

★ SUPPORT YOUR POSTIES!

Postal workers go on strike from Thursday over what Royal Mail claim is to prevent modernisation. In reality, this is a dispute that has come to a head over Royal Mail's inability to stick to agreements made previously and their desire to increase the workload but decrease the pay.

Royal Mail has stated figures are down to justify their plans. Yet this is an age where the post is used more than ever on a daily basis, with sales for clothes, books, films and video games from the internet being constant, possible day or night. Then there are the bills, the statements and the letters from the council, which will always remain on paper until internet usage is even near widespread. There's also something you might not know about, but have seen in the morning; stamps on envelopes, usually junk mail, from delivery companies like TNT and UK Mail. What this means is private companies have bidded for Royal Mail contracts, have piggybacked off the postal system and have had their tat delivered by the post man or woman at little cost.

But they're right, figures are down. Only it's not from less mail but their fiddling of the

figures. Post is sorted into boxes and counted at sorting offices. The volume is judged by an average. An estimate was agreed by the union and management to be 208 letters per box. However Royal Mail decided the estimate was 150, without any actual appraisal. This enabled them to claim there was a 10 per cent reduction. Suspicious of the figures, the union had counts done manually at random, for a two week period in different sorting offices. On average, there was 267 items.

In 2007, following strike action, workers made the compromise of improving their attendance and productivity whilst reducing cost in order to improve conditions such as some being on 4 day weeks without change in pay. There was also a bonus scheme where by workers saving money in sorting offices received half the amount split amongst the workforce. Both of these were scrapped by Royal Mail, ending bonuses, reverting people back to 5 day weeks and cutting pay and jobs. This is happening whilst Royal Mail is enjoying profit to the tune of £321 million. It's not really success begets more success, evidently. Incidentally, it's only the bosses still retaining



their bonus.

The delays have been blamed purely on the strikes. But Royal Mail hasn't been very quick to mention the process of absorption, where workers are expected to deal with someone else's round without extra pay. So if for any reason, one person has to take on another's work, the post either doesn't get sorted in time, or much of it comes back to the sorting

office.

Strikes aren't won by popular support but it certainly strengthens them. Working class people (that is the vast majority of the world's population, so it probably includes you) need to stick together as they get stronger and weaker respectively, as a whole. If the postal workers win their strike, it will embolden other workers elsewhere to strike themselves and struggle for demands. If they lose, others will face attacks and redundancies. Full time contracts are no longer attractive and casualisation is seen as necessary across the board so other public sector industries will be next.

For those unhappy about the lack of post, bear in mind those workers on strike will be lacking some of their pay. But ultimately, if Royal Mail gets their way, your postal service will be lacking and not just one or two days due to strike. It will be all the time, because already stretched workers will be struggling with not enough of them to do the job properly. Support your posties, not the dismantling of our postal service.

For more information - <http://www.supporttheposties.net>



Anarchist Federation A New World In Our Hearts.

The Anarchist Federation is a growing organisation of anarchist communists from across the British Isles who aim to abolish capitalism and all oppression to create a free and equal world, without leaders and bosses, without wars or environmental destruction.

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