

Bakerloo News



National Union of Rail, Maritime & Transport Workers

August 2005

Bob on the Bakerloo

RMT General secretary, Bob Crow, took time out of running the national union and spent the morning talking to drivers and station staff at Queens Park station.

Station Assistant Patricia Mcdaid said "It was good to see Bob Crow on the station spending time with RMT members. Seeing Bob taking to drivers and station staff it is obvious that he values the views of all underground workers".



Bob Crow talks to T'Op Danny Johnson about joining the RMT

No price tag on safety

The events of the 7th and 21st July changed everything, so we are told by just about everyone. From Tony Blair telling us that imprisonment without trial is a calm and measured response to last month's bombings, to Met chief Ian Blair warning us that if he catches any of us running on a train platform, internment without trial will be the least of our problems. It is therefore good to hear the voice of reason emanating from London Underground management; or is it?

Doubts about Tim OToole's grasp of the situation were first aroused on the 7th July when he appeared on television at 4pm assuring the public that trains would be up and running by 7pm that evening. The events of the last few weeks have done nothing to reassure Tube staff that anyone in LUL management is taking the attacks of last month seriously.

Following last month's attacks it was clear to RMT that management's proposed job cuts in the name of customer led rostering would have to be abandoned. The shorter working week {SWW} would have to be implemented with an increase in staff numbers, not only to cover the extra time station staff would be taking off, but also to deal with the new security situation that OToole himself admitted might last for the next 10 years. However, LUL management are now busy pushing the 'business as usual' line, claiming that last month's

events should have no impact on the SWW negotiations. And while General Secretary Bob Crow has gained assurances from Ken Livingstone that there will be no reduction in numbers on London Underground, this does not answer union concerns about issues such as ticket office jobs, unstaffed stations and contractor access. In short LUL management are choosing to ignore the lessons that were learned the hard way last month and are instead pushing on with their plans to reduce staff establishments across the combine. To LUL the security of both staff and passengers is secondary to cutting costs, but RMT recognises that last month's attacks were as significant as the King's Cross fire in 1987 and that a similar response is needed.

In the aftermath of last month's attacks station staff numbers were augmented by untrained office staff and police from the BTP and the Met. This visible increase in staffing levels was aimed at reassuring the public, but if this is to be more than just a PR exercise then LUL need to invest in properly trained staff. The RMT's position is clear, as are our demands:

The implementation of the shorter working week by November as was agreed in the deal signed last year.

An increase in the staff establishment across all grades and throughout the combine with no unstaffed stations.

No to the remote monitoring of gate-lines.

No to the remote signing on of contractors.

A second appropriately trained member of operational staff on every train.

Furthermore, the union demands that the government withdraw its plans to water down the Section 12 regulations, put in place after the King's Cross fire and calls on Ken Livingstone to join us in this fight to protect basic safety standards on the Tube. Finally, to answer Tim OToole's concerns about where the money is going to come from for all of this. Simple, it is time for Gordon Brown to dip into that seemingly bottomless moneybox that he uses to pay for endless police overtime and to keep British troops in Iraq. There can be no price-tag on passenger and staff safety.

Branch Meeting
Upstairs at The Clachan,
Kingly Street.
Near Oxford Circus tube.
Thursday
1st September
16.00hrs

ALL GRADES UNITED IN ONE COMMON OBJECT

From heroes to zeros

One week Underground staff are being lauded as heroes: you get cinema tickets sent to your home; maybe even a box of chocolates as a thanks for your actions during the terrorist attacks. The next week the big stick is wielded and veiled threats are made.

LUL Top Brass are renegeing on the understanding if there is no radio, then there should be no train. LUL's Operational Standards Notice 48 flies in the face of the principle - no radio, no train. They even have the cheek to state this was agreed by the RMT. To add insult to injury they now intend to change the procedures on refusal to work on the grounds of health and safety. Let's be clear, management are doing this because they fear that drivers think the union's advice is safer than LUL's trumped up procedure. So rather than trust drivers to act safely, LUL are putting the boot in by attacking our refusal to work procedure.

At the emergency safety conference on July 27, Tim O'Toole said "we're going to have to provide a working radio, or we're not going to be able to provide a service." The latest safety bulletin from management says "we had to change our practice of providing service without a train radio." A complete volte-face. But what do you expect from this lot? Not heroism, that's for sure.

Good luck Bro Bowman

Paul Bowman, former level 1 rep for train staff at Elephant & Castle is moving to sunnier climes: Hammersmith depot! Assistant General Secretary, Pat Sikorski, will be making a presentation to Paul at the September meeting for his services to the Branch. All welcome.

Crime Group re-instated

Members will recall that a joint meeting of unions and staff was held to discuss the situation north of Queens Park.

The outcome of this meeting was that a number of requests were made to management to improve the safety of all staff in what is an increasingly dangerous part of the line for drivers and station staff to work on. One of the demands was the immediate re-instatement of a crime sub committee.

After the usual prevarication management have

now relented and have agreed to start up this group. The first meeting will take place in early September. Prior to this meeting with management, there will be a further meeting for all staff of all grades and unions to formulate plans. This will be advertised in advance.

If you have any issues you wish to be raised contact Jim McDaid on 07834 117378 or Mac McKenna on 07801071363.

Branch agrees to affiliate to Jean Charles De Menezes Family Campaign

The August meeting of the Bakerloo Branch unanimously agreed the following resolution on the shooting of Jean De Menezes at Stockwell Tube station:

"This Branch sends our condolences to the family and friends of Jean Charles de Menezes who was shot dead by police officers at Stockwell Underground station on 22 July 2005.

We believe that it is vital to establish a true account of the events which led to his tragic death and bring those responsible for his killing to justice.

We reaffirm our commitment to oppose all racist attacks against members of the community and further reaffirm our opposition to any Government attempts to use the terrorist attacks on London as an excuse to erode our civil liberties and democratic freedoms. We call upon the Metropolitan Police to abandon their shoot-to-kill policy.

This Branch agrees to make a financial donation to the 'Jean Charles de Menezes Family Campaign' and to publicise, support and participate in future campaigning events which it organises."

As a result the Branch donated £50 to the campaign and forwarded the resolution to the Council of Executives and the London Transport Regional Council.

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