



## SUPPORT OUR VICTIMISED REPS

A recent meeting of Finsbury Park branch played host to Arwyn Thomas and Eammon Lynch, two long-time RMT activists sacked by the company on trumped up charges.



**SACKED - Arwyn Thomas**

Arwyn, a Northern Line driver based at Morden, explained to the meeting how he had had a heated discussion with strike breakers on a strike day last October. The strike breakers made a complaint which was seized upon by management and ended in Arwyn's dismissal from the

company after 29 years' service. Since then, an employment judge has awarded Arwyn 'interim relief', which means that the company must continue to pay his wages and honour his contract until a decision is made at a full Employment Tribunal. This rare decision was made because the judge believes that Arwyn was dismissed because of his legitimate trade union activities and that he has a very good chance of proving it at the full hearing. The company was given the chance to reinstate Arwyn but, disgracefully and vindictively, refused to do so.

Eammon Lynch, a Bakerloo Line driver and Health and Safety rep at Elephant and Castle depot, was sacked last year after following an incorrect instruction from a Network Rail line controller. He

remains sacked despite the fact that another employment judge instructed LU to pay him interim relief until his full Employment Tribunal hearing. Eammon explained that even the judge could see that, based on all the evidence presented, he had been sacked because of his record as an effective trade union rep, and for no other reason. In particular, the



**SACKED - Eammon Lynch**

judge drew attention to the fact that the line controller had not been disciplined, despite his error, and other drivers who had made more serious mistakes had been

treated more leniently than Eammon.

## **VOTE YES**

Eammon's ET hearing is to be held on 14-17 March, whilst Arwyn's will be held on 23-26 May. In the meantime, they are paying visits to train depots around the whole combine in order to build up support for a fightback against the

injustice they have suffered. On 3<sup>rd</sup> March, Eammon and Arwyn visited Arnos Grove where they were given a warm welcome; thanks to some earlier publicity, Arnos drivers were generally well aware of their cases and expressed their support. Our union will shortly be balloting all RMT drivers across the combine for

strike action to force LU to reinstate our unfairly dismissed comrades. It's a battle we must win: if we allow our best reps and activists to be picked off by management, our union will soon be toothless.

**Vote YES. Reinstate Arwyn and Eammon!**

# **SAFETY BREAKDOWN ON VICTORIA LINE**

From Monday 21<sup>st</sup> March, the Victoria line is starting to roll out its training plan to all its train operators. There are, we believe, a few problems with this plan.

- The training has no competence assurance validation
- Block Marker Boards have still not been sighted (we are still awaiting a directors' meeting to address this problem)
- Key changes to rules and procedures have not been agreed with the union
- High speed shunt signals (ATP shunt) have not been agreed
- Exiting sidings using plungers has not been agreed
- Sensitive edge activations and how to deal with them has not been agreed
- Bi-directional movement in and out of depots has not been agreed

As you can see, a whole host of problems and this is not an exhaustive list. But how can you be trained on any of the above with the clear knowledge that it may not be correct?

**Firstly, you do not refuse to go to training but, when any of these items are raised, you must make it clear to the trainer your union's position, which is you must not sign to say you have been trained on any of the above.**

We have written to senior management seeking an urgent meeting to discuss and resolve this situation, but so far the silence has been deafening! Therefore, **a ballot short of strike action** (no loss of pay) is being planned. Please ensure you vote YES to action short of strike action to show them how strong our concerns are.

# Health & Safety News

## **RMT Stops Tubelines Safety Cuts**

Tubelines management recently tried to unilaterally extend the period between track walks from 72 to 96 hours. Safety reps working for Tubelines informed trains Safety reps about this change and it was agreed that this would have an adverse effect upon track safety. In fact, track workers stumbled across a potential train derailment site that may have not been discovered under the revised track patrolling proposals. Track workers' reps made trains reps aware and, as a result, they informed LUL operational managers who were unaware of the proposed changes and put a halt to the planned implementation date until full consultation has taken place. This is a victory for common sense and is a great example of the benefits of an all-grades union.

## **No Agreement on New DISI Book**

The RMT is against a third party having a say on the outcome of a train remaining in/out of service. The latest DISI book currently being given to drivers allows for train technicians and sometimes even managers to make decisions regarding certain train defects. **This new DISI book has not been agreed with the unions and you are advised, until further notice, to continue to work to the old one.** Drivers have the final say and the RMT will stand by drivers who exercise their right to taking a train out of service for whatever reason they deem fit.

## **Atrial Fibrillation – Don't Just Ignore It**

A cluster of drivers at Arnos Grove depot are suffering from a heart condition known as atrial fibrillation (irregular heartbeat). Drivers are encouraged to attend the next health fair (which will be advertised in advance) and have to their pulses checked. Don't wait until it's too late – your life is worth more than your job!

## **RESPECT OUR CLEANERS**

It has been reported to our branch that, on some stations, cleaners are not being treated with due respect by LU staff. Cleaners already have a rotten job for which they are poorly paid and where they are often mistreated by callous companies operating with Dickensian work practices. They do not need unfriendly and unhelpful treatment from station staff to add to their woes. **If you have dealings with cleaners, please remember that we are an all-grades union and that cleaners make up a good number of our paying membership and so deserve to be treated as well as anyone else.**

# March Against the Cuts!

Finsbury Park branch has vowed to support the TUC march against the government's cuts on March 26<sup>th</sup> by getting as many members as possible to attend. Are you tired of seeing thousands upon thousands being thrown on the dole, vital public services being cut to the bone, and pay freezes for the lowest paid whilst the rich help themselves to fat bonuses? Well, so are we. Join us as we march through London with hundreds of thousands of others to tell the government what we think of their plans.

Meet outside Finsbury Park station (Arsenal entrance) between 0900 and 0930. Look out for the banner. We will leave at 0945 for Victoria Embankment where the march will start. Details below.

London, March 26, Assemble 11am, Victoria Embankment

## **Every Tube worker is affected by government cuts**

Help play **YOUR** part - bring your workmates, friends and family

**The biggest attack on jobs and public spending since the 1920s will mean:**

- More than a million more jobs lost in the public and private sectors
- Worse health provision, schools and public services as government slashes funding
- Every household will lose an average £275 through higher VAT
- Benefits slashed and the value of pensions cut because the government has cynically changed to a lower measure of inflation
- Fees for Employment Tribunal applications, weaker health & safety rules and a massive cut in Health and Safety inspectors.

**Why Tube workers should join the demonstration on March 26**

- On top of the thousands of jobs already lost the government is cutting funding, which will lead to even more cuts, and more attacks on safety, pay and conditions
- London's mayor and the government want to re-privatise tube infrastructure at the earliest opportunity. They are already pushing a bill through parliament to sell off TfL land
- The Tories are also actively seeking ways of introducing driverless trains
- And to drive all this through without resistance, the mayor and government are considering plans to ban strikes on the underground.

**Say NO to government cuts. There IS an alternative. Demonstrate with RMT in London on March 26**

**Every Tube worker is affected by government cuts and attacks on rights at work.**

## **Next Branch Meetings**

***Twelve Pins Public House (near Finsbury Park Stn)***

***Thursdays 7<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> April at 1600hrs***