

- Escalate to all-out action
- No secret negotiations
- Elect strike committees to control the action

All out on 9 December: strike and demonstrate

Tens of thousands of postal workers will mass the picketlines then march on London today. Despite wintry weather and management harassment, strikers remain solid. Public support too has kept strong.

True, the billionaire press and TV grill union leaders like Dave Ward and Mick Lynch for Christmas strikes while letting the bosses, who are forcing us to strike off the hook. But a recent YouGov poll reveals this has only hardened public support for the strikes.

Strike at a crossroads

Nevertheless this week's talks failed to budge Simon Thompson on plans for slashing our terms and conditions, massive job cuts (including compulsory redundancies) and hiring a two-tier self-employed workforce. A deal that meets our key demands is not going to happen before Christmas.

Meanwhile the shopfloor offensive continues: managers bullying workers into taking more mail, while suspending 30 or more reps on trumped up charges, part of their plan to

bust the union. From 121s with managers to push redundancies through to the Ryder app drivers, they have tried every trick in the book – and failed.

On the contrary our battle has inspired other sections of workers, like the nurses, civil servants and ambulance crews.

CWU tops have said we will strike as long as it takes. Absolutely, but bosses will continue imposing change in the workplace, with slash-and-burn revisions ramped up after Christmas. The truth is we could have finished it by Christmas if we had gone all out.

The CWU leadership claimed members couldn't afford to escalate. This is an excuse. They had months to build a strike fund and solidarity movement. What else was Enough is Enough supposed to be for? Unbelievably strikes were cancelled for three whole weeks in November for fake talks. We need to demand they call all-out action now.

Rank and file control to win

Members were told that striking is only one tactic. In reality the 9 December rally is the first and so far only other tactic they've come up with.

Strike action is our most powerful weapon. Union HQ's strategy of turning the strike on and off in hopes of pressuring Royal Mail into a deal was never going to work. Shadowy billionaire Kretinsky, nesting in his tax haven Luxemburg and backed by the Tory government, was always pulling the strings.

Workers should use today's picketlines and the London demo to discuss the way forward, how to develop the momentum locally and nationally. How we can build rank and file organisation with members' meetings, electing workplace strike committees and cross-function committees of delegates from the offices, mail centres and RDCs.

They should demand an immediate escalation to all-out in the New Year, while building for action locally with walkouts or ballots against the victimisation of strike leaders, against outrageous revision plans to gut the existing workforce and impose owner-drivers. We say: jobs for all, on equal pay and conditions.

But offices should not be left to fight alone. City and region-wide ballots should be organised. Branches and reps should hold a national meeting of the militant minority to push for more action.

If Royal Mail retaliates by ramping up suspensions or winning an injunction, we should remember that an unofficial strike in August 2007 broke them. We can do that again, only this time we can call on solidarity from the million other trade unionists who are striking this month.

The *Financial Times* says that if all December's strikes were coordinated for just two days running, it would know 0.3% off annual GDP. That's the power we've got. Let's use it.

While supporting every positive initiative by the union leaders, the fact is they won't do it. The mass picket lines show the workers can. This month's strike wave gives us a golden opportunity to build solidarity and coordinate our actions. But without the rank and file taking control of the strike from below, we face the possibility of a bad deal or, for the first time, no deal at all and a busted union.

This is the fight of our lives, so let's fight!