debit, by RMT Credit Union Ltd or your bank or building society, you are entitled to a full and immediate refund of the amount paid from your bank or building society.
- — If you receive a refund you are not entitled to, you must pay it back when RMT Credit Union Ltd asks you to.
- You can cancel a Direct Debit at any time by simply contacting your bank or building society. Written confirmation may be required. Please also notify us.



JOIN RMT BRITAIN'S SPECIALIST TRANSPORT UNION



Visit www.rmt.org.uk to join online
or call the helpline on freephone

0800 376 3706

Problems at work? Call the helpline
(Now with two operators)

Keep your RMT membership details up-to-date

In the light of draconian anti-trade union laws that have been used against the union, members should keep their personal data up to date. It is also important to note that in order to keep members informed your union requires your mobile telephone number and email address.

Members can do this via the RMT website, telephone the RMT helpline above, or writing to the membership department at RMT head office, Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD.

