

MASS CWU STRIKE

160,000 ROYAL MAIL & BT WORKERS WALK OUT TOGETHER!

- Coordinate across public and private sectors
- Kick out the Tories!
Build a new workers' party
- Renationalise Royal Mail, BT and all telecommunications under democratic workers' control and management

Postal workers made recently privatised Royal Mail £758 million profit in the last two years, essential workers who kept the service going through lockdown. And £400 million has been paid to shareholders in dividends.

The CEO got an annual pay and perks package worth £753,000. The deal included a bonus of £142,000.

But he expects Royal Mail workers to accept 2%, plus another 3.5% which they will have to pay for themselves through job losses and increased working. All the CWU is asking for is a pay rise that keeps up with inflation

The company is taking advantage of new anti-worker laws to bus in agency workers to try and break the strike. But the strike remains solid.

Socialist Party members visited hundreds of picket lines to show our solidarity with the strike. Everywhere cars tooted their support, as many workers understand that they might be taking action themselves soon.



NSSN RALLY & LOBBY OF TUC CONGRESS

STRIKE together

co-ordinate the action

Sunday 11 September, 1pm

Holiday Inn Hotel, Brighton

RALLY AND MARCH TO LOBBY THE TUC AT THE VENUE

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“We should all go to Brighton”

At every single picket line, there was widespread support for the idea that the Trades Union Congress (TUC) should make a call for all workers to strike together and to coordinate the action. Many strikers expressed an interest in coming on the National Shop Stewards Network (NSSN) lobby of the TUC on 11 September.

Striking CWU members on the BT Tower picket were looking forward to going out together with Royal Mail workers. One said: “This is a positive step and shows how we can win both our disputes.”

“If you don’t give people enough to eat, there will be riots and revolution. And that’s what’s going to happen”. A striking BT worker made this prediction at the Enfield picket line, north London, on 30 August.

On their first strike day in July, out of 6,000 workers in London, only 73 went in. And BT are striking with Royal Mail for the first time on 31 August.

Below are just some of the reports

Gary Clark, secretary **CWU Scotland No.2 Branch** (pc) said: “I got this from one of my members: ‘Hi Gary, I’m from Bathgate DO & today was the first time I’ve ever been involved in any strike action. I feel so proud to be part of an incredible union. Just wanted to thank u all for the amazing work u do for us”

As well as pay pickets at **Waltham Cross, Hertfordshire** were really angry about the attacks on working conditions. “They want to be able to turn us on and off like a tap. Annualised hours would mean delivering mail in the dark in the evening in winter. They call themselves a family firm, but we won’t be able to pick up our kids from school as we do now. They’ve even been telling us we’re not walking fast enough! After everything we did during the pandemic, turning the company around”. And there wasn’t much love for Labour, “Starmer is just a Tory with a blue tie” said one picket.

A worker at **Quinton, Birmingham** said: “At some point the employers will realise they cannot keep taking the piss out of all of us. This used to be one of the best paid jobs in the country. Now I wouldn’t even consider becoming a postie if I was young”.

In **Sutton Coldfield** management hired five extra vans, but couldn’t find any agency workers to drive them, and were forced to close the office.

In **Leeds** pickets told us that they had accepted the extra pressures during the pandemic, but now management are seeking to turn that into a new normal.

On the **Bristol** picket line, striking workers said: “If we all strike together we can bring the country down. Not the whole country, just the rich”.

In **Bromsgrove, Worcestershire** strikers asked the question: ‘Who is there to vote for, as Labour are as bad as the Tories’.

Even some of the agency workers refused to cross the picket line in **Ipswich**. Carl Williams, assistant secretary of the local CWU, said: “Something is happening in this country, and has changed in the last 18 months. People can only take so much”. Rob Richards, CWU Area health and safety rep stated: “It’s about time, workers fighting back against corporate greed. Enough is enough”.

York area CWU rep Neil Jones was critical of the TUC leadership, who he said should be uniting the struggles taking place.

In **Wednesbury, Sandwell** striking posties told us: “I’m working full time and I’m on the bread line”, but “we’re all in this together, our fight is your fight”.

John Wilkinson, assistant area rep for **Leicestershire**, and shop steward for deliveries at Leicester Mail Preparation Unit, said: “Royal Mail say that they’ve given us 5.5%, but they haven’t. It’s pie in the sky. Nobody wants to lose money by being out on strike, but we have been forced into this position. Our backs are against the wall. The pay increase is insulting to our members, and insulting to the service that we provide to the public. And the terms that they are offering are taking us back 100 years.”

The workers’ movement can win!

All of this shows why the **National Shop Stewards Network** rally and lobby of TUC Congress on 11 September to demand the action is coordinated in Brighton is so important. Get in touch to organise a contingent from your area – posties, BT, rail workers, teachers, NHS workers, everyone should come along to demand the lead we need from the TUC!

As Pete Randle, one of the victorious Coventry bin strikers, put it: “We’ll be joining the NSSN rally and lobby for a number of reasons. It shows the solidarity across unions. When unions come together it shows the force of collective action. It’s about the future fights that will take place. We need to strike, we can’t have a

pay cut. We need strike action right across the board. A general strike needs to happen and we have to build the momentum towards that. The unions must fight industrially, but we also need the creation of a new working-class party, we need to find a new political home.”

This strike movement could bring down the Tories - but Starmer’s Labour doesn’t speak for us. We need our own working-class voice! We need MPs who can give a voice to the growing industrial fightback. The workers’ movement should take the first steps now towards building that now, including preparing to stand candidates in the looming general election.