

Australian educators stand with London bus driver David O'Sullivan and demand his reinstatement

The Committee for Public Education
1 June 2021

The World Socialist Web Site has received numerous statements of support from Australian educators and members of the Committee for Public Education (CFPE) demanding David O'Sullivan's reinstatement at Cricklewood bus garage in London. At meetings of the CFPE, a rank-and-file group of teachers, education staff and academics, resolutions have been unanimously adopted in support of the campaign which can be read [here](#).

Visit [here](#) to find out more and join the campaign for David O'Sullivan's reinstatement. You can donate to O'Sullivan's legal defence [here](#).

Sue Phillips, primary school teacher in Melbourne and national convenor of the CFPE

I proudly stand with David O'Sullivan, the London Bus Drivers Rank-and-File Safety committee and the Socialist Equality Party (UK), alongside thousands of workers worldwide determinedly fighting for O'Sullivan's reinstatement.

O'Sullivan's courageous exposure of the unsafe conditions at his workplace as a result of the murderous policies of the Johnson government and Metroline should be applauded, while the collusion and betrayal of the Unite union and the Trades Union Congress loudly condemned.

In September last year, in the midst of thousands of COVID-19 infections raging across Britain, and the forced opening of schools, bus drivers at Cricklewood garage took the decision to take matters into their own hands and form a rank-and-file safety committee. Their decision was driven by the urgent need to protect not only their own lives and families, but also the thousands of workers, pensioners and young people who board the buses every day.

The launching of the safety committee provided a political lead to workers everywhere. The powerful resolution passed in establishing the committee made many critical points that are worth repeating:

“We are not cattle and will not be sacrificed to protect the profits of the corporations and banks who have made a financial killing during the pandemic. Against the Johnson government, and its backers in the Labour Party and Trades Union Congress, we make our appeal to the working class.”

“Our lives and safety are non-negotiable! Our loyalty is not to the billionaire shareholders who own the major transport companies but to our fellow workers, their families, and the travelling public whose lives are being endangered through corporate negligence. Nothing will change unless we decide to change it, and for this to happen we must act as one!”

Fearing the establishment of the committee and any independent movement from below, Metroline, with the full support of the Unite union, which exists to strangle any action of workers outside their bureaucratic control, have moved to victimise, silence and sack O'Sullivan.

The Committee for Public Education (CFPE) in Australia has pledged to support and to publicise O'Sullivan's case among educators, university workers, parents and students. Sullivan's defence against victimisations and the fight for his reinstatement has universal significance.

As the bus drivers' rank and file safety committee stated above: “Nothing will change unless we decide to change it, and for this to happen we must act as one!”

Kaye Tucker, teacher in Sydney and CFPE member

I salute David O'Sullivan for the courageous stand he has taken in highlighting the dangers of COVID infections at the Cricklewood bus garage in London. With over 60 bus drivers' lives already lost, this is clearly a life-and-death issue. O'Sullivan is standing up for workers internationally by upholding his colleagues' right to a safe and secure workplace.

Teachers in Australia know too well how little regard there is for the well-being of workers, having been forced back into unsafe working conditions and subjected to a very public “shaming” campaign by federal and state governments.

Just as the bus drivers' union, UNITE, has abdicated any responsibility for the health and safety of bus drivers in London, the teachers' unions in Australia and internationally have collaborated in the imposition of back to work orders in schools, in full knowledge of the fact that there is not sufficient protection against the dangers of infection. Hundreds, if not thousands, of teachers have died worldwide as a result of this policy.

Workers need to stand in support of David O'Sullivan as the struggle against his sacking is a test case for workers everywhere!

Mandy, primary school teacher in Melbourne and CFPE member

What an indictment on society when workers, such as David O'Sullivan, are considered courageous for simply calling out for their own and others' safety. What does it say when the simple act of exposing dangerous conditions and caring for workmates, results in being sacked? What a disgrace!

I fully endorse the Committee for Public Education's support and fight for the reinstatement of Mr. Sullivan and for his rights to be upheld. I encourage educators and other workers locally and internationally to stand together against this appalling situation. Workers cannot rely on their employers or unions to protect their rights and safety at work. We can, however, stand together and fight for a society that puts lives before profit.

Erika Zimmer, retired teacher and CFPE member

I stand in solidarity with David O'Sullivan who risked his job to fight for the safety of his co-workers, the travelling public and his own family. Employers have shown complete disregard for the safety of their workers. They have been given the green light by governments and the unions, allowing them to reap

record profits on the backs of workers' lives and health.

Boris Johnson is “deeply sorry” that over 120,000 have died from the COVID-19 virus, and the TUC, having colluded with employers and government, feigns outrage. Who do they think they're fooling? O'Sullivan's case must be widely supported by workers and calls for his immediate reinstatement be intensified throughout the international working class.

Rick, retired teacher

All workers should support Dave O'Sullivan because all workers have the right to refuse psychopathic demands to work in dangerous conditions—demands driven by capitalism's drive for profits at the cost of workers' lives and health. Reinstatement Dave O'Sullivan!

Martin, retired teacher

The treachery of the Unite union bureaucrats knows no bounds! Not only do they collaborate with the bosses to constantly erode drivers' wages and conditions, now they conspire with the bosses to sack workers who are determined to fight for their most basic rights! In this case, literally, the right to life! I offer my full support to brother Dave O'Sullivan in his just fight for reinstatement! I urge all workers everywhere to do likewise.

To get involved with the work of the CFPE, contact them at cfpe.aus@gmail.com or visit their Facebook or Twitter pages.



To contact the WSWs and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact