

Swindon RMT Bulletin

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Support The Signalling Workers.

RMT Sets Up Fund

Although the signalling dispute is in relation to the wages of a single grade, the outcome will be important for the interests of all rail workers. Should we win this dispute then the gung-ho managements in all the various railway businesses will be reined in. The first steps towards privatisation have meant that management in all these businesses have sought to attack our conditions of service, in order to cut costs. Profits not only come before the wages and conditions of the workers in the industry, they come before the service provided and safety as well.

The dispute is a test of the ability of these managements to **worsen** our conditions of service in their quest for profits. It is clear that 25-30% of the staff involved would actually suffer a drop in take-home pay, and this for more 'productivity'! They have talked of 'compensation' but when pressed on what this would be, part-time Bob Horton wriggles like a snake.

Make no mistake, if management are able to turn Sunday into a normal working day (ending double time) for signal staff, other managements will try to do the same for all those who work weekends.

It is therefore in the interests of all union members to ensure that the action by signalling staff is maintained. The union therefore has decided to launch a national **fund**, directed not only at other rail workers, but at all trades unionists. Locally, Swindon Trades Union Council has issued an appeal to all the local unions calling for contributions from trades union branches and collections in the workplace.

So far as RMT members are concerned we are asking for a weekly workplace collection - whatever you can afford. Either pay your money to the subs collector or the secretary. We must all support the signalmen/women.

These workers need and deserve the support of all rail workers.

Railtrack Contempt For Safety.

In their desperation to run a few trains Railtrack have broken their own safety policy. Managers with no experience of working in panel boxes have been pressed into working, in some cases against their wishes. They tell us they have been threatened with the sack if they refuse. Signalmen/women are quite rightly angry about this because they have to work under a very strict safety discipline. Yet managers who have not been trained to work in a particular box are operating them. This not only shows contempt for the safety of passengers. The managers who are doing this dirty work - some are refusing to do a job for which they are not trained - can be sure that if they commit any errors, Railtrack will drop on them from a great height.

We were told under the new railway that 'safety will not be compromised'. In the light of this experience we can see that this is a sick joke from a management which is acting as nothing more than government yes-men.

**RMT AGM CALLS FOR RAIL RENATIONALISATION
- WITHIN FIRST YEAR OF LABOUR GOVERNMENT.**

At its AGM in Liverpool at the end of June, the RMT passed the resolution from Swindon Rail branch calling for renationalisation of the industry within the first year of an incoming Labour government. Frank Dobson, Labour Party spokesman expressed the commitment to renationalise "the whole network". The mover of the resolution called on the union Executive Committee to meet with Labour leaders to prepare a renationalisation Bill which could be quickly put forward in the new parliament, should Labour be elected. The resolution was passed unanimously.