



# POST WORKER



*Start the ballot if no agreement...*

## LEIGHTON IN TROUBLE KEEP UP THE PRESSURE

**O**ur strike ballot campaign has forced Royal Mail to back off from its imposed pay deal.

Management from Allan Leighton downwards told us that the pay was a closed issue and that we had better get used to it.

Now, after we came to the brink of starting a strike vote, the business has shifted its ground and conceded that the 2.9 percent settlement will flow through to all allowances (including London Weighting) and scheduled attendance.

True, the additional money is from July, not April, but it will mean improvements for subsequent years.

The progress made on pay and the Efficiency agreement, and management's change in attitude over imposing the deal and effectively derecognising the union were the reasons given why the National Officers decided not to issue the strike ballot notice.

Our meetings, our campaigning, our determination, our readiness to fight have made Leighton and Co think again.

Perhaps the final straw was the humiliation when management tried to set up phoney consultation meetings for union reps to listen to the business case. Everyone said they'd boycott them.

Then they scoured the offices looking for individuals to come to the meetings who could be bullied or bribed into claiming to represent their mates. Even then only a few

dozen turned up.

So we've wounded the other side. But it's crucial we don't let up the pressure because there are lots of issues outstanding which in the longer term will be much more far-reaching than a single pay deal.

- **Door to door:** Management want to remove the current restraints on door to door by September 06 with no remuneration for Delivery workers. So what will happen to the £30 or £40 a week that lots of us get from the current agreement? What will happen to our earnings?

- **Vacancies:** management will give a guarantee that present full time jobs won't go part time which is a legal contractual obligation. But they won't guarantee that when full time vacancies arise that they will not automatically revert them into part time hours. This is crucial for our futures and the maintenance of full time jobs.

- **Pensions:** there is extra cash for the pension fund, but no guarantee that our contributions rate and pension age will stay as it is over the coming years.

- **Walk sequencing:** there are no terms of reference for the trials of this new technology which could potentially transform the job disastrously. The company has offered a mission statement, but no details.

- **Attendance procedure:** management want a new system introduced immediately which will no doubt aim to make it easier to sack people. This is completely unagreed and no proposals on details have been given.

And this isn't even to mention issues such as a shorter working week, reaching average pay, the plans for 40,000 job losses, outsourcing, MDEC pay, teamworking, Share in Success, privatisation and share sales.

On Tuesday (4 July) the postal executive decided that if there was no prospect of an agreement on the major issues by Friday 7 July, then the strike ballot notice should go ahead.

If fruitful talks are continuing then the ballot notice will be delayed until Monday and the postal executive will then examine what's on the table.

If there is no acceptable agreement then the ballot notice will go out on Monday 10 July.

We must not stop campaigning. Leighton may feel that his concessions on pay have killed the mood. But the future of all of us is at stake over the wider issues that have fuelled our readiness to ballot.

The campaign has brought 136,000 workers across Britain together and prepared them to go into battle.

That mustn't be thrown away. Unless there is a good agreement on the central issues then we should immediately issue the notice for a strike ballot and fight for our futures.