



POST WORKER



An important battle for us all...

FULL SUPPORT FOR EXETER STRIKERS

OVER 400 CWU members in Exeter mail centre will strike on Monday (4 December) in a very important battle for all of us.

Management say they are going to ship in hundreds of managers to entirely take over the work at the mail centre for the day. That's largely bluster (do you think they could do the work, however many of them there are?), but it does show how seriously they take this dispute.

At the centre of the strike are union rights and management's desire to impose changes without agreement.

In September Exeter workers walked out spontaneously after a union rep was disciplined without bosses going through any of the normal procedures.

After a week on strike they won justice for the union rep, defended their rights at work and concluded a satisfactory return to work deal.

But now bosses have backtracked on that agreement and gone on the attack.

The union branch secretary has been barred from his office and must make an appointment to enter the mail centre building.

Union reps have been told they must give ten days notice if they want paid or unpaid leave for union duties.

An agreement on duty swaps has been torpedoed by management insisting that if any duties are swapped then they must remain swapped.

Finally a deal at the end of the strike over SAs and overtime has been overridden.

Exeter management may be particularly confrontational, but the issue of bullying from the top is familiar to most of us.

Unagreed

At the moment across Britain there are offices with strike ballots or actual disputes brewing over the ripping up of contracts, imposing part-time jobs, cutting duties, trialing new ways of working without agreement and much more.

And then in the wings are team-working and team leaders, mail centre closures, a new attendance procedure, walk sequencing, the wage-cutting implementation of the working time directive, and, it seems, the return from the dead of the privatising shares scheme.

There needs to be a national response to what has become a national and coordinated series of assaults.

But we need to support every battle that is happening at the moment.

Exeter's struggle is important. It

deserves support from every level of the union.

Send messages of support to South West No 1 branch — e-mail cwusw1@yahoo.co.uk fax 01392 448 225 or phone 01392 448 225.

And, if you can, get to the picket line on Monday (from 2pm).

But unless management back off there also needs to be escalation to increase the pressure.

The danger otherwise is that Exeter bosses unveil a whole new series of punitive measures after the strike—even though it is an entirely legal strike that has hurdled all the obstacles of the anti-union laws.

Plymouth mail centre is also in dispute, and Bristol has just begun the balloting process. Truro and Barnstable delivery offices are in dispute with managers.

So it is possible to work towards a regional day of action where all the big mail centres come out together.

That would definitely stretch Royal Mail.

Let's get behind Exeter and make sure they are not isolated—and let's push for the national action we need to halt management's attacks.

●Post Worker is the rank and file newspaper for postal workers. It has news, views and debate from postal workers across Britain.

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