

Artful DODGER

No. 1, April '95 - Produced for the first anniversary of penalty fares

WE'RE NOT PAYING!

For millions of us, riding on the tube is mostly a means of getting to work. Often it's the most unpleasant part of the working day, and the bosses expect us to pay for it out of our own pockets! The bastards should be paying us! Every worker who's not completely resigned to their miserable lot knows that a spot of theft and sabotage help to brighten up the working day. So let's extend this into the miserable journey into work - let's refuse to pay their fares, and while we're about it, let's fuck up their advertising campaigns, their ticket barriers, their surveillance systems... Let's use our imaginations!

Transport is just one area where the bosses are tightening the screws, making it harder for us to survive on our meagre wages and benefits. Not just for us as users of transport but for transport workers as well, who have been sacked in their thousands over the last ten years. For us, the penalty fares introduced a year ago were just one of hundreds of attacks on the working class carried out over the last few years, from cuts in wages to cuts in health care. So what's so special about tube fares? Nothing, except it's an area where we can win easily. All of us were tremendously impressed by the anti-poll tax movement of 1990-1993 which showed clearly that mass non-payment and mass non-cooperation can be effective as a means of fighting back against attacks on our living standards. Once people realised bailiffs had no real power the collection of poll tax fell apart - billions of pounds is still unpaid! When enough people realise that ticket inspectors have no real power, the collection of penalty fares will collapse, along with the collection of normal fares!

Some people think that if more people dodge the fares "honest" passengers will pay more. In fact the opposite is true. The less we resist paying their fares the more they will increase them. How much do you think they spend on their overblown management or on installing the dangerous and inconvenient barriers? Do you really think that more fare revenue would be spent on improving the service?

FREE EVERYTHING!

For us, fighting for free transport is just one way of asserting our needs as human beings against the needs of a crazy system, capitalism, that puts profit before everything else. Just look around you at the barmy effects of putting profit before people: thousands sleeping on the streets, hospitals closing, people going hungry... While we stand at bus stops in the rain, the rich drive past in cars worth more than our houses. Where does their wealth come from? It comes from us! We say "stuff that, everything should be free!"

THE TEN POINT PROGRAM OF THE F.D.L.F.

WE DEMAND:

- 1) Free transport.
- 2) Toilets in stations and on tube trains.
- 3) Disabled access to all stations.
- 4) More buskers.
- 5) Graffiti artists to be encouraged.
- 6) Tubes to run all night (with triple rates for staff working unsociable hours).
- 7) Bins should be put back now that the IRA have decalared a cease-fire - LT management should make a positive contribution to the peace process in N. Ireland.
- 8) Reopen all pubs that used to be in stations.
- 9) Ticket inspectors to be redeployed to something useful.
- 10) Bicycles to be allowed on tubes.

and lots more besides...



News From the Fare Dodgers' Liberation Front

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS...

Penalty fares were introduced by London Transport a year ago on April 3, 1994. The inspectors who are supposed to enforce this policy have almost no legal powers. They rely on bluff.

The most misleading aspect of the LU propaganda is the way it gives the impression that an inspector can make you pay a penalty fare immediately. This is pure bullshit. The authority for introducing penalty fares comes from the London Regional Transport (Penalty Fares) Act 1992. The Act makes it clear that the only obligation on a person unwilling or unable to pay a fare on the spot is to provide a name and address. The inspector has no power to arrest you, nor even to demand proof of identity! If an inspector refuses to let you out of the station this technically constitutes false imprisonment. In practice, you should be careful when you give a false name - inspectors have access to a regularly updated data base which seems to mostly rely on the electoral register. They will usually insist on checking out the name and address you give them (although sometimes they only pretend to), so it's best to use one which actually exists.

If you dispute the reason for being given the fine you can give your reasons to the inspector or in writing

within 21 days. A valid reason is that there were no facilities available for buying a ticket at the start of the journey. Surely a ticket window with a long queue is not really "available"? Nor is a ticket machine that won't give change. Maybe you lost your ticket. This is the sort of tack you might try if you want to argue. On the other hand it might be worth just being polite - inspectors often let people off, particularly if they are obviously poor. Even if you don't give any reason at all (and assuming they've got your correct name and address!) the only means LU have of enforcing the penalty fare is by means of a County Court Summons. In other words, collecting their £10 will be similar to collecting the poll tax - almost impossible if we refuse to cooperate! So far they haven't even summonsed anybody, they've just send out silly letters which can safely be ignored.

...AND ABUSE THEM TO THE FULL!



Last Tuesday, John Locke walked into a West End car show room and asked to test drive one of their cars. After driving around for 20 minutes he and the salesman arrived in Hampstead, where the Chairman of London Transport lives. John stopped the car outside the Chairman's house and shouted out the Chairman's name. When the Chairman appeared John released the hand brake, put his foot down and drove straight into him.

Thanks to Penalty Fares people are getting angry with London Transport bosses.



In recent weeks we've been making improvements to some of London Underground's disgusting Penalty Fares posters found in tube carriages. Here's an example of our handiwork.

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OTHER THINGS YOU CAN DO (Besides not paying...)

- If you see someone else being hassled by an inspector, tell them what their rights are. Tell the inspector what a wanker you think he or she is! This demoralises them and makes them less confident about doing their job.
- Photocopy this newsletter at work and spread it about.
- If you give a false address to an inspector, why not make it the name of some scumbag who deserves to get a nasty letter from LU - your boss, your landlord, your headmaster, your probation officer....?
- If by some chance you've bought a ticket when you meet an inspector, take forever to find it.
- Always give your one-day travel card away when you've done with it.
- Deface LU's disgusting penalty fare posters whenever you get the chance. Let's vandalise their anti-begging and anti-busker posters while we're about it.
- Put chewing gum (or whatever) in ticket machines - make sure people always have a valid excuse for not having tickets.
- Next time there's a tube strike... support it by staying in bed or by joining in the action. You can help to make tube workers' struggles more effective by causing maximum disruption to the economy.
- Write to us and get some of our excellent stickers to plaster about.

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