



Remploy Consortium of Trade Unions Newsletter

No 4: October 2009

2009 PAY AND CONDITIONS UPDATE

TUC

A small delegation of Remploy workers visited the TUC at this years Conference in Liverpool. As always at the TUC we had a very warm and supportive welcome from delegates from all the affiliated unions. We handed out leaflets informing delegates of the current situation in Remploy. Les Woodward who is the GMB delegate to the TUC Disability Committee will be giving a full report to the Committee that meets on the 15th October at the TUC in London.

As always in the TUC there are MPs and even Ministers. We were able to speak to Maria Eagle, former Minister for Disabled People and MP for Walton and her sister Angela who is MP for Wallasey. Both MPs were very disappointed at the way the Company is being run and that industrial relations have plummeted and promised to intercede on our behalf to Jonathan Shaw. We also managed to speak to Michael Meacher MP for Oldham West and Royton who is a long time supporter of Remploy and the factory in Oldham. He promised to help in any way he can once Parliament re convenes week commencing 12th October.

Labour Party

A delegation of Trade Union activists from all over the country, lobbied the Labour Party Conference in Brighton. This is an annual event, but this year it has been subject to interference by both the Company and Government.

The Company stated that it is not appropriate for employees to lobby a political party despite the fact that the factory network has been decimated by political decisions made by the very people who attend the conference, and have threatened to withhold pay for those that did attend. To make things worse and it would be absolutely laughable if it wasn't so serious, the Government has now told us that we are all Civil Servants.

Of course this has major implications for our terms and conditions. First and foremost: Are we going to receive an allowance for pin stripe suits, bowler hats, broly and briefcase, which is the standard garb for males and will the ladies receive the same for their business suits? Are we going to have time to change into our new work wear in work and most importantly and seriously what are the implications for our pay and pensions. If we are classed as civil servants, we want Civil Service Terms and Conditions and pension provision.

“Man of the Match” award must go to James Stribley who as a delegate to the conference from the Yorkshire Region got a standing ovation for his speech asking the conference to make reference back on Remploy. This in effect keeps Remploy on the Labour Party agenda at least for another year.

CCTV

In recent weeks two CCTV Operators, from separate sites (one a shop steward) have fallen victim to both Remploy and the client. The client has insisted that they do not want them to work on site and Remploy do nothing to protect the employment rights of their employees. By the time you read this newsletter both operators will have been dismissed. To do this Remploy has used a clause relevant to Interwork which bypasses the policies and procedures within the Accord, to dismiss them. One of the operators has not even had a reason given to him for his removal from the client, and Remploy is not standing up to these clients to defend its workforce.

All operators are liable to the same treatment and there has never been a better reason to get protected by joining the GMB, and at least having someone to stand up to clients who are too big for their boots, and Remploy managers who are;

- Using the client as a means to an end
- Too afraid to stand up for your rights
- Have no compassion towards its employees

If you work for CCTV and are not in the Union then join the GMB now. You know it makes sense.

York

We are well on the way to making the dream of a Workers Cooperative in York for disabled workers a reality. We have put a Business Plan together and have had positive responses from potential customers such as Trade Unions and other Organisations. We met several of these at the TUC and were promised support in the way of orders should the Cooperative get off the ground. John Wilson ex-Remploy York Team Leader has been doing sterling work fronting up our organisation in York and has gained further funding from the Yorkshire region, for which we are grateful. As the York Workers Cooperative story unfolds we will keep all our members up to date.

Don't forget:

We urge all our members to write to their own MPs and the Prime Minister

Tim Matthews and Sue Butcher are destroying the industrial relations in Remploy as well as destroying Remploy itself. Sue Butcher has not ruled out high bonuses for 2009 for the 29 senior managers and directors.

Trade union members in Remploy must be prepared for a long and hard fight with these Victorian mill owners!

Join the Union and let the professionalism of GMB protect you at work!

www.gmb.org.uk