

# Break the bosses before they break Royal Mail

- **Management threats can only be met by escalation**
- **Rank and file strike committees to control the dispute**
- **Defend public services: renationalise Royal Mail**

**THE 13TH OCTOBER** saw a solid strike on the first day in the CWU's campaign of 19 strike days up to Black Monday. Everywhere postal and Parcelforce workers held upbeat picketlines outside offices and depots.

The next day CEO Simon Thompson got his revenge by announcing plans for 10,000 redundancies including 6,000 "front line" staff by next summer. He claims that the company is losing too much money and contracts due to the strike. What about the half a billion pounds Thompson "lost" by giving it to shareholders, the board, and himself in the form of dividends, bonuses and share options?

### **Royal Mail digs in**

In fact, Royal Mail has been quietly planning deep cuts in offices and depots, taking tens of thousands of hours out with impossible plans, since the summer. They are blaming their cuts on the strikes—but those imposed unagreed revisions are actually part of what we are striking against!

**All these dishonest threats will just make postal workers more determined to fight for our jobs, not less.**

Despite six days of action in Royal Mail and Parcelforce, postal bosses have responded by digging in: continuing with unagreed changes and coming clean with plans to break up the company by changing the name of Royal Mail Group to International Distribution Services.

Behind this lurks a plot by billionaire Daniel Kretinsky and his Vesa group to take control of the company, break off the profitable international parcels arm GLS, and then likely move on to breaking up Royal Mail itself. The plans have been put on hold pending a government investigation. But don't bet on the Tories coming to our aid. To avoid a public outcry the government will wait to see the outcome of the strike before acting.

CWU leaders reported progress in talks last week, and even the possibility of a deal this week. But Simon Thompson binned those promises and then didn't show up for promised talks this Monday.

### **Escalate the strike**

It is good that the union's Postal Executive Committee (PEC) listened to members and escalated the strike, but is it enough? We are still only striking one day a week and as long as the parcels get delivered asap Royal Mail don't care if mail piles up undelivered for days or

even weeks. The union should expose that with a public awareness campaign and report the company to Ofcom.

Rolling strikes, with different functions out on different days, will create more disruption, but they mean crossing each others' pickets, and only start in November, again with one per week.

We have to assume Thompson represents the shareholders and is blocking any agreement. **The only answer to this obstruction—is escalation.** In a positive step towards this, the CWU has announced it will set up a proper strike fund to support workers who can't pay bills or buy food.

With hardship funds in place for escalation, let's use the pre-Christmas period to hit them as hard as we can—three days striking one week, then four, five, in the weeks before Black Friday—up to all-out if needed. **Workplace strike committees and city-wide rank and file committees** connecting the local units can keep members together, and ultimately **control the strike and negotiations.**

It's clear that this management is determined to derecognise the CWU in all but name, break up Royal Mail and cut the USO. **We need to launch a campaign to renationalise Royal Mail, linking it to the power of the strike.**