

POWERFUL ROYAL MAIL STRIKE CONTINUES TIME TO STEP UP THE FIGHT!

The strikes so far have been solid and the picket lines have been among the biggest we have ever seen. Up to 160,000 CWU members took action together across Royal Mail and BT on August 31. This is a game-changer and shows the power when workers strike together.

However, Royal Mail's top bosses, even while the strike is taking place, have accumulated millions of pounds in new shares. All this while imposing a 2% pay 'rise' and waging war on CWU members' terms and conditions.

It's time to up the action and name dates for longer periods of strike action!

It has now been discovered that talks have been going on behind the backs of the workers with the VESA equity group for a takeover of Royal Mail. And that the real reason for the attacks on our members is that they want to sell the company off with a defeated or weakened union. Then billions more will be given to the existing shareholders.

We must step up the fight to clear out these privateers and nationalise the industry under democratic workers' control and management.

- **Step up the action in Royal Mail**
- **All strike together - coordinate across public and private sectors**
- **Kick out the Tories!**
Build a new workers' party
- **Clear out the privateers! Renationalise Royal Mail, BT and all telecommunications under democratic workers' control and management**



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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TUC MUST ORGANISE NOW FOR MASS COORDINATED STRIKE ACTION

The 8–9 September Royal Mail strike days, part of historic coordinated action across CWU, come just days before the TUC meets at its annual congress.

Eleven years ago, TUC congress took place as the Tory/Lib-Dem coalition government unleashed its austerity offensive. Twenty-nine public sector unions came together during that week to coordinate strike ballots, leading to a two million-strong ‘N30’ strike in November 2011.

The struggle today is even sharper than in 2011. The attack on workers’ living standards is even more generalised, as the cost-of-living crisis hits.

No choice but to fight

Workers increasingly have no choice but to fight. The strike wave is accelerating. Most of the action has been localised, with Unite reporting that over 70,000 of its members have been involved in over 300 disputes. Bus workers have been to the fore as well as bin workers, in which the GMB have also been prominent.

But what has been a game-changer is the national strike action on the railways, and in Royal Mail and BT. The Unite dock strike at Felixstowe, where over half of the UK’s containers are shipped in to, is also of huge importance.

This has all raised the prospect of national coordinated strike action across all sectors against the cost-of-living squeeze and the crisis-ridden Tory government.

Those attracted by the fighting capacity of unions include workers not organised at this stage. Amazon workers’ anger exploded at the insulting ‘pay offer’ of between 35p and 50p per hour. Following the example of rail workers, they walked off the job. The prospect of building a fighting union

organisation among Amazon’s 75,000-strong UK workforce is now within reach. The same goes for other non-union employers.

The unions are becoming a pole of attraction for all those facing the crunch, even more so in the absence of a fighting political alternative, given Keir Starmer’s moving of Labour further and further to the right.

New workers’ party needed

This isn’t an argument for the unions to turn away from politics. The report that the campaign banner ‘Enough is Enough’ has signed up 500,000 supporters shows the huge potential if the unions were to launch a political vehicle that stands with workers and fights on a socialist, anti-austerity programme, including the renationalisation of the energy companies, utilities, the railways, and Royal Mail and BT. Such a party would lift the confidence of workers and strengthen the struggle.

Growing anger against the Tories could mean Starmer’s New Labour winning the next general election. But Starmer has made it clear that he doesn’t act in the interests of the working class. In such a situation, the existence of a new workers’ party – even with a handful of MPs – would be a vital political weapon in the hands of workers.

Tories can be defeated

The Tory government is weak and divided, and can be defeated. But that doesn’t mean victory is certain. The one thing that Britain’s capitalist class is united on is the need to make the working class pay for this crisis. To win, the workers’ movement needs determined action. The TUC should launch an appeal to build a massive strike fund to assist those unions on the front line, such as the CWU and the RMT. It also means a plan to coordinate.

The National Shop Stewards Network has again called a lobby of TUC congress, as it opens on Sunday 11 September, on the theme of: ‘Striking together: Coordinate the action’. It calls on the unions to draw up plans to bring together ballots and action.

Strike together

Given the stage of most public sector unions’ disputes, this poses action towards the end of autumn on an even greater scale than N30. But days of significant coordinated action can be called that build towards that.

If the national strikes on the railways, Royal Mail and BT were coordinated with the localised disputes, up to a quarter of a million workers could be involved. This would have a huge effect on the confidence of public sector workers getting ready to vote in national strike ballots.

The TUC has called a lobby of parliament on Wednesday 19 October against the cost-of-living crisis. Finally it has begun to publicise its intention to build for a mass lobby. Organised and built for properly, this should be a day when the streets of London are flooded with workers, especially those in dispute, taking action together.

It would be seen as a vital step in upping the ante against the Tories and the employers, and a platform to fight for mass coordinated strike action. It should also issue a promise to new Tory leader Liz Truss that any further anti-union measures would result in a 24-hour general strike.

Escalating action, up to and including a 24-hour general strike, is posed in the next weeks and months. The fighting unions and growing number of activists must campaign to make it happen.