

RMT *news*

Essential reading for today's transport worker

PENSIONS VICTORY AT NORTHLINK

INSIDE THIS ISSUE



**NO TO SOCIAL
DUMPING**
PAGE 16



**DON'T BE ON
YOUR OWN**
PAGE 11

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INFORMATION

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Job Description*		Part Time	YES ☐ NO ☐

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contents

Page 4
UNFARE!

Page 5
**LONDON OVERGROUND
RECOGNITION DEAL**

Page 6
WEST COAST FRANCHISE JOBS BATTLE

Page 7
RENATIONALISE THE GREAT WESTERN!

Page 8
**FIRSTGROUP PULL OUT OF NORTH
DEVON**

Page 9
PARLIAMENTARY COLUMN

Page 10
NORTHERN RAIL TECHIES

Page 11
DON'T BE ON YOUR OWN

Page 12
PREPAID PLUS MASTERCARD

Page 14
LETTERS

Page 15
NO PUDDLES AT TOLPUDDLE!

Page 16
NO TO SOCIAL DUMPING!

Page 17
**PENSION VICTORY AT NORTHLINK
FERRIES**

Page 19
REPRESSION IN KAZAKHSTAN

Page 20
YOUR LEGAL QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Page 22
BRING BACK BRITISH RAIL

Page 23
PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Page 24
SOLIDARITY WITH VENEZUELA

Page 25
CROYDE BAY HOLIDAY OFFERS

Page 27
**OLYMPIC BOXER WHO CHOSE COUNTRY
OVER MONEY**

Page 28
ELECTION ADS

Page 37
ELECTION ADS/CROSSWORD

Page 38
CREDIT UNION

EDITORIAL



WINNING ON PENSIONS

I am pleased to report that the union has settled a dispute with Serco Northlink Ferries in Scotland, after winning assurances that pensions, jobs and working conditions are to be protected.

This followed a meeting between RMT and Serco Northlink managing director Stuart Garrett and a ballot for industrial action has been cancelled.

However a ballot for strike action is going ahead on Caledonian MacBrayne Scottish Ferries in order to win similar assurances in advance of the planned sell-off of key routes.

We are asking for existing pension provisions to be protected and for joint bargaining machinery to continue, regardless of whether the contract is unbundled or not.

A union delegation is due to meet Scottish Transport Minister Keith Brown this month over the situation and we hope to reach a successful outcome.

But the spectre of social dumping is growing in the shipping sector. The case of Condor Ferries, employing Ukrainian seafarers on just £2.35 per hour, confirms that shipping companies are employing seafarers on grounds of their nationality so they can be paid well below the minimum wage.

We see millions out of work yet British seafarers will not be able to gain employment due to this race to the bottom.

The campaign against social dumping is important not least because other parts of the transport industry could be affected in the future.

The latest victim in the drive for profit in the bus sector is the closure of all bus routes run by FirstGroup in North Devon, leading to the loss of up to 100 jobs.

This is a company that made £27 million from its bus operations on its last accounts yet these profits were paid out in dividends to shareholders with nothing reinvested.

This is at a time when First are sucking in millions of pounds of taxpayers money in subsidies through an extension of their Great Western rail franchise. They should have the decency to invest some of that public money back into North Devon.

The decision to push back the start of the Great Western franchise from April 1 to "the summer" of 2013 is due, in part, to the chaos caused by the McNulty threat to jobs and services.

The campaign against McNulty has hit home with a lot of Lib Dem and Tory MPs in the West Country and there is disquiet about the extent of the cuts, which is undermining backbenchers' support for the franchise bidding process.

Passengers are also rightly angry about inflation-busting fare increases being imposed on them by government diktat which will mean some fares rocketing by 11 per cent from the New Year.

RMT is linking up with the travelling public to fight these plans and to step up the campaign for the renationalisation of Britain's railways.

This campaign will involve the battle to defend jobs and services on the West Coast route – including preparing a ballot for industrial action – after First Group won the InterCity franchise from Virgin on the basis of planned cuts of 20 per cent.

FirstGroup won the franchise on the same kind of bid that led to the collapse of the GNER and National Express contracts on the East Coast – forcing the government to renationalise the service.

City investors already believe that First paid too much to run the franchise for the next 14 years and shares have tumbled.

There are some important demonstrations coming up, the rally against McNulty in Manchester on September 30, the TUC demonstration at Tory Party conference in Birmingham on October 7 and the march in London on October 20 against cuts and austerity. I hope to see you there with your banners.

Finally RMT launches a pre-paid card this month. This can be used as a credit card but it is not a credit card and will not get you into debt. But it will get you discounts and cash-back so take the time to read about it to see how it could benefit you and your family.

Best regards

Bob Crow

UNFARE!



Massive rail fare hikes of up to 11 per cent and cuts to railway staff and services spark protests

Rail unions, transport campaigners and passengers held protests across the country last month against job cuts and huge fare rises agreed by the government.

The ConDems gave the green light train operating companies to increase rail fares by three per cent more than RPI inflation, meaning large price hikes on most rush hour travel, season tickets and off-peak fares.

The government has also given TOCs the power to increase some fares by even more, allowing operators to charge passengers up to 11 per cent more for train travel from January 2013.

The government's Rail Command Paper has set out proposals for TOCs to shed thousands of station staff, guards, catering staff and ticket offices to slash costs. The government is asking TOCs and Network Rail to implement cost-cutting proposals in Sir Roy McNulty's Rail Value for Money Study that could put up to

20,000 jobs at risk in the rail industry.

In a test case, train operator London Midland has submitted proposals for closures and reductions in operating hours of more than 80 ticket offices on its network, leaving many stations devoid of staff. Both unions and campaigners fear that the Secretary of State for Transport Justine Greening may give the green light to these proposals shortly.

Women's Institute chair Ruth Bond warned that cutting the number of staff at rail stations and on trains could put female passengers at greater risk of attack and harassment.

Writing jointly with TUC general secretary Frances O'Grady, she told Justine Greening that large-scale job cuts would leaving trains without conductors and ticket offices empty, making "train travel a dangerous and daunting option for many passengers".

In addition to causing some of the highest rail fares in Europe, privatisation has

doubled the taxpayer subsidy to the rail industry. In its report *Rebuilding Rail*, Transport for Quality of Life shows that more than £1bn per year is now incurred in extra costs as a result of the fragmentation, transaction costs, leakages through profits and dividend payments and other on-costs resulting from rail privatisation.

On the day of the publication of the RPI inflation figure that will be used to calculate rail fare increases from January next year, *Action for Rail, Bring Back British Rail, Campaign for Better Transport and Climate Rush* took in a national day of action including demonstrations at Waterloo Station in London and leafleting and protests at over 40 stations around the country.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow warned that passengers will be angry when they find out the full extent of the inflation-busting fare increases imposed on them by government diktat.

"The idea that this extra money will be invested in the

railways is a sick joke, it will simply be trousered by the greedy train operators, same as it always has been since privatisation.

"The case for renationalising our railways, and throwing the rip-off merchants off the tracks, is now overwhelming.

"The public is sick and tired of being charged through the nose to travel on creaking, overcrowded trains while the rail companies are robbing them blind.

"The campaign to *Bring Back British Rail* (BBBR) is an idea whose time has come," he said.

BBBR spokeswoman Ellie Harrison said that people were angry and frustrated with the railway system in this country since it was dismantled and sold off in the 1990s, and the latest extortionate train fare rises would only make this situation worse.

"We need a radical rethink of the way our railways are run so that passengers can, once again, take priority over profits," she said. ■

LONDON OVERGROUND RECOGNITION DEAL

RMT has won a recognition deal for STM Travel Safe Officers on the London Overground.

London regional organiser Steve Hedley said that the deal was a tribute to the steadfastness and courage of local members and representatives as the company had initially tried to discourage people joining the union.

"These tactics seemed like something out of the dark ages of when workers first formed trade unions," said Steve Hedley, recently elected as RMT assistant general secretary.

He said that RMT had finally

put a stop to such practices and achieved the union achieved 50 per cent vote needed to secure recognition.

The Travel Safe Officers have now elected their reps, Emmanuel Bruce who will be the Industrial rep and Adnan Hanif for health and safety.

"With recognition now achieved, we will be able to get on and attend meetings with the company over pay, conditions and contracts," said Steve.

RMT is now trying to organise and recruit all STM staff, security and stations in order to build up membership and get recognition for all other STM staff. ■



TUBE CLEANERS STRIKE OVER OLYMPICS PAYMENTS



Tube cleaners working for Initial and ISS mounted a picket at Stratford and other key locations last month to kick off a 48-hour strike for pay justice and Olympics recognition.

Following rock-solid action around the opening weekend of the Games members took action between August 9/11 2012.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow said that with the eyes of the world on the London Olympics nobody should forget the London transport cleaners on minimum pay rates doing some of the dirtiest jobs in often appalling conditions with no Olympics recognition or reward.

"It is these staff who keep services clean and safe who are now forced again by their employers to take action for a living wage and recognition of their Olympics efforts.

"The Olympics has to be about equality, inclusiveness and social justice and that's what our cleaners are standing up for as the spotlight shines on London.

"Instead of forcing our members back out onto the picket lines these profitable companies should be round the table with us negotiating a fair deal for the cleaners," he said. ■



WEST COAST FRANCHISE JOBS BATTLE

RMT has launched a campaign to defend jobs and services on the West Coast route – including preparing a ballot for industrial action – after First Group won the InterCity franchise on the basis of 20 per cent cuts across the board.

FirstGroup based their bid on the same kind of over-gearred financial projections that lead to the collapse of the GNER and National Express contracts on the East Coast – forcing the government to renationalise the service.

FirstGroup shares plummeted over fears that the rail privateer might not be able to afford the franchise which it successfully bid £5.5 billion to run.

City investors believe that First paid too much to run the most lucrative franchise for the next 14 years and shares tumbled six per cent.

It is reported that George Osborne and the Treasury demanded that the contract go to FirstGroup regardless of the risks of another spectacular East Coast-style collapse and regardless of the fact that only months ago First pulled the plug on the Great Western route early to avoid £800 million in payments to the taxpayer.

Fleet maintenance company, Alstom, has revealed that the winning West Coast InterCity bid is likely to include a wholesale reconfiguration of the

rolling stock with shops and catering removed to lever in more seating capacity, putting up to 800 train crew jobs on the block.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow said that FirstGroup and the government should be left in no doubt that RMT would mount a massive industrial, political and public campaign to stop any attacks on jobs and the services that they provide to the travelling public.

“It is clear that this franchise in being let on pure McNulty terms with a gold-plated, extended contract linked to massive cuts to jobs and passenger services and huge increases in fares in order to

extract every penny in profit.

“RMT will work with MPs and communities along the West Coast route to stop the savage assault on staffing levels and budgets that we expect to be at the core of this new franchise arrangement.

“The new First West Coast deal is an exercise in casino franchising that lays bare the whole sordid enterprise which is rail privatisation.

“Companies promise the earth, jack up fares and slash jobs and services in a drive for profits and if the numbers don't stack up they throw back the keys and expect the public sector to pick up the pieces,” he said. ■

LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE RALLY AGAINST MCNULTY



ACTION FOR RAIL CAMPAIGN

Sunday September 30, 5.30pm, Mechanics Institute, 103 Princess Street, Manchester M1 6DD

The government's vision for the future of our railways is a frightening read for those who work on and rely on the country's rail network.

They want the industry to find huge cost savings, and have made clear that these savings must come at the expense of passengers and railway workers with the threat to over 20,000 jobs.

At the same time private companies are to be rewarded with longer franchises and the freedom to make more profits, including proposals to break up and privatise Network Rail.

Come to the rally and keep up to date with the campaign to defend jobs and services by signing up at Facebook - www.facebook.com/actionforrail and Twitter - www.twitter.com/actionforrail and visiting the website www.actionforrail.org.uk

RENATIONALISE THE GREAT WESTERN!



RMT demands renationalisation of Great Western franchise as it slides into tax-payer sponsored chaos

RMT is calling for the renationalisation of the Great Western franchise after the government handed an extension to FirstGroup, underwritten by a multimillion-pound taxpayer subsidy, on the bogus grounds of “delays with issuing tender documents”.

The latest ‘scandalous and expensive’ fiasco on Great Western comes despite First Group having served notice on the contract to avoid a payout of more than £800 million to the government.

The next contract for the franchise was due to begin on April 1 next year but it is likely to be put back to the summer because of what the government is spinning as “delays”.

As an indicator of the level of the chaos surrounding the process, the Department for Transport has refused to confirm a new start date.

As a result, despite pulling the pin on the contract to dodge £800 million of payments due to the taxpayer, trains will continue to be operated by FirstGroup, with multi-million pound public subsidies.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow said that it was a symptom of the chaos caused by the McNulty threat to jobs and

services, pressure from MPs along the route and a massive delay in the Intercity Express Programme (IEP) contract.

“This latest fiasco on Britain’s railways will cost the taxpayer a small fortune and will have FirstGroup laughing all the way to the bank as they benefit from a multi-million pound windfall on the back of this shambles.

“The case for renationalising to avoid this kind of franchising chaos is now overwhelming – if the tax-payer is funding this route then why shouldn’t they own it?,” he said.

The campaign against the McNulty report has hit home with a lot of Lib Dem and Tory MPs in the West Country and there is disquiet about the extent of job losses and ticket office closures, which is undermining backbench support for the franchise bidding process as they recognise the public outrage at the poisonous combination of cuts and profiteering.

The £4.5 billion IEP contract for 596 carriages means that there is to be a fundamental shift, compared to other franchises, in the franchise bidding process. The huge importance of the IEP project

means that Agility Trains will have to assist bidders in developing their proposals.

A planned six months of design development, before ‘design freeze’, for the new rolling stock will coincide with the franchise bidding, which could result in Agility having to

contend with four bidders who could all have radically different opinions on how the Hitachi trains could be improved.

To avoid Agility wasting time on bids that have little chance of success, it is envisaged that the DfT may weed out the weaker bidders. ■

MITIE FGW VICTIMISATION BALLOT

RMT is balloting crew working on the Mitie contract on First Great Western for both strike action and action short of a strike over the blatant victimisation of union representative Sharon Petrie.

The ballot, of more than a hundred staff ranging from on-train cleaners to the crew emptying the sewage tanks, will will close on September 7 2012.

RMT Representative Sharon Petrie was suspended by Mitie after baseless and unsubstantiated allegations while carrying out the duties of a union rep.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow said that the allegations were unfounded, spurious and

discriminatory and it was clear that she is being targeted due to her trade union activities.

“Sharon has shown enormous courage in the past by standing up over pay problems and staff welfare.

“She has also assisted her colleagues with getting warm clothing for the winter months, helped to alleviate excess work expectations and always tried to achieve fairness at work.

“RMT will not stand by while our reps are attacked in this fashion and we are calling for a strong yes vote for action as we take Sharon Petrie’s campaign for justice forward,” he said. ■

TRANS-PENNINE RAIL CLEANERS STRIKE OVER PAY 'INSULT'

Cleaners, security staff and train despatchers on the Trans-Pennine Express employed by Carlisle Cleaning and Support Services took 24-hour strike action last month after bosses refused to budge from a sub-inflation pay offer.

RMT members on the contract have already taken rock-solid strike action over an 'offer' that would inflict a real-terms pay cut on already low-paid staff.

A two-week overtime and rest-day working ban followed the latest action after the company turned down an offer of talks at conciliation service Acas.

RMT regional organiser Andy Warnock-Smith said that Carlisle had had ample opportunity to settle but it continued to treat members with contempt by attempting to impose another effective pay cut.

"Our members' solid strike action last month brought Carlisle back to the table but it failed to table any improvement in its offer," he said.

Staff on the contract suffer some of the worst conditions in the industry, with no sick-pay, no paid meal breaks and no enhanced pay rates for working overtime, nights, weekends or even bank holidays.



FIRSTGROUP PULL OUT OF NORTH DEVON

Union calls for nationalisation of bus industry as transport privateer FirstGroup hand in the keys

Fears are growing that rural services could be lost as FirstGroup pull out of bus operations in North Devon and put routes and depots up for sale this month.

RMT revealed that staff were "on a knife edge" because of uncertainty over where the axe will fall, after the company said that it would ditch up to 50 per cent of its UK bus division operations, but refused to say which areas were in the firing line.

A FirstGroup spokeswoman said the company was "developing opportunities for a number of disposals of our bus operations and more information about these plans is not being disclosed for commercial reasons".

RMT regional organiser Phil Bialyk said that First staff and

passengers across the region were concerned about the "unsatisfactory" lack of information.

"First should have a commitment to bus services in the Westcountry, but clearly they're more worried about their shareholders.

"We're on a knife-edge, not knowing if they're going to pack it in because they're not making enough money," he said.

Rival company Stagecoach has stepped in to cover many of the routes.

Stagecoach employs around 120 people from its Barnstaple depot and runs around 50 buses. The addition of new services in September will see around a dozen extra vehicles and several drivers added to the fleet.

Campaigners fear that Somerset is also vulnerable



because the county council public transport subsidies have been cut by more than £2 million.

Norman Browne of the campaign group Save Our Buses said that such severe cuts, combined with reductions in government funding, meant rural bus services were "inevitably" stretched, even to major towns such as Taunton and Yeovil.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow reiterated the union's call for the industry to be renationalised.

"This shock plan by First

Group would axe life-line bus services across North Devon and dump over a hundred bus workers on the dole.

"This is a company that made profits of £27 million from its bus operations on its last accounts and those profits were paid out in dividends to the company shareholders with nothing reinvested.

"It is now clear that renationalisation is required and those Con Dem MPs representing these areas that sat back and did nothing should be made to pay at the next election," he said. ■

SWEDISH DEROGATION SCANDAL

Agency workers employed by Trainpeople.co.uk engaged on Grand Central Railways and London Underground's Bakerloo Line contracts are not protected by EU Agency Worker Regulations (AWR) as the company is using the so-called Swedish derogation.

As a result workers have not been paid for the second month running as this legal loophole, developed by employers to get round 'soft' EU legislation, which prevents workers from getting the same pay as permanent employees.

The AWR was introduced after much horse-trading last year and employers using temporary workers turned to recruitment agencies and umbrella company partners to provide a 'flat-pack solution' to get round the legislation.

The 'Swedish derogation model' is also known as 'pay between assignments' and is derived from an opt-out clause Sweden negotiated when the Agency Workers' Directive was agreed at EU level.

Under this model if an agency worker is made into a permanent employee of the recruitment agency, they do not gain the same basic rights of employees of the organisation where they are placed after 12 weeks work.

Therefore agency staff do not have the right to equivalent pay, holidays and working hours as others doing the same job.

Ironically Norwegian trade unionists held a general strike earlier this year to stop the implementation of the Agency Workers' Directive as its main impact is to make agency work the norm, undermining the permanent contracts that currently exist in Norway.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow said that the union was looking at the legal implications of the AWR and the Swedish Derogation.

"RMT believes that all transport workers should have secure contracts of employment, directly employed by an integrated, publically owned public transport system," he said. ■

Parliamentary column



SNP HANDS OFF CALMAC FERRIES

RMT has done us all a favour by consistently exposing the SNP government's plans to privatise Clyde and Hebrides ferry services (CHFS).

Although SNP leader Alex Salmond's administration has not yet deigned to tell anyone their policy on the imminent tender for the 2013-19 CHFS contract, it is clear that the threat of unbundling profitable CHFS routes for sale to the private sector is very real.

RMT members working for CalMac don't need me to tell them how unsettling it is to be faced with the prospect of your job and workplace being privatised but it is high time that the SNP government came clean on its intentions for west coast ferry routes.

Their long awaited Ferry Review has suffered delay after delay, different fares structures are causing resentment and confusion in island communities and now the privatisation of CalMac subsidiary NorthLink - hot on the heels of the Gourock- Dunoon fiasco - adds to the genuine fear among CalMac ferry staff and management that the Government is intent on privatising CalMac's remaining routes.

Neither is the SNP government's claim only to be concerned with 'value for money' credible when you compare the 70 per cent subsidy (£243m) they will pay Serco to run the same ferry services to the Northern Isles which cost the taxpayer £190m to provide for the previous 6 year contract. In addition, I understand that although the CalMac bid for the NorthLink contract was again the cheapest it was ruled out on a spurious technicality.

I also understand that when CalMac sought permission from their political bosses to appeal this decision they were directed not to by Scottish Government Ministers - a blatantly partial political decision.

From this performance it is hard to avoid the conclusion that the SNP government's ferries policy could destroy CalMac's hard won reputation for delivering good quality and reliable lifeline ferry services to Scotland's west coast island communities.

And, of course, if the worst fears of CalMac workers, the communities they serve and the trade unions are realised, the consequences for the UK maritime industry will be dire. At present, there simply aren't enough seafarers coming into the industry in order to avoid a skills shortage, with the shipping industry reneging on previous commitments to provide training places for domestic seafarers. One of the few beacons of light during this dark period for UK seafarers has been CalMac.

Since 2002, the company has provided or sponsored training for over 400 officers and ratings - a big contribution to the industry's skills base from a relatively small shipping company which resounds across the British Isles.

The communities and families affected cannot afford to lose this excellent public transport operator and Scotland certainly cannot afford to sell off a major asset, purely to satisfy the short term political needs of a nationalist administration.

Whilst we wait for the Scottish government to announce their final ferries plan, I hope that CalMac workers, the Board and management, not to mention trade unionists and the public, will let Ministers know the strength of feeling in favour of keeping CalMac on the Clyde and Hebrides ferry routes.

Richard Baker MSP, Shadow Labour Infrastructure and Transport Minister and member of RMT Scottish Parliamentary Group



NORTHERN RAIL TECHIES

Eight RMT company council reps from Northern Rail have successfully completed an Information Technology Qualification (ITQ) computer course set up by RMT Learning.

RMT Learning Development Worker (North) Graham Chesters put forward a business case to Northern Rail for the reps to receive some Information and Communications Technology (ICT) training to help them in their union role. Northern Rail agreed to release the reps from work to attend the learning programme.

The five day course took place on Wednesdays over five weeks at Northern Rail's Training Academy in Bolton and the reps were able to complete modules towards a Level 2 ITQ qualification. The learning programme was delivered by Alison Aldred, a tutor from Manchester College which also



TECHIES: The eight RMT Conductors' Company Council Reps with Manchester College course tutor, Alison Aldred.

provided laptops.

The reps found the course enjoyable and were able to improve a range of computer skills including organising files, using Word and Excel software, sending e-mails and attachments and researching on the internet. All reps agreed that their new found skills will be a great help to them at home and at work

and that the course helped improve their confidence using computers.

Paul Goodier said the course had helped him improve his ICT skills and the knowledge gained will be "invaluable, at work, with union duties and at home". Penny Calcutt felt the course has helped her realise 'how much more I can do on a computer to

make life easier'. One of the reps also used his new knowledge of Excel to make improvements to the 'Conductor Links' at work.

If you would like more information about ICT training courses, please contact your local ULR or the RMT Learning Team: on 020 7529 8820/l.rutland@rmt.org.uk

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DON'T BE ON YOUR OWN

RMT will continue to stand up for you legal rights after government announces employment tribunal charges for workers to have access to justice

Massive changes to Employment Tribunals made by the government mean that access to workplace justice has been denied to millions and now comes with a hefty price tag.

The changes are designed to stop working people seeking compensation from employers.

The qualifying period to claim unfair dismissal has been doubled to two years – at a stroke depriving millions of workers of legal protection in the workplace.

RMT has always argued that workplace rights should start from day one, but the government has listened to bosses who want to be able to sack workers at will.

Prohibitive tribunal fees are to be introduced, with a fee of up to £250 just to register a case, and up to £950 more payable before it gets to a hearing. Appeals will cost up to £1,600.

This is a cynical hammer blow designed to make it as difficult as possible to lodge a tribunal claim, and a massive attack on union resources.

The door has been opened to judges sitting alone in tribunals, no longer balanced with lay “wing” members.

The government wants to banish trade-union panellists and others with industrial experience from sitting with judges, many of whom have no employment experience.

Witnesses' expenses will no

longer be paid

Witness statements will now be taken “as read”, potentially depriving claimants of the right to cross-question witnesses.

The potential cost of losing a tribunal has been doubled, from £10,000 to £20,000.

Another move clearly aimed at discouraging claims being brought, not least as tribunals are increasingly exercising the option to award costs against the losing side.

Ministers claim these measures will save time and money, but they will load chances even further against tribunal claimants.

Even now only around eight per cent of unfair dismissal cases are successful, and the figure is far lower for discrimination cases.

For RMT these changes mean well over £1million a year in extra legal fees, but the union remains committed to winning justice for its members at work.

Despite these massive costs, RMT will continue to offer a comprehensive legal service to members, including covering tribunal fees and costs. Put simply, if the union runs the case, the union will pay the fees.

Claimants will have to submit the initial fee, but if RMT runs the case it will be reimbursed, and when a member gets a hearing date RMT will pay the hearing fee.

The union will also continue

to pay witness expenses. Only if the member is successful at a Tribunal and the Tribunal awards the fees back to the member will they have to be reimbursed to the union.

Now more than ever it makes sense to belong to RMT, the union that stands up for its members at work and offers a comprehensive legal service.

So, if you are not already a member, join RMT today, and get yourself protected by RMT's expert legal team and tell your workmates that are not in the union that they are not protected.

*The above benefits are subject to membership qualification and acceptance of cases by the union and its solicitors. ■



**NOW, MORE THAN EVER
DON'T BE ON YOUR OWN!**

RMT Join RMT – the union that will stand up for your legal rights

Massive changes to Employment Tribunals could leave you with a **£1,200** bill just to get through the door, and the threat of **£20,000** costs if the case goes against you. **But if RMT runs your case the union will pick up the tab**

Join RMT today on 0800 376 3706 or at www.rmt.org.uk

NOW LAUNCHED!

Earn unlimited cashback with the new RMT Prepaid Plus Card

In this tough economic climate saving money and budgeting has become harder for members and their families. So the new RMT Prepaid Plus MasterCard® card could not have come at a better time with up to 6% cashback savings at over 40 shopping retailers. And unlike debit or credit cards you can only spend what you load - making it ideal for budgeting.

RMT is pleased to announce the launch of the NEW RMT Prepaid Plus card. Earn between 3 and 6% cashback when you use it to shop at partner retailers - whether in-store or online.

There's a wide range of retail partners including Sainsbury's, ASDA, Argos and Boots making saving on your everyday shopping and essentials possible (see below for all partner retailers).

What is a prepaid card?

The RMT Prepaid Plus card is not a credit or debit card. You load it with money before you spend (similar to pay as you go mobile telephones). You can only spend what you load to your prepaid card, making it a practical budgeting tool.

You can use this card like any other chip and PIN payment card and it is accepted at over 32 million outlets worldwide wherever you see the MasterCard Acceptance Mark.

You can top up your card at anytime by logging in to your online account or at a Post Office or Pay Point terminal.

There are no fees when you set up a monthly direct debit or make a debit card load over £200 (fees may apply for other top up options). You can find out your card balance at any time with an SMS or by going online.

There is no limit to how much cashback you can earn and if you order an additional card for a member of your family you could earn even more cashback (see "How do you earn cashback?" below).

How to apply

Applying for your card is easy and free (as this is exclusive to RMT members, you will need your RMT membership number). All you have to do is go to www.RMTprepaid.com

There is a basic monthly management fee of £1.95. You will also need to load your card with at least £10 when you apply. This money will be available for you to spend when you get your card.

Apply free today at www.RMTprepaid.com

Why get yours?

Not only is this a practical budgeting tool, but you can also save money. You earn between 3 and 6% cashback when you buy at participating retailers whether in-store or online.

Not a credit or a debit card, the NEW RMT Prepaid Plus card is a new kind of payment card. You load it before you shop and use it like any other chip and PIN payment card.



Earn between 3% and 6% Cashback when you use your card at:*



*Range of brands and cashback are subject to change. Some retailer exclusions apply.



"Finally a card worth talking about in this difficult economic climate! The RMT Prepaid Plus card is different – you only spend what you have loaded. And you earn cashback when you shop at many popular stores. It's a great way to budget and save." - Bob Crow

10 Great reasons to get the NEW RMT Prepaid Plus card

SAVINGS CALCULATOR

To see how much **cashback you could earn** each month use the handy savings calculator at www.RMTprepaid.com

Cashback example

(Based on a prepaid card loaded with £450 by direct debit)

Retailer	Cashback
£10 in Boots (toiletries)	£0.50
£50 in Pizza Express (dining)	£2.50
£20 in Argos (homewares)	£1.00
£50 in Debenhams (clothing)	£2.50
£320 at Sainsbury's/ ASDA (groceries)	£9.60
Total monthly cashback	£16.10

****The NEW RMT Prepaid Plus Card is FREE to apply for.** You simply pay a monthly fee of £1.95. The first fee will be charged within 30 days of successful application. When you apply for the card you will need to make an initial load. This load will be available for you to spend once you receive and activate your card.

How do you earn cashback?

Earning cashback with the RMT Prepaid card is easy and there is no limit on how much you can earn. You can also apply for an additional card for a member of your household and enjoy even more cashback.

1. Simply get your card and make sure it's topped up with funds.
2. Use your card in-store or online at retail partners to earn cashback.
3. Your cashback is paid to your prepaid card the next time you top up!

1. Makes **budgeting easy**

You can only spend what you load so there's no getting carried away.

2. **Save on your everyday shopping**

You earn cashback by simply using your card at retail partners.

3. **No credit checks. No overdraft charges**

4. **Free to apply for****

5. **Exclusive to RMT members**

6. **Accepted at over 32 million outlets worldwide**

7. **Secure**

This card is chip and PIN protected, and not linked to your bank account.

8. **Additional card**

You can get an additional card for a member of your household and enjoy more cashback at partner retailers.

9. **Easy to manage and top up**

You can view your statement, see how much cashback you have earned and top up online by simply logging in to your prepaid account.

10. **RMT APPROVED!**

Apply today at
www.RMTprepaid.com

This card is issued by Clydesdale Bank PLC pursuant to licence by MasterCard International Incorporated. This card is an electronic money product. The electronic money associated with this card is provided by PrePay Technologies Limited, a company authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority. PrePay Technologies Limited is a registered Service Provider of Clydesdale Bank PLC. MasterCard and the MasterCard brand mark are registered trademarks of MasterCard International Incorporated.

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CON DEMS WILL PAY COME ELECTION TIME

RMT member responds to comments by Lib Dem MP for Berwick Alan Beith in a local newspaper criticising the government's proposed six per cent increase in rail fares

Dear Alan,

I note in today's Berwick Advertiser (16-08-2012) your comments about recent announcement by your government regarding rail fare increases. You say, "Britain has the most expensive railway network in Europe, up to 30 per cent more than our nearest competitors".

As you are fully aware the most profitable and well run railways in Europe are either state-owned or part state-owned, meaning that money generated does not spill into fat cats pockets at big corporations. Instead it is absorbed and used as investment in that country's rail infrastructure. The UK had a similar railway before John Major sold it off after years of under investment; it was called British Rail.

To blame the Labour government for the current problems is disingenuous at best and dishonest at worst. Major sold off the railway and now, as with the energy companies (the rising utility bills you mention being solely due to a mad clamour for profits) it is all about generating income for CEOs at First, Virgin, Stagecoach or whoever. These companies will happily cut staff and hike prices in order to make more money for shareholders.

First Group will happily increase fares on the new WCML franchise, close ticket offices, cut swathes of staff at stations and on trains - given the current economic catastrophe which the coalition continue to try and talk up despite an obvious lack of a Plan B from Osborne. This cannot be helpful.

Meanwhile First will attempt to squeeze every penny out of passengers in order to meet their unrealistic premiums. This is history repeating itself Alan as you have witnessed first-hand on ECML, It is the economics of the madhouse.

The McNulty white paper continues to be the single biggest attack on rail workers since Beeching. It completely ignores the primary reason that Britain's railways are so expensive - the privateers and the fat-cats milking profits whilst cutting jobs and services.

For McNulty to say we rail workers are overpaid is an insult. An insult to colleagues and other rail staff, an insult to an industry I am proud to work for and shame on the Lib Dems for not standing up to this.

As you know East Coast is currently in public ownership following the NXEC debacle, it is being run very well and with no burden on the taxpayer. Is this not the way forward for Britain's railways? Of course it is, and when the West Coast Main Line goes the same way (about the time of the next general election at a guess) - the cries of "I told you so" will be deafening and all those on your side of the house who have refused to come out against this nonsense will be held accountable and will be looking for other ways to fill their time after election day.

Many thanks,
Berwick Member

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 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.



NO PUDDLES AT TOLPUDDLE!

Hardy Tolpuddle festival goers and marchers this year were rewarded with an almost rain-free weekend as the predicted deluge didn't materialise.

This meant the annual round of seminars, debates, musical and cultural happenings and a large processional march from the festival site to the nearby village of Tolpuddle went ahead in glorious style.

For a flavour of the Tolpuddle festival go to www.union-news.co.uk to see

an excellent film of the event and its importance in the trade union calendar.

Each year thousands descend on the village of Tolpuddle, Dorset to celebrate the victory of the Tolpuddle martyrs, farm workers deported to Australia in 1834 for the 'crime' of forming a trade union. Their story is now part of the development of a free and democratic society.

It is celebrated in the small museum in Tolpuddle and at the festival on the weekend of

the third Sunday in July every year with the climax being a march through the village.

Organised by the South West TUC, this festival takes up different themes and events each year.

The year was the 100th anniversary of the birth of legendary communist singer Woody Guthrie and he was remembered with a line-up to mark the legacy of his music on the main stage and at the open mic event.

In and around the Martyrs

Marque at the festival stalls were selling ideas as well as goods and there was fun and workshops for kids and creative adults. The Sunday welcomes lots more people who come for the day and the grand procession of banners through the village and wreaths are laid on the grave of Martyr James Hammett. So try to get there next year, you won't regret this unique experience.

For more information go to www.tolpuddlemartyrs.org.uk



NO TO SOCIAL DUMPING!



NO SOCIAL DUMPING: RMT Portsmouth branch joint chair Mick Stubbs and vice secretary Ian Boyle leafleting the port

RMT protest in Portsmouth and Southampton against social dumping in the shipping sector which allows 'captive' foreign workers to be paid just 75p per hour

RMT has repeatedly warned that the government's so-called 'light touch' regulations in the Equality Act leave seafarers vulnerable to exclusion on the grounds of nationality and increases the scandalous practice of social dumping.

Despite new legislation, trumpeted by the European Union, massive scope remains for the shipping industry in the UK to continue paying lower wages to seafarers from non-EU countries, and to continue recruiting crew members on that basis.

The specific case of Condor Ferries confirms that shipping companies are not deterred by the new regulations to impose pay discrimination.

By employing Ukrainian seafarers on £2.35 per hour (£28.12 per day for a 12 hour shift) on routes between Portsmouth, Weymouth or Poole and the Channel Islands, Condor Ferries provide the latest example of seafarers being recruited on grounds of their nationality so they can be paid well below minimum wage and how the company can maximise



its profits at the expense of UK seafarers.

International Transport Workers' Federation maritime co-ordinator Stephen Cotton described the practice as 'utterly scandalous' designed to pay seafarers way below the minimum wage.

RMT president Alex Gordon told local media at the demonstration that social dumping was creating shameful conditions where workers were paid rates as low as 75p an hour as 'captive foreign labour' by companies based in the UK.

"These practices are killing employment opportunities for British seafarers.

"We see millions out of work and yet British seafarers will not be able to gain employment because of this race to the

bottom," he said.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow said that the political elite was allowing their wealthy mates running the shipping companies to benefit from social dumping that dodges normal employment regulations while the EU turns a blind eye.

"Social dumping is a mechanism seized on by rotten employers to batter down wages and conditions," he said.

RMT national secretary Steve Todd said that the fight against social dumping was a priority for the union.

"We will step up the campaign to turn the spotlight on the shameful practices that this Con Dem government continues to legitimise in the British shipping industry," he said. ■



AGREEMENT: (left to right) RMT port committee member Andy Gordon, Bob Crow, Serco NorthLink Ferries MD Stuart Garrett, RMT national secretary Steve Todd

PENSION VICTORY AT NORTHLINK FERRIES

RMT wins assurances on pensions at Northlink ferries but battle continues at Caledonian MacBrayne

RMT has settled a dispute with Serco Northlink Ferries in Scotland, ensuring that pensions, jobs and working conditions are protected and a ballot for industrial action was cancelled.

The settlement follows a meeting that was held last week between RMT and Serco Northlink Ferries Managing Director Stuart Garrett.

As a result, the written assurances regarding pensions, place of work, staffing levels and other outstanding issues the union was seeking have now been received.

The company recognises, and has also clearly stated, that any future changes to existing terms and conditions or staffing levels must and will be subject to negotiation and agreement within the existing machinery.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow congratulated members at Northlink on their steadfast resolve and solidarity during the dispute which successfully

protected jobs and existing agreements.

"The successful conclusion of the dispute has demonstrated to all what can be achieved when workers are prepared to stand up and fight against threats and attacks from the employer.

"Should any agreement not be adhered to in the future, RMT will have no hesitation in fighting industrially and legally to protect our members' position and that principal applies right across the board," he said.

CAL MAC

RMT will be meeting Scottish Transport Minister Keith Brown this month in crucial talks aimed at solving a deepening crisis over proposals to set up key Scottish ferries routes for privatisation.

The confirmation of top level talks comes after RMT announced a ballot for strike action on Caledonian MacBrayne after the total failure to give assurances to staff in

advance of the planned sell-off of key routes.

Transport Scotland has identified four CalMac routes for privatisation: Ardrossan – Brodick, Wemyss Bay – Rothesay, Oban – Craignure and Largs – Cumbrae.

RMT warned last year that consultation on "unbundling" Scottish ferry services masked Scottish government plans to privatise Cal Mac and hive off profitable, or subsidy-rich ferry routes to privateers such as Stagecoach's Brian Souter, a major Scottish National Party donor, allowing "cherry-picking" of Scotland's lifeline ferry services.

This move fits with the EU drive to break up national transport services and hand them over to the private sector.

The union has set out clear demands to Cal Mac over the past two months that members' existing pension provisions must be protected and that the current practice of one joint bargaining

machinery should continue, regardless of whether the contract is unbundled or not.

RMT national secretary Steve Todd said that RMT welcomed the fact that the minister had agreed to an early meeting with the union straight after the summer break aimed at resolving a deepening crisis on these key Scottish ferries routes.

"Our team will be aiming to assurances on pensions and bargaining machinery are simple and straightforward and no different to similar assurances we have negotiated on Northern Isles routes.

"Preparations for the ballot of CalMac staff continue and we are sure that no one is in any doubt that RMT will take whatever action is necessary to protect our members jobs, pensions, working conditions and negotiating rights on the Scottish ferries routes whatever threats are thrown at us," he said. ■

BECOME KING OR QUEEN OF THE CASTLE WITH UIA INSURANCE



As a valued RMT member, why not enter UIA's free prize draw for the chance to win a luxury 2 night stay at Augill Castle, Cumbria - worth over £700!

Augill Castle, situated in Upper Eden Valley, has gardens opening out to beautiful views of the nearby Yorkshire Dales and the Lakeland Fells beyond.

The prize also includes:

Breakfast & dinner daily, a bottle of wine each evening with dinner, bottle of champagne in room on arrival and £100 travel allowance!

Simply let us know your home insurance renewal date and we will enter you into a free prize draw to win this ultimate weekend getaway! Go to www.uia.co.uk/competition and take a few minutes to provide us with your details for your chance to win.*

For details of RMT member benefits on Home, Travel and Motor insurance why not visit our website www.rmtinsurance.co.uk

Alternately call UIA on 0845 842 8421
(Lines are open 8:30am-8pm Mon-Fri, 9am-1pm Sat)†.

*Closing date 30th September 2012. For full terms and conditions of the prize draw please visit <http://www.uia.co.uk/Competition/Competition-TCs/> † Calls will be charged at local rates. For quality and protection purposes your call will be recorded. We exchange information with other insurance companies to prevent fraud. UIA (Insurance) Ltd is a member of the Association of British Insurers and is registered under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act – No.2898R. Principle office in England at Kings Court, London Road, Stevenage, Herts, SG1 2TP. The RMT is an introducer appointed representative of UIA (Insurance) Ltd, which is authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority.



YOU HAVE A CASE, BUT DO YOU HAVE THE CASH?

WHAT PRICE JUSTICE? The government thinks it knows, £1,200 if you claim for wrongful dismissal. It's the same for race discrimination.

Even what the government calls a "simple claim", such as not being paid what you'd earned, could set you back £400.

Experts object, but ministers are still planning fees for most employment tribunal cases.

They see nothing unfair in this.
Nothing wrong that someone who has

not been paid the minimum wage could have to fork out more than a week's pay to claim it back.

And nothing wrong in making the costs system ever more complex.

Not only is the government chipping away at everyone's rights at work, ministers are making it impossibly expensive for many to enforce rights that they would not dare to attack outwardly, such as the minimum wage.

It's one employment law for the rich, another for the rest of us.



VISIT OUR WEBSITE AND DELIVER YOUR VERDICT WWW.STOPEMPLOYMENTWRONGS.ORG



REPRESSION IN KAZAKHSTAN

Kazakhstan union leader addresses this year's annual general meeting about the repression of workers in the former Soviet state

Esenbek Ukteshbayev, president of the independent trade union Zhanartu addressed delegates at the RMT annual general meeting in Torquay about the campaign to end repression in Kazakhstan.

He outlined how the authorities regularly viciously attacked trade unionists and other forms of intimidation and repression such as making up criminal charges and a number of activists have been imprisoned.

A lawyer defending trade unionists was sent to prison in December 2011.

Disturbing footage of troops opening fire on striking workers

can be seen on RMTv as part of an interview with Esenbek Ukteshbayev.

He underlined that strikes taking place included demands not only for improved wages and conditions but for the re-nationalisation of state industries.

"This is what the government is afraid of because they are aware of their criminal behaviour.

"All the state industries and resources was taken off the people and taken by the clique running the country as their own property," he said.

He said that the regime was



conducting a 'genocide' against its own people so Campaign Kazakhstan is an international campaign that has been set up to fight this injustice.

"It really shakes the regime that this international pressure is growing particularly from respected organisations like RMT.

"I have great respect for RMT as it is a genuine fighting trade union that seeks to defend its members," he said.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow presented Esenbek with a gift from the union and said that he was honoured to meet him.



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

Action for Rail - Day of Action: On August 14, 2012 the joint union Action for Rail campaign organised a nationwide 'Day of Action' with events at railway stations up and down the country in the UK's largest ever demonstration against fare rises.

RMT Cleaners Demonstration at Stratford Station: RMT cleaner members working for Initial and ISS demonstrated outside the Olympic Park at Stratford Station on August 9, 2012 as they kick off a 48 hour strike for pay justice and Olympics recognition.

CHANNEL 2 – NEWS BULLETINS

Shipping bulletin with Steve Todd.

Kazakhstan - Workers' Rights Under Fire: Esenbek Ukteshbayev, President of the independent trade union Zhanartu talks to delegates at the RMT AGM 2012 about the campaign to end repression in Kazakhstan.

CHANNEL 4 – RMT EXTRA

RMT at World Pride 2012: On Saturday July 7, 2012 London was the proud host of World Pride 2012 and as usual RMT was at the heart of the march to celebrate 40 years of pride in London.

We're All In It Together Album Launch. A 33-track double CD available to RMT members by sending £12 cheque to Red Planet Records, c/o Unity House, 39 Chalton Street, London N1 1JD

GET THE LATEST FROM RMT AT WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/RMTUNION WWW.TWITTER.COM/RMTUNION



LEGAL

YOUR LEGAL QUESTIONS ANSWERED

A selection of frequently asked legal questions answered by RMT solicitors Thompsons

What are the requirements for employers to report an accident at work?

RIDDOR is the law that requires employers and anyone else with responsibility for health and safety within a workplace, to report and keep records of:

- work-related deaths
- serious injuries
- cases of diagnosed industrial disease
- certain 'dangerous occurrences' (near miss accidents).

The requirement used to be for employers to report when an employee was "incapacitated" – absent from or unable to do work that is part of their normal duties – for over three days. But the government increased this to over seven days, as of April 6 2012.

The number of days does not include the day the accident happened.

Employers and others with responsibilities under RIDDOR must still keep a record of all

over-three day-injuries – if the employer has to keep an accident book, then this record will be enough.

The deadline by which the over-seven-day injury must be reported has also increased to fifteen days from the day of the accident.

I've heard that there have been changes in the rights of employees to claim unfair dismissal. What will the affect of this be?

The government has introduced a number of reforms to employment laws which reduce employees' employment protection and access to an employment tribunal.

The most significant of these changes is the extension of the qualifying period for unfair dismissal from one to two years, from 6 April 2012.

This means that although unfair dismissal is a statutory right available to employees who believe they have been dismissed unfairly or unreasonably by their employer, if they started their job on or



after 6 April, they must be in continuous employment with their employer for two years before they can pursue a claim.

For instance, an employee who started working for their employer on 21 March 2011 and was dismissed on 4 April 2012 can bring a claim of unfair dismissal as she only needs one year's service to qualify.

However, her colleague who started working on 21 April 2012 and was dismissed on 28 April 2013 cannot bring a claim as he doesn't have the necessary two years' service.

The qualifying period for the right to receive a written statement from an employer of the reasons for dismissal also increased from one to two years.

My partner is due to give birth in a couple of months' time and I would like to take more time off than the statutory two weeks. How do I go about that?

The Additional Paternity Leave (APL) Regulations 2010 give

fathers (and adoptive partners) the right to up to six months' paternity leave, which can be taken once the mother (or other adopter) has returned to work. Some of this leave may be paid if taken during the maternity or adoption pay period. This means that an employee may be entitled to APL in respect of a baby born earlier than expected.

To qualify for APL, the father or partner of the child's mother must also be an employee. The eligibility criteria for APL to a large extent mirror those for Ordinary Paternity Leave. You must:

- have been continuously employed for at least 26 weeks ending with the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth (EWC)
- remain in continuous employment with the same employer until the week before the first week of APL.
- be the biological father of the child, or married to, or the

partner or civil partner of, the child's mother

- have, or expect to have, main responsibility (apart from any responsibility of the mother) for the upbringing of the child
- be taking time off to care for the child – Reg 4(2) APL Regulations.

In addition, the child's mother must be entitled to maternity leave, statutory maternity pay (SMP) or maternity allowance (MA), and must have returned to work. For this reason, the right to APL is only open to employees whose wives or partners work. Spouses or partners of women who have decided not to return to work cannot therefore benefit from the right.

To qualify for APL, an employee must give their employer written notice at least eight weeks before the start of the leave, giving the date that the baby was due, the actual date of birth, and the chosen start and end dates of APL.

My wife was injured in a car crash that was not her fault. She has been advised by the other driver's insurer to accept £1,000 compensation. She's still in pain and having treatment several months after it happened. Should she accept the money?

It is likely that your wife's injury is "worth" considerably more than £1,000. She would need to get expert medical opinion to know for sure. No one injured in an accident that was not their fault should accept an insurance company offer without getting independent legal advice. She can do this through the RMT's extended legal service which covers family members injured in non work-related accidents.

Insurance companies make these offers to save money. They routinely call injured people with offers which may sound good, but they cannot make an honest assessment of the impact of your wife's injury, how long it will take for her to recover and what her losses will be

without investigation.

No one is under an obligation to accept an insurance company offer no matter how persistent the insurer is or what they may claim about it being a better deal than a lawyer would be able to achieve.

Independent legal advice may result in your wife receiving many times more compensation than the insurance company offer.

Can an employer discipline or dismiss an employee for capability reasons while they are off sick?

It is a common myth that workers cannot be sacked while they are off sick. Being off sick is no protection against being disciplined or dismissed for another reason.

One of the five fair reasons the Employment Relations Act sets out for dismissing an employee is on grounds of capability. Unscrupulous employers often rely on this ground when trying to avoid paying redundancy payments, claiming that an employee has been dismissed because of poor performance or due to long term sickness absence.

So employees faced with a disciplinary who are signed off as unfit for work simply to avoid attending a disciplinary hearing in the hope that the employer will not dismiss them, are not protecting themselves. Instead they are leaving themselves vulnerable to being dismissed on grounds of capability.

Whether or not the employee would succeed in a claim for unfair dismissal if this happens is dependent on being able to show that the employer acted unreasonably in all the circumstances, ie they did not act in the way that any reasonable employer would.

I have been off work suffering with stress which is being caused by issues at work. Can I sue my employer?

Claims for work-related stress are difficult. The worker first has to prove that they have a

psychiatric illness (the injury).

Then they have to show:

- That their working environment posed a real risk of causing the illness and the employer knew (or ought to have known) that they were exposed to that risk.
- That their employer knew that the difficulties they faced were so severe as to create a risk of an imminent psychiatric illness. This might be by producing a doctor's report or being able to show that they have been off work before due to stress.
- That their employer failed in their duty of care towards them. This involves showing that the employer did not do everything that was reasonable in the circumstances to keep the worker safe from harm – a court will look at how the employer dealt with any risks.
- That the harm they suffered was caused by their working environment and their employer's breach of the duty of care owed to them.

Proving that the psychiatric injury was foreseeable by the employer is a crucial part of any stress at work claim and is very difficult to prove. The courts have said that foreseeability depends on what the employer knew or ought to have known about the pressure on the individual employee at the time. That doesn't mean employers have to ask about a worker's state of health all the time, but if there are obvious things happening (for instance, the person keeps bursting into tears), then the House of Lords has said that they would expect a reasonable employer to realise that there might be a problem.

Once an employer has become aware that a worker seems to be struggling, they must investigate the problem and find out what they can do to resolve it. If they can show that they did this, by offering a confidential counselling service for example, they are unlikely to be found in breach of their duty.

Workers also have to show that it was more likely than not that their employer was to blame as a result of a breach of their duty.

I have been left disabled as a result of an accident at work. I have heard of Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit. How do I qualify to receive it?

You are eligible for Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit (IIDB) if you are disabled as a result of an accident at work or a disease caused by a job and if you were employed at the time of the accident. You must also be defined as having at least 14% disablement.

It is not means tested, is not subject to National Insurance contributions and does not affect any other national insurance benefits such as Employment and Support Allowance (previously called Incapacity Benefit).

However IIDB will affect income related benefits such as Income Support, Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit.

The amount you will get will depend on your level of disablement assessed by a doctor on a scale of one to 100. Disablement is assessed by comparison to a person of the same age and sex whose physical and mental condition is normal.

If a percentage assessment is made for less than 14%, providing it is registered at the time of assessment, it can be added to subsequent assessments in respect of further industrial accidents or disease. Even if each assessment is less than 14%, a payment of benefit will be triggered if, when added together, the assessments exceed 14%.

To apply for IIDB 90 days must have elapsed since the accident. Application forms are available from Jobcentre Plus, who will commission a medical report.

Awards of benefit are made for the period you are expected to continue to suffer from the relevant loss of faculty. Awards can be made for an indefinite period. ■

Bring Back British Rail

Ellie Harrison of Bring Back British Rail explains why the time of the campaign has well and truly come

We all know that the privatisation of our railways in 1994 was a disaster.

It has resulted in a raw deal for both staff and passengers in the form of job cuts and fare hikes. Renationalisation - the common sense solution to sorting out the mess we have been left with - has long since been RMT's policy.

Unfortunately, the Tories' 'there is no alternative' mantra did so much damage that there is still a lot of work to be done to re-establish this idea in everyday politics.

This is where *Bring Back British Rail* comes in. For the last three years, we have been working hard to build a mainstream campaign which unites employee and passenger concerns to popularise the idea of renationalisation.

From this perspective, last month's demonstrations against fare increases were a great success for *Bring Back British Rail*. We had interviews, discussions and images featured on BBC Radio 2, Radio 5 Live, The Guardian, Metro and Sky News ensuring that renationalisation became central to the debate.

For this reason, since the campaign's beginnings in 2009, its popular merchandise has been key to helping spread the word as well as raise funds to help continue our activities. If you want to support *Bring Back British Rail*, visit our website and get yourself a t-shirt, rail card wallet, badge or sticker and wear it with pride! Let's get everyone, in every part of the country, shouting in unison: 'Bring Back British Rail!' ■



Bring Back British Rail
info@bringbackbritishrail.org
www.bringbackbritishrail.org
www.facebook.com/bringbackbritishrail
TWITTER: @bringbackBR

President's column



NO TO SOCIAL DUMPING

Channel 4's 'Undercover Boss' on August 6 showed Stena Line CEO Gunnar Blomdahl, disguised as Norwegian hotel worker 'Per Hansen' on board 'Stena Mersey' from Birkenhead to Belfast, 'Stena Britannica' from Harwich to Hook of Holland and 'Stena Nordica' on the Holyhead-Dun Laoghaire crossing.

To make sure viewers 'got the point' of this TV ritual humiliation show (where bosses gain workers' confidence by 'going undercover' pretending to be a fellow wage slave to spy on their workforce), Per/Gunnar wore a Ken Dodd wig. 'You look homeless', trilled his daughter as he modelled his 'working class look' in her swanky London flat.

The programme showed Philippino cleaners working for Stena 11 hours a day, seven days a week, six months on, two months off for three to four dollars - approximately £2.56/hour.

In 2010 unions exposed Stena profiting from extreme pay discrimination. Historically, the UK's 1968 Race Relations Act excluded seafarers. It was entirely legal for shipping companies operating in UK waters, from UK ports to discriminate on grounds of national origin when it came to pay.

This deliberate practice of differential pay based on nationality, although clearly discriminatory, was even retained for UK ships when the Race Relations Act was amended in 1976. Whilst separate sleeping, eating or sanitary accommodation on grounds of race for passengers and crew was finally banned, pay discrimination continued to be lawful. The result, a vicious downward spiral of pay apartheid, illegal in any other occupation, that acts as an incentive to shipowners to export seafarers' jobs to the lowest-wage economies in the world and which should cause revulsion in any society based on equality, dignity and human rights.

Stena's response? This is 'normal practice' in international waters where the British minimum wage does not apply. Did Gunnar feel Stena treats Philippino crew equally? He told Channel 4: "We use Philippino crew to stay competitive because our competitors are working the



PROTEST: Southampton mayor Derek Burke and councillors joined the RMT demonstration to say "No to Social Dumping"

same way.

"They don't earn as much as others, but back in the Philippines they have much, much lower costs," he said.

Even the public relations propaganda of 'Undercover Boss' can't disguise the fundamental injustice and damage to our jobs caused by pay apartheid. The effect of workers doing the same job alongside each other for different rates of pay drags down wages remorselessly and is known as social dumping.

Social dumping in the maritime sector has been aided and abetted by EU liberalisation of ferry services since 2004. Irish Ferries quickly replaced 543 Irish seafarers with predominantly eastern European agency crew and reflagged its vessels to Cyprus cutting wages by half. In December 2007 the European Court ruled the Finnish Seafarers' Union and the International Transport Workers' Federation acted unlawfully to prevent Finnish ferry company, Viking Line employing Estonian crew on lower wages. In 2010, German-owned shipping company 'Merizon' using Estonian-flagged vessels, started a low-wage ferry operation between Liverpool and Douglas, Isle of Man, only halted by RMT's campaigning action.

The Daily Mirror has now revealed that cross-channel ferry operator Condor Ferries was paying Ukrainian crew less than £30 for a 12-hour day - that's £2.35/hour "including overtime". Condor vessels are flagged in the Bahamas, thus avoiding the 2010 Equality Act - which

now bans different pay rates for different nationalities on UK-registered ships.

According to one estimate the combined potential wage savings of UK shipowners is around £260 million.

Yet RMT's sister union the Maritime Union of Australia has recently won an agreement with statutory force that requires all ships using Australian ports to pay union-negotiated rates of pay to all workers regardless of nationality. The MUA also campaigns to ensure that employers and contractors employ Australians (especially Indigenous Australians) and provide much-needed training to young people.

RMT Docks and Shipping Biennial General Meeting this year called on our union to fight the race to the bottom spreading from deep-sea and cruise sectors to ferries.

So in August I joined activists, officers and executive members from RMT shipping branches outside Southampton Dock gates where P&O 'Carnival Cruises' pay Indian waiters on board its luxury liners £0.70 per hour (plus tips) and if they protest they are 'not required back'. Trades Councils, the National Shop Stewards' Network and even Southampton mayor Derek Burke and councillors joined us to give a clear message: "No to Social Dumping". RMT is working with all unions nationally and internationally to stamp out the scourge of social dumping.

Alex Gordon

SOLIDARITY WITH VENEZUELA



Mike Sargent took part in a Venezuela Solidarity Campaign visit to the country recently representing the union

As part of the Venezuela Solidarity Campaign delegation visiting this South American country I had the opportunity to see first-hand developments taking place over the last decade since Hugo Chavez was returned to power with an overwhelming mandate for change.

Under the current socialist leadership of the United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV), this oil-rich country has made amazing environmental, social and political gains.

There has been a huge redistribution of wealth away

from the rich minority and to poor communities and the state. The people, especially the poor, recognise this and are hugely supportive of the revolution.

One of the driving forces behind much of this change is the women's movement. Their influence within community councils and political life in general cannot be underestimated. Community councils are made up of groups within each neighbourhood they are highly influential in grass roots democracy and are predominantly run by women.

I was fortunate to meet a

number of leading women who impressed me with their diligence, drive and dedication including Egle Sanchez.

I also was pleased to meet Caracas Metro workers union president Edison Alvarado who took us on a tour of the new cable car station. Built at a cost of 1.5 billion dollars, it reaches up into the poorer areas and barrios of Caracas.

Before its construction people had to either walk up hundreds of steps or wait for dangerously rickety buses. Now, for a fare of just one and a half bolivars, around 15p, they can travel

swiftly and comfortably around the hills that surround the capital.

It was a fantastic experience for me and I am grateful to the VSC for arranging it and helping me to make contacts and friends for the future.

We are hoping to increase the size and frequency of solidarity delegations from British trade unions to Venezuela. ■

For more information, to participate in future delegations, or to organise special delegations, please refer yourselves to the Venezuela Solidarity Campaign, venezuelainformationcentre@yahoo.co.uk, www.venezuelasolidarity.co.uk



SHOW SOLIDARITY WITH VENEZUELA AN URGENT APPEAL FOR SUPPORT!

Venezuela is holding key elections in October and the Venezuela Solidarity Campaign has launched an appeal backed by the TUC and numerous unions.

RMT general secretary Bob Crow: "We oppose external intervention and believe the Venezuelan people should be free to determine their future. Please back this appeal".

As Venezuela approaches key elections US interventions will

aim to intimidate and isolate the people of Venezuela. The US is directing more than \$20million to the Venezuelan opposition to secure a compliant government and media lies have stepped up. VSC has a record of successfully exposing these lies.

Support for Venezuela is a real barrier to the US project of isolating and demonising the country. We are already increasing activity, but need extra resources urgently. We

don't get big corporate donations or government funding. £10,000 will mean we can put our plan into action – Please donate today!

You can donate online at www.venezuelasolidarity.co.uk

Donations can also be sent by cheque – or to affiliate your branch please send a cheque for £30 with your details- to Venezuela Solidarity Campaign, PO Box 56210, London, N4 4XH. ■

CROYDE BAY HOLIDAY OFFERS



Exclusive Croyde Bay holiday offers for RMT members

Trade unionists have been taking holidays and short breaks at the UNISON-run Croyde Bay holiday resort on the stunning North Devon coast for many years.

Set up by local government workers organised in NALGO back in the 1930s, Croyde Bay has gone from strength to strength and today it provides top class accommodation just a minute's walk from one of the region's most beautiful beaches.

RMT bus workers also used Croyde Bay's meeting facilities earlier this year to hold their annual grades conference.

Now Croyde Bay is offering RMT members discounted short breaks for a limited period and the chance to enjoy a holiday experience that brings people back year after year.

Brand new hotel accommodation • Summer chalets and self-catering cottages • Indoor pool, sauna, steam room, jacuzzi, gym • NEW spa treatment rooms • Three bars and two restaurants • Nightly entertainment • Minute walk to the beach



SPECIAL OFFERS FOR RMT MEMBERS

Autumn Leisure Breaks

November 16 – 18

December 14 – 16

£109 per person

Dinner and breakfast

New Year

Four Nights:

December 29 – January 2.

£299 per person

*Dinner and breakfast • New Year's Eve gala buffet
• A live band • Late disco and bar*

Call 01271 890890 to book quoting your RMT membership number

Croyde Bay Holiday resort, UNISON, Croyde Bay, Bruanton, North Devon EX33 1QB

Terms and conditions apply. Offers can be withdrawn at any time. Offers are for RMT members and cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. Offers expire November 1 2012.

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

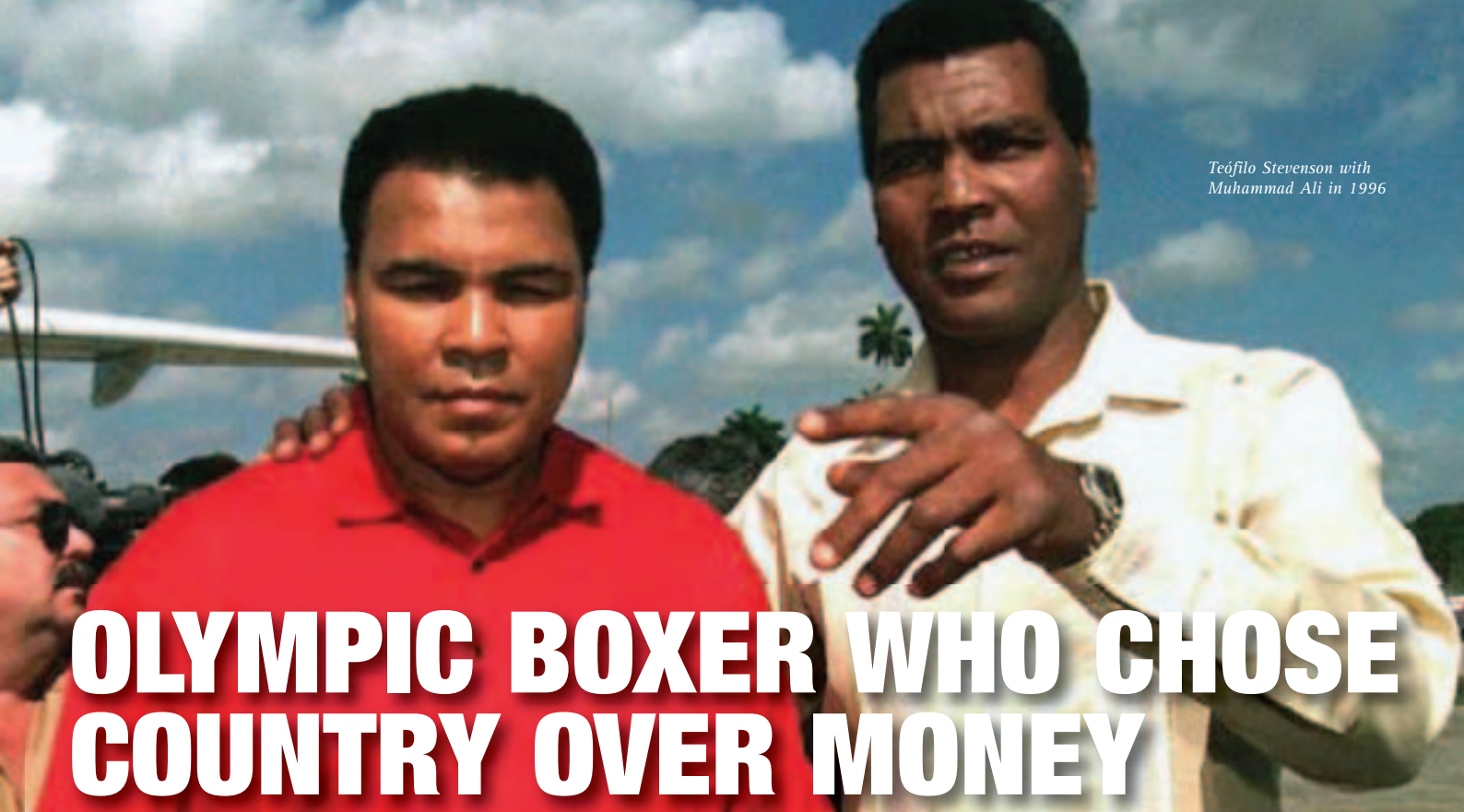
0800 587 7516 (0800 328 1014 in Scotland). Lines open 8.00am-8.00pm Mon-Fri (except public holidays) and 9.00am-5.00pm Sat and Sun. For the 24 hour criminal law line call 0800 587 7530 (0800 328 1014 in Scotland)

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PROTECTING AND PROMOTING OUR MEMBERS' INTERESTS



A photograph of Teófilo Stevenson and Muhammad Ali. Stevenson is on the left, wearing a red shirt, looking down. Ali is on the right, wearing a light-colored shirt, looking towards the camera with his hand raised. The background shows a cloudy sky and some foliage.

Teófilo Stevenson with
Muhammad Ali in 1996

OLYMPIC BOXER WHO CHOSE COUNTRY OVER MONEY

Cuban boxing legend that refused to fight Muhammad Ali in the United States Teófilo Stevenson dies aged 60

The greatest heavyweight in the history of amateur boxing, Cuban legend Teófilo Stevenson, died recently at the age of 60.

Teófilo won three consecutive Olympic gold medals from 1972 to 1980, but he is also famous for turning down million dollar offers to fight Muhammad Ali in 1974.

US boxing promoters Bob Arum and Don King tried, separately, to entice him away from Cuba to fight Ali, offering a fortune, but Stevenson said he'd rather keep the love of his people,

He would become an international political star at the height of the cold war with a short and eloquent declaration: "What is a million dollars' worth compared to the love of eight million Cubans?"

Paying tribute Fidel Castro said that Teófilo Stevenson deserved the recognition of the Cuban people.

"This young man, the humble son of a humble family said he would not exchange his people for all the dollars in the world," he said.

Stevenson's defiant stand

sent political shockwaves through the US establishment similar to the one Ali sparked eight years earlier when he refused to fight in Vietnam.

Ali's famous quote: "I ain't got no quarrel with them Vietcong" was not only a personal turning point but for the social history of the US and the growing anti-Vietnam war movement.

He was dragged in front of

the Illinois State Athletic Commission to apologise for refusing the draft but, ever defiant, he shocked them by simply saying: "I don't have to apologise, I'm not in court".

The US media and the US establishment, that now rewrite history and claim to revere him, led a vicious campaign against Ali, vilifying him, revoking his boxing licence and confiscating his passport so he could not

make a living abroad.

But he never wavered, inspiring a generation to resist and build the civil rights movement before returning to the ring in 1970 as a hero.

Stevenson and Ali are sporting heroes but their principled and defiant resistance to US imperialism against all the odds also remains an inspiration that can never die.



MUCH LOVED: Muhammad Ali receiving a welcome in Hong Kong in 1980 is still much loved and mobbed wherever he goes even today



ASHFORD BRANCH NOMINATES PAUL COX FOR SOUTH EAST REGIONAL ORGANISER FOR ALL MEMBERS	SOUTH LONDON RAIL BRANCH NOMINATES PAUL COX FOR SOUTH EAST REGIONAL ORGANISER THE SENSIBLE OPTION	HEATHROW EXPRESS BRANCH NOMINATES STEVEN SKELLY FOR THE COUNCIL OF EXECUTIVES	THE MEMBER'S NO 1 WIGAN BRANCH NOMINATES PETER PINKNEY FOR PRESIDENT
CHILTERN BRANCH NOMINATES PAUL COX FOR SOUTH EAST REGIONAL ORGANISER ALWAYS PUTTING MEMBERS FIRST	THREE BRIDGES BRANCH NOMINATES PAUL COX FOR SOUTH EAST REGIONAL ORGANISER WHY CHANGE WHAT WORKS?	HEATHROW EXPRESS BRANCH NOMINATES PETER PINKNEY FOR RMT PRESIDENT	PADDINGTON NO 1 NOMINATES MICK LYNCH FOR PRESIDENT
DARTFORD & DISTRICT BRANCH NOMINATES PAUL COX FOR SOUTH EAST REGIONAL ORGANISER ALREADY PROVEN IN THE JOB	FAREHAM NO. 2 BRANCH NOMINATE PETER GALE FOR REGIONAL ORGANISER FOR THE WESSX REGION AND URGE ALL MEMBERS TO GIVE HIM THEIR VOTE	EAST KENT BRANCH NOMINATE GARRY HASSELL FOR SOUTH EAST REGIONAL ORGANISER	THREE BRIDGES BRANCH NOMINATES PETER PINKNEY FOR PRESIDENT
DEPTFORD BRANCH NOMINATES PAUL COX FOR SOUTH EAST REGIONAL ORGANISER PUTTING MEMBERS INTERESTS FIRST	RMT OFFSHORE ENERGY BRANCH NOMINATES MICK LYNCH FOR PRESIDENT	EAST KENT BRANCH NOMINATES PETER PINKNEY FOR RMT PRESIDENT	PORTSMOUTH BRANCH NOMINATES PETER PINKNEY FOR NATIONAL PRESIDENT
EAST SUSSEX COASTWAY BRANCH NOMINATES PAUL COX FOR SOUTH EAST REGIONAL ORGANISER FOR ALL OUR INTERESTS	HULL RAIL BRANCH SUPPORTS MICK LYNCH FOR RMT PRESIDENT	EUSTON NO1 BRANCH NOMINATE MICK LYNCH FOR RMT PRESIDENT AN EXPERIENCED CANDIDATE	PORTSMOUTH BRANCH NOMINATES MICK TOSH FOR WESSEX REGIONAL ORGANISER AND URGES SUPPORT
GILLINGHAM BRANCH NOMINATES PAUL COX FOR SOUTH EAST REGIONAL ORGANISER A CANDIDATE YOU CAN TRUST	AYR BRANCH SUPPORTS MICK LYNCH FOR PRESIDENT	BRIDGEND, LLANTRISANT & DISTRICT BRANCH NOMINATE MICK LYNCH FOR RMT PRESIDENT AN ABLE AND EXPERIENCED CANDIDATE	CROYDON NO1 BRANCH NOMINATES GARRY HASSELL FOR REGIONAL ORGHANISER AND SEEKS SUPPORTS FOR THIS ABLE CANDIDATE
ORPINGTON BRANCH NOMINATES PAUL COX FOR SOUTH EAST REGIONAL ORGANISER FOR A MEMBER-LED RMT	DORSET RAIL BRANCH NOMINATE MICK TOSH FOR WESSEX REGIONAL ORGANISER A PROVEN AND ABLE CANDIDATE	BRIDGEND, LLANTRISANT & DISTRICT BRANCH NOMINATE STEVEN SKELLY FOR COUNCIL OF EXECUTIVE SOUTH WALES & WEST REGION	POOLE AND DISTRICT BRANCH NOMINATES PETE GALE FOR WESSEX REGIONAL ORGANISER AND ASKS FOR A SUPPORTING NOMINATIONS
RAMSGATE WORKSHOPS BRANCH NOMINATES PAUL COX FOR SOUTH EAST REGIONAL ORGANISER FIGHTING FOR OUR RIGHTS	UPPER RHYMNEY VALLEY BRANCH NOMINATES STEVE SKELLY FOR COUNCIL OF EXECUTIVES, SOUTH WALES AND WEST REGION	JUBILEE SOUTH BRANCH NOMINATES PETER PINKNEY FOR PRESIDENT	WEYMOUTH BUS BRANCH NOMINATE PETE GALE FOR REGIONAL ORGANISER WESSEX REGION A TRIED AND TESTED CANDIDATE

SALISBURY NO. 3 BRANCH NOMINATE PETE GALE FOR WESSEX REGIONAL ORGANISER AND ASKS ALL OTHER BRANCHES TO SUPPORT HIM	WINCHESTER BUS BRANCH NOMINATE PETE GALE AS REGIONAL ORGANISER-WESSEX REGION AND ASKS THAT ALL OTHER BRANCHES GIVE HIM THEIR SUPPORT	ANDOVER AND SALISBURY RAIL BRANCH NOMINATES PETE GALE FOR THE POSITION OF REGIONAL ORGANISER WESSEX PLEASE GIVE HIM YOUR SUPPORT	BRIGHTON AND HOVE CITY NOMINATE GARRY HASSELL FOR SOUTH EAST REGIONAL ORGANISER
BOURNEMOUTH NO3 BRANCH NOMINATED PETE GALE FOR REGIONAL ORGANISER-WESSEX REGION SUPPORT THIS CANDIDATE	NEWPORT ISLE OF WIGHT NO. 2 BRANCH NOMINATES PETE GALE FOR REGIONAL ORGANISER-WESSEX REGION AND ASKS FOR THE SUPPORT TO ENSURE THAT HE IS RETURNED	EASTLEIGH WORKHOPS BRANCH NOMINATES PETE GALE FOR WESSEX REGIONAL ORGANISER PLEASE GIVE HIM YOUR SUPPORT	SOUTH LONDON RAIL BRANCH NOMINATES PAUL COX FOR SOUTH EAST REGIONAL ORGANISER
BASINGSTOKE NO.2 BRANCH NOMINATE PETE GALE REGIONAL ORGANISER, WESSEX SUPPORT THIS ABLE AND PROVEN CANDIDATE	SOUTHAMPTON NO.5 BRANCH NOMINATES PETE GALE FOR REGIONAL ORGANISER-WESSEX REGION AND ASKS ALL OTHER BRANCHES TO GIVE HIM THEIR SUPPORT	EIRE SHIPPING BRANCH NOMINATES PETER PINKNEY FOR NATIONAL PRESIDENT	DOVER DISTRICT GENERAL GRADES NOMINATES PAUL COX FOR REGIONAL ORGANISER

£50 PRIZE CROSSWORD

No. 80. Set by Elk

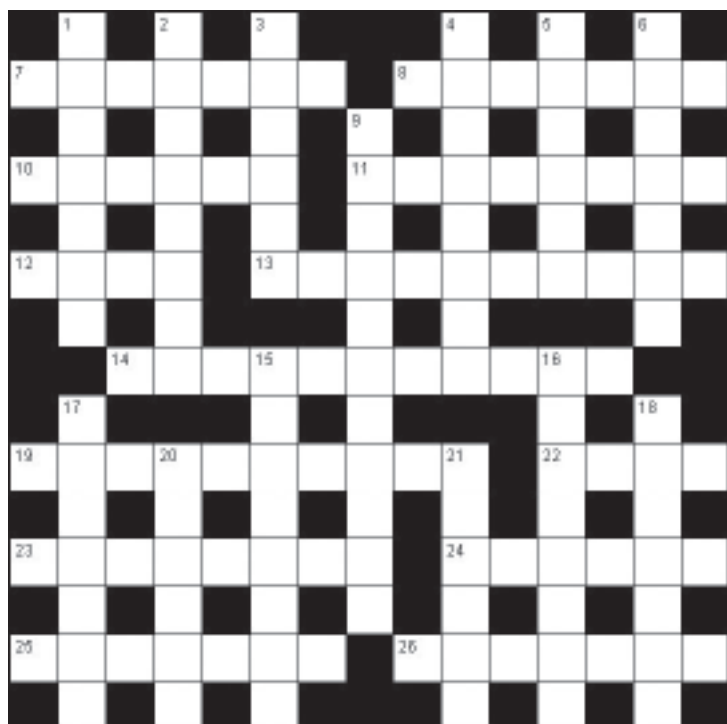


No. 79 solution...

The winner of prize crossword no. 79 is Jeff Kirk Dumfries.

Send entries to Prize Crossword, RMT, Unity House, 39 Chalton Street, London NW1 1JD by September 25 with your name and address.

Winner and solution in next issue.



ACROSS

- 7 Vessels plying to and fro (7)
- 8 Roy, author of rail cuts report (7)
- 10 Scorched; burnt at the edges (6)
- 11 Parts of dramatic serial; incidences of illness, say (8)
- 12 Nanny or Billy? (4)
- 13 Cleared of all blame (10)
- 14 Judicial or official inquiry - could be Spanish! (11)
- 19 Outward flights (10)
- 22 Colloquial expression for one working when others are striking (4)
- 23 Woodwind instrument (8)
- 24 Sailors' song (6)
- 25 Golden syrup - difficult to wade through! (7)
- 26 Answered (7)

DOWN

- 1 Meat from animal that sounds expensive! (7)
- 2 Venue for 2012 TUC Congress (8)
- 3 Used for sewing or injecting (6)
- 4 Mishap (8)
- 5 Natural light-show - Borealis or Australis (6)
- 6 Said; spoken (7)
- 9 What to do in London on October 20, for a future that works (11)
- 15 Straighten out from confused knot (8)
- 16 You'll find it in the way! (8)
- 17 Counters of money or votes (7)
- 18 Fought (7)
- 20 Overseas; out and about (6)
- 21 Female relative or union colleague (6)

JOIN THE CREDIT UNION AND WIN AN IPAD!

Join the RMT Credit Union before Christmas and you could win an iPad! The names of RMT members that join between now and December 20 will be entered into a prize draw to win the iPad.

It could not be easier to join your RMT Credit Union just visit www.rmt.org.uk/creditunion

Or email c.union@rmt.org.uk



IPad prize sponsored by UIA Home Insurance

UIA is a leading insurer within the trade union movement, specialising in the provision of low cost insurance to RMT and other trade union members. As a mutual insurer, UIA reinvests any surplus in order to keep premiums low. Many RMT members, including general secretary Bob Crow, are existing policyholders and already know what excellent value and quality service UIA offers. These underlying principles mean that RMT members can be sure of a consistently fair and honest approach from a company that shares our trade union values.

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Email address			
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2 Marital Status

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Drivers Licence No.

3 Your Employment.

Employer	
Job Description	

RMT Branch

4 Mr ☐ Mrs ☐ Ms ☐ Miss ☐

5 Membership Status

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- 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.
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- — 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.





A FUTURE THAT WORKS!

October 20, 2012

Mass demonstration against austerity in London

The TUC is organising a mass demonstration against austerity in London on Saturday 20 October 2012. A march through central London will culminate in a rally in Hyde Park.

BRING YOUR BANNERS

CUTS WILL KILL KILL THE CUTS

BRING YOUR BANNERS

