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COMMUNICATION WORKER

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ballot special

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THE FIGHT IS ON!



AND HERE'S HOW

The fight for the shorter working week is now on. 73,349 postal workers (55%) said yes to action, this is proof that the majority of postalworkers are prepared to fight.

The last few months has seen an unprecedented attack by management upon our conditions. The annual pathetic pay rise has been coupled with cuts in overtime and increased casualisation. Workers have responded with over a hundred wildcat strikes. Management, and the government, have reacted by threatening to suspend the letters monopoly. But now comes the real test of strength, a national campaign of industrial action to win the first cut in the working week for 22 years. But now isn't the time to go over the arguments for the 3 hour reduction. Now is the time to argue how we can win the fight. The union bureaucrats are worried as to how far we should go. They want to limit any form of action to an overtime ban, or selective strikes (i.e. pulling out the big offices such as The Mount or West Central). But the strategy is doomed to failure. The recent Civil Service strike was run on these lines, and ended in a massive defeat.

There is only one way to win this fight, and that is an all-out strike. It must start now before the Christmas pressure starts. If management prolong the talks until after Christmas, as they did in '71, we will face a much tougher fight. The time to strike is now.

OUR CAUSE IS JUST, OUR ARGUMENT'S ARE RIGHT,
OUR STRENGTH IS SECOND TO NONE- LET'S USE IT
AND WIN!

FOR 73,349 AGAINST 58,917

A 55% yes vote now enables the executive council the power to call any action up to and including an all out strike. Under the new anti-union laws they have until the 10th December to do this.

TNT drivers have balloted 2 to 1 to take industrial action in pursuit of their pay claim. We must strive to make links with them, especially in view of what their management have been saying about ' a post box on every street corner.'

THE WAY TO WIN

If we are to win this fight it is essential that postalworkers take the running of the strike into our own hands. The day to day decision making, such as: picketing, spreading the strike, raising money, and other tasks must be made by the rank and file. If we leave it up to Tuffin and the EC to do the strike will undoubtedly be lost.

The size of the majority, and the recent wildcat strikes are ample proof that we are prepared to fight back. But all the time our leaders are trying to control and extinguish that fury. In London, during the summer, Mike Hogan (EC member) has asked strikers to go back to work so that he can negotiate with management. Meanwhile,, last week, Alan Tuffin said that if 'management attacks to provoke you, you must not react but await instructions from your union.'

We say, if management attacks, we hit back, if they suspend, we strike, if they bring in casuals, we picket.

WHAT MUST BE DONE.

1. Regular mass meetings at workplace levels, and election of strike committees.
2. Fight to make the strike all-out, overtime bans, 24 hour strikes are not enough, and are designed to divert our strength.
3. Scabbing must be countered by effective mass picketing.
4. If necessary the strike must be spread to other groups of workers handling mail, such as TNT drivers.
5. Set up workers support groups in your area.

'Communication Worker' is produced by a group of rank and file postalworkers. If you would like to find out more about us why not drop us a line. You could also make a small donation towards the cost of this bulletin, please make all cheques payable to P. Blake.

Rank & File Communication Workers Group, BM Box 3644, London WC1N 3XX.

message of support

Firstly, may I express solidarity with the postal workers in their fight for better conditions within their industry, and wish you every success. The principles of your demand will prove your most powerful weapon, how to carry these to your fellow comrades both within and outside your industry will see the fight through some very trying and dark times. The question of building solidarity must be one of your main objectives through rank and file mobilisation. The demand for total involvement of those on strike, through mass meetings on a regular basis and the election of strike committees that are accountable to the members at these mass meetings is a foundation to victory. The position of freedom of debate and association will be attacked directly by the full timers in your union, for they prefer total control and secret talks with management, the T.U.C. and A.C.A.S. and even Labour Party leaders rather than talk to the rank and file. You must fight to control your own destiny, the EC and General Secretary want only the yes vote to take action, then exclude you until it is time to sell yourselves out with a further ballot to end the action (EC "Don't blame us you voted to end the strike"). So time is of the essence, build now, all power to the rank and file. Make links with other workers for a united front (non-sectarian) through workers support groups both regionally and nationally even before the ballot result.

Rank and File Printer
(Ex News International)