

WORKERS' fight



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"The emancipation of the working class will only be achieved by the working class itself" (Karl Marx)

NOW FOR OUR "UN-BRITISH" FIGHT-BACK AGAINST AUSTERITY!

Starmmer is fixated on the contest with his political opponents over "Britishness". So he claimed it was "un-British" to protest against Netanyahu's war on the same day as the anniversary of the 2023 Hamas attacks.

Maybe this was insensitive to victims of that attack. But what did supporting the Palestinians have to do with being "un-British" - whatever that may mean?

Wasn't it always considered a matter of pride that the "English" supported the "underdog"? And in a conflict where the Israeli army - one of the strongest in the world, backed by US might - confronted a tiny guerilla army and a poverty-stricken unarmed population, who's the underdog?

Was it Starmmer's "great British values" that led him to support Netanyahu in ruthless collective punishment against the Palestinians, giving weapons, F-35 parts and logistical, air and naval back-up? And that led him to turn a blind eye to the mass-killing of civilians which has hugely overshadowed what happened on 7 October 2023, or the demolition of 78% of buildings and displacement of 2.1m people?

And does Starmmer think his (only) recent distancing of himself from Netanyahu and token "recognition of Palestine" isn't seen for what it is? That is, as a way to get British business feet under the table when the rebuilding contracts are dealt out under the control of the Arab leaders!

If those are "British" values, the working class cannot possibly share them!

Starmmer's "conflation" problem...

On 6 October, Starmmer wrote in the *Times* newspaper: "Over a thousand men, women and children brutally murdered and hostages still held all for one reason: because they were Jewish".

This is a deliberate distortion: they were murdered because, for Hamas, they represented an enemy oppressor



- the Zionist, supremacist apartheid state which dehumanises and imprisons Palestinians and has done so for over 80 years. This terrorist attack two years ago, which Hamas leaders admitted had spiralled out of control, cannot simply be reduced to religious bigotry. And if they were after hostages, it was because one Israeli hostage has always been "worth" hundreds of Palestinian hostages.

On the other hand, Netanyahu's forces do kill Palestinians because they are Palestinian. They commit atrocities which could only be possible if they did not see them as fellow human beings. The self-confessed "fascists" in Netanyahu's cabinet call them "animals". And this is the same government which Starmmer supported... He and all of the other British politicians who went along with this, are soaked in the blood of Gaza.

...and his sectarian crusade

Starmmer is now trying to appear the great crusader against racism - but of only one kind: anti-Semitism against Jewish people, which he says he'll "root out" after the attack at Heaton Park Synagogue.

But does an attack by a lone knife-man mean that anti-Semitism is "rooted"

in society? As members of the Heaton Park congregation themselves said, this attack was inevitable, due to the horrific Gaza war, and due to the conflation of Zionism with Judaism.

As for "conflation", Starmmer is a master of it. Using the official definition of anti-Semitism, he condemns all those who oppose the Zionist Israeli state as anti-Semitic. Protesters against Netanyahu's slaughter are labelled "hate marchers" (including Jewish anti-Zionists!). He has proscribed the Palestine Action group - and those who object to this publicly are arrested for "supporting terrorism". In addition, Home Secretary Mahmood announced plans to restrict "cumulative protests".

How far can this go? What about when the working class demonstrates against the cost of living, precarious employment and cuts, and "British business" objects? No doubt we will be condemned as un-British and maybe even called terrorists - since our class opposes patriotic nationalism, British or otherwise. That said, if we do strike terror into the hearts of the bosses and their government, all the better! ☐

International

Gaza: can Palestinians trust this 20-point way out of hell?

As we go to press, Trump's 20-point ceasefire deal "to end the war in Gaza" and exchange hostages has just been agreed. Trump calls this an agreement for "a beautiful peace in the Middle East". It's no coincidence that the Nobel Peace prize - so childishly coveted by Trump - was to be awarded the very same week...

Obviously, it's a deal too little and too late for the hundreds of thousands of dead and wounded across the whole region. The Israeli military did not only turn Gaza into hell, but wrought destruction over Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Yemen, and Iran, aided by massive US firepower to bunker-bust Iran's nuclear facilities - regardless of fall-out. We're told the devil is in the "agreement's" detail. Of course, Netanyahu's government, if it survives, will not respect it.

But as has been the case from day one, the only hope for the people of the region lies in the organisational capacity



Palestinians return to Gaza city

of their working classes. And they'll have ready allies among workers in the rich countries - as Italian and Spanish port workers have shown in recent weeks.

However, real and lasting peace will only be possible once the world is rid of

degenerate capitalism which only hangs on to power through making war. It won't go quietly. It will have to be overthrown by the united force of workers, across all the artificial borders that imperialism has imposed on us. ☐

West Bank: increasing settler violence and occupation

While the bombing of Gaza continued, last month Israeli forces alongside ultra-Zionist settlers ramped up their attacks right across the occupied West Bank. Armoured bulldozers once more "cleared" routes for new Israeli settlements on land belonging to Palestinians, demolishing everything in their path.

Lethal IDF-settler attacks

The number of West Bank Israeli settlements has more than doubled since 2020 - and their forced imposition has become ever more violent. More than 1,000 Palestinians have been killed by settler militias armed by the IDF - and by the IDF itself - since October 2023. As many as 7,500 raids by Israeli forces into Palestinian towns and villages across

the West Bank have taken place so far this year, a 37% increase compared with 2024.

In just one week there were 27 attacks, killing one Palestinian in Ramallah governorate, injuring 17, damaging homes and forcing the displacement of three families in the northern Jordan Valley. Ahead of the start of the olive harvest, farmers have been refused access to their lands.

No annexation?

On 23 July, the Knesset voted 71 to 13 to approve a "non-binding" motion to annex the West Bank. Of course it's against international law (as if that ever matters) and is reported as "purely symbolic" - reflecting the desire to continue the

de facto annexation agenda already in operation. An additional budget of 918m shekels (£205m) was approved for infrastructure projects to connect West Bank settlements with each other and with Israeli cities. Israeli Finance Minister Smötrich, leader of the far-right Mafdal party, has announced a project for 3,400 housing units, which will de facto cut off Palestinians from East Jerusalem.

This is no doubt why Trump, who also has his Egyptian, Gulf and Turkish allies to consider (but their obligatory support for "Palestine" has never done much to help the Palestinians), told White House reporters ahead of Netanyahu's UN address that he "will not allow Israel to annex the West Bank... It's not going to happen". Never mind that it's already happening.

Ukraine: Zelensky still posing as warrior - against ever-growing opposition

During the UN Summit at the end of September, Trump said Putin had "let him down". He then apparently had a friendly meeting with Zelensky. So it was generally reported that he was now going to help Zelensky win the war...

But what he actually meant was that Starmer's "Coalition of the Willing" was welcome to buy more weapons from the US to give to Zelensky, while adding that: "if Ukraine wants F-16s, it's going to have to pay for them [...] and tell us exactly how they'll use them".

Zelensky's cynical bravado rather collapsed. He replied: "We will never barter our sovereignty for a price tag. Ukraine will not become a customer for US weapons; we are a partner defending

freedom. If the United States wants us to pay for every jet, fighter or missile, the answer is a firm 'no'". He then asked Starmer&Co to fund the next batch of American weapons!

Ukrainians are increasingly war-weary. The mayors of Kharkiv and Mariupol publicly urge a cease-fire. Vitaliy Klitschko, mayor of Kyiv, was side-lined by Zelensky after saying he was in favour of giving up territory to Russia "for the sake of peace". The war has claimed over 620,000 lives with more than 1.8m injured and 7.5m internally displaced. Over 3,200 square kilometres of urban area in eastern Ukraine lie in ruins, with 12,000 residential buildings destroyed. Ukraine's GDP has shrunk by 35% since 2022. Reconstruction

costs would exceed \$450 billion.

On the frontline, morale has long-since frayed. The commanders of at least 3 battalions have submitted resignation letters. More than 170,000 soldiers have deserted. Roman, a 26-year-old artillery commander near the front line in the Donbas, told Reuters, "We are certain the enemy will not stop, but we are being asked to keep firing while the political leadership treats us like pawns. Many of my men have told me they will stop obeying orders if the war continues...". Nevertheless, Zelensky wants to keep 220,000 soldiers active at the front this coming winter. Whether he will be allowed by "his" soldiers to get away with this is another question. ☐

Our society

London Underground strikes: what next?

London Underground workers are still in dispute - and they're still demanding a reduction of their working week to 32 hours. After the rolling strikes in September, management has proposed a three-year pay deal: a 3.4% "increase" this year, followed by flat, RPI-linked rises in years two and three, with no other improvements. However, bosses continue to refuse to grant a shorter working week or better travel allowances. RMT officials are now meant to decide whether to accept or reject this

offer.

This dispute highlights how wages are too low to live on, especially in London. Which is why 12-hour shifts have become a "routine" whether as contractual working hours, or to top up low wages by adding hours of work in the same job or a second or third one. And it's not just in TfL; it's everywhere, so one has to wonder why the RMT hasn't extended the fight to TfL's most obvious allies - the rest of transport workers, starting with the railways?! These are demands that

everyone else in the working class would get behind.

In fact, since August around 7,500 bus drivers (mostly in Unite) in different companies across the country have been involved in disputes over pay and exhausting working conditions - from London to Cardiff, Bristol, Manchester, and Newcastle. Surely all these workers could join forces? But first they'd need to push aside their "sectarian" union leaders and take control of the fight themselves. □

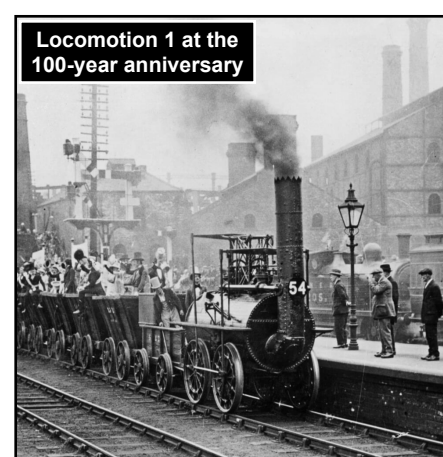
Rail Bicentenary: all aboard the vintage train!

It's the bicentenary of the first railway! The 26-mile long Stockton and Darlington line opened on 26 September 1825 to bring coal from mines near Witton Park in County Durham to the wharves of Stockton on the Tees river, passing through Darlington. This was the first railway to carry both goods and passengers. It had a profound impact on the area, and soon new docks were built downriver at Middlesbrough - turning this fishing hamlet into the largest town on the Tees.

To celebrate the railway's 200-year anniversary, a replica of this first train and its locomotive (Locomotion No 1) traced the route over three days, on

26-28 September, with long stops for ticketed public viewings - one of which - at Dinsdale near Darlington, was from 2am to 6am, no doubt attracting spotty enthusiasts only! Celebratory events also include an "Inspiration Train" touring Britain until December. Part of its brief is to "encourage people to consider a career in rail to shape the next 200 years".

They'd better not hold their breath waiting for the vacancies to be advertised, however... After 30 years of privatisation and now this so-called "renationalisation" without even a shoestring budget, the railway workforce has been cut to shreds; never in 200 years, have so many trains been operated by so few workers...



200 years of British Railways? 200 years of struggle!

Yes, the first passenger line opened in 1825 - but by 1846, the first railway strike was taking place - in Leeds and Bradford, as workers protested over long shifts, poor pay, and unsafe conditions. They faced 12 to 16-hour shifts, with frequent boiler explosions and derailments causing deaths. When they demanded fair wages and shorter hours, bosses used strike-breakers to suppress the strike.

The message remains as clear today, as it was then: nothing is handed to us: every improvement in pay, hours and safety is won through struggle!

Railway privatisation was a disaster for workers and passengers alike. And it still survives today only thanks to a massive government subsidy: £12.5 billion in 2024 alone! Meanwhile, services have been scaled back, jobs have been cut, and safety has been compromised...

Now Labour claims to be "renationalising". In reality, they're just completing the job the Tories started with their "Great British Railways" scheme: taking failing private contracts back into state hands, slowly, gently - while shielding profiteers. Six out of 17

Train Operating Companies were already state-run before Labour came in, yet the rest will only be brought back piecemeal, with all DfT contracts to be public only by the end of 2027.

And what about us - the railway workers? There's no plan to increase pay. There's no guarantee of guards on every train. And there's no end to subcontracting and division... Two hundred years later, the fight remains the same: workers themselves must take the lead and demand a single, united railway workforce!

TUC: living on another planet

This year's TUC Congress passed largely unnoticed. Why? Because what occurred on that stage had no relevance to the everyday lives of workers!

General Secretary Paul Nowak and others addressed the Labour government, calling for wealth taxes - a 2% levy on fortunes over £10m, closing capital gains loopholes, and increased surcharges on banks. Yes, they offered the government all sorts of good advice, saying it had to "prove itself to working people". Perhaps they should have

looked in a mirror!

The reality is that union leaders spend their time lobbying and certainly not recruiting the battalions of workers needed to reinvigorate our ranks! Membership numbers reveal the cost: in 1979, unions had 13.2m members. Today? There are barely 6.4m - half the strength gone in a generation. Our class is more fragmented than ever, and leaders' preoccupations have less and less connection with struggles on the ground.

Meanwhile, real wages remain lower than they were in 2008. Strikes over pay and safety have taken place across rail, health, post and education in recent years - yet TUC leaders speak as if the real battle is fought in Parliament, not the workplace. But of course, bosses and governments only listen when profits are hit. That means us calling indefinite strikes and coordinated action - in other words, the hard economics of class struggle. For the average union leader, that's like talking Martian!

Their society

"Land of the free"? Free speech clampdown in the US...

No surprise that Trump used the murder of the far-right activist Charlie Kirk to crack down on anyone who exercised their right to "free speech" against Kirk, or Trump himself. TV host Jimmy Kimmel did so, accusing Trump of cynically using this assassination to justify new attacks on his critics - and promptly got suspended by employer, Disney.

In the days afterwards, a teacher made a comment in a private chat room, only to discover he was fired. Hundreds

of workers were axed or disciplined, by airlines, restaurants, schools, universities, law firms; by an NFL football team and a print shop, even by the Secret Service and army regiments.

Vice-President JD Vance called on his supporters to report people they heard saying anything negative about Kirk. Far-right activists trolled social media to identify the people who made them - one of them bragging that she'd reported 471 people to their employers in just two

days.

But even before the killing of Kirk, in fact since the start of Trump's second term, repression against dissent was growing. Trump targets all those who criticise him. *"I hate them"* he says.

But let's remember, that behind him is the capitalist class, for whom this repression is a useful adjunct to their screw-turning against the working class. Which is why it needs to be resisted by the working class! ☐

... and in "mother of all democracies"

Keir Starmer has been doing a good imitation of Trump in his own crackdown on free speech in Britain. Since 2023, tube workers, rail workers, NHS staff and even a worker at Arsenal football club have all been sacked for expressing support for Palestine, usually on their personal social media accounts. In two years the total number is probably many thousands.

• Like the Sex Pistols and Greenpeace?

Most, if not all of these dismissals, would be found to be illegal if they were brought to court, but which worker has the time

or the money to do that? In November 2024, even the Belfast rapper, Mo Chara of Kneecap was accused of terrorism and taken to court for waving a Hezbollah flag at a concert - a charge which has just been thrown out on a technicality.

And then there's former Home Secretary Yvette Cooper's banning of the activist group called Palestine Action, and the systematic arrest of anyone showing their opposition to the ban - again, whether by holding up a placard outside Downing Street or on social media - or even internal IT at work. Up to 500 protesters were arrested at the start of October, on top of 857 at the start

of September. A total of around 3000 arrests for *"supporting terrorism"* in less than four months.

The power of protest... and strikes

And now, in the wake of the attack on the Manchester synagogue, which led to calls for the banning of all demonstrations against Netanyahu's war on Gaza to be considered as *"inciting anti-Semitism"*, Home Secretary Shabana Mahmood is looking to crack down on *"repeated protests"* and their *"cumulative impact"*, which she claims cause Jewish people *"considerable fear"*. But of course many Jewish people have been arrested for being part of these protests! She says she's looking at giving police powers to ban protests outright.

The government here, like in the US, is clamping down on rights to free speech and protest, for sure. But these rights were always curbed, depending on who it was who was exercising them. Strikers and anti-government protesters have been beaten, arrested, imprisoned, even killed - and in the not-so-distant past - recall the miners' strike of 1984-5 or the student protests of 2010. The potential power of the working class and the youth is never forgotten by the rich and their politicians because it threatens their very existence. ☐



Greece: the attack on the 8-hour day

A "13 hour working day bill" is to be voted by the Greek parliament on 13-17 October. It's the most recent in a series aimed at dismantling the 8-hour working day and 5-day working week.

The first bill, in 2021, increased the annual legal overtime allowed from 96 to 150 hours. Overtime (up to 2 hours a day) could be "exchanged" for days off instead of being paid at the standard premium rate, de facto instituting a ten-hour working day with no extra overtime pay!

The second bill in 2023 introduced zero-hour contracts, expanded the 6-day working week to more branches of industry and commerce, and made

it legal to work for two different employers, for a maximum duration of 13 hours/day (against EU regulation which stipulates 11 consecutive hours of rest in any 24 hour period).

That said, working 2 jobs for 13+ hours a day, paid under the table, is already a reality for many workers, following drastic cuts in real wages (-32.8%) since the 2008 crisis! *"People are already working two jobs, why not allow them to do it legally?"* was the line of argument of the government, claiming that *"we are by no means cancelling the 8-hour day, the bill talks specifically about work for a second employer"*. But this line was soon

forgotten as the third instalment of this government's attack on wages and the 8-hour day now makes it possible to work 13 hours for the same employer!

It's the same old story. With wages as low as they are, bosses claim that overtime, 6-day working weeks and 13 hours of work respond to *"workers' needs"*. But they get to define these needs only as far as the working class lets them! The 24-hour strike of public and private sector workers on 1 October gave them a small taste of how workers can disrupt their plans. But the only thing that can stop them for good, is a real fight-back - out until we win. ☐

Their society

The capitalist class makes its Budget Day demands clear

A head of Chancellor Rachel Reeves' November budget, the "state of Britain's finances" is the big topic. The Economist magazine ran an editorial in September under the header "Britain is slowly going bust". It says things are bad - inflation high, government debt 95% of GDP (compared to 35% 20 years ago), and the interest rate the government has to pay on that debt is the highest in the G7 and the highest since 1998. The Economist's solution? Reeves should only consider raising taxes on the population, not on business nor wealth,

and the welfare bill should be cut!

But government debt levels per se, aren't the problem, admits *The Economist*: there's been constant government debt since the end of the 17th century, and the capitalists can't do without it - over £100bn a year is paid out in interest to banks and other financial institutions who lend to the government!

So what's the problem? Simply that government debt (in so-called "bonds" or "gilts") is only one way that the capitalist class exercises daily control

over its government. It needs to be sure the government does the rest, and doesn't lose sight of its interests... So *The Economist* also wants taxes raised on the working population. And particularly as the need for more public spending on welfare, health, housing, transport etc., continues to grow. The Economist is explicit - "if Britain cannot budget responsibly (i.e. in a way that suits the rich) by choice, then markets will force it to do so by necessity". Yes, so speaks the dictatorship of the capitalist class! □

Their patriot game: no, we won't lie back and think of England!

Labour conference had "Patriotic national renewal" as its "flagship" policy. And the "flags" were literal. The hall was bedecked with them. Delegates even got given a full selection - Union Jacks, English, Welsh and Scottish flags - to wave during Starmer's speech. David Lammy sported a small vintage National Front badge - oops, Union Jack - on his lapel. And all in aid of trying to prove who "loves" Britain more: Starmer's Labour, or Nigel Farage's Reform!

Who's the racist now?

With not many concrete economic policies to announce - the Autumn Budget won't be out until November - speeches focused heavily on migration and "pride in being British".

The irony was that, while Reform's anti-migrant policies were being called "racist" by Starmer et al, new Home Secretary Shabana Mahmood proudly announced the doubling to 10 years of the qualification period for immigrants

before they can apply for "indefinite leave to remain". Along with Foreign Secretary Yvette Cooper, she boasted about deporting asylum seekers to France. Thankfully, Lammy changed topic and spoke about "building new prison places" to tackle crime!

No, "immigration" isn't workers' "main concern"!

This might have been a successful conference for the government and Labour party members; but it likely left voters - and the majority non-voters - across the country completely indifferent. What workers care about most today is what's in their pockets, that is the ever-rising cost of living - contrary to the claims of racist pot-stirrers in the media and elsewhere who report that "immigration is voters' top priority".

Yes, and while back here on earth, living standards are falling, and the cost of everything is going up... all Starmer

can do is to repeat that it's all going to come right because of his "economic growth" initiatives. Chancellor Rachel Reeves kept boasting about "investment in British industries" - yup, subsidising "British business" is what it's all about!

We choose to sing the "Internationale"

This government would do everyone a favour by offering itself as a comedy ensemble, on (preferably) very late-night TV. What was worth a laugh was that this year, after singing the hymn "Jerusalem", (which even Tommy Robinson's rally adopted) as their grand finale, they shamelessly sang the old 19th century socialist anthem, the Red Flag!

As for the rest of us, under the authentic revolutionary communist red flag, we need to set about building our own workers' party - to fight against the capitalist class and their friends, wherever they might sit in Parliament. □

Class Struggle n° 125

Autumn 2025

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- United States: a medical system made for profit
- Bangladesh: one year after the "July revolution", the decisive battles are yet to come

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Playing to Reform's and Robinson's tune

The newly appointed Home Secretary Shabana Mahmood has announced a string of attacks against refugees and migrants in addition to the increase in the qualifying period for permanent settlement from 5 to 10 years. She also wants to introduce new "contribution-based" tests: an applicant will have to be in work, pay National Insurance (and not have ever claimed benefits), speak English to a high standard and have done volunteer work to "give back to the community". This means that even after 10 years of residence, permanent settlement status won't necessarily be given! As for refugees, family reunion rights will be tightened even further!

Already under ex-Home Secretary Cooper, a "one-in-one-out" policy was agreed between Britain and France: for every one "illegal" migrant deported

to France, Britain would "accept" one asylum seeker from France who meets certain eligibility criteria. Very much like an exchange of prisoners of war! In fact, after Trump's suggestion that Starmer should "send in the military", there is even talk of the Navy being tasked with stopping the small boats!

This kind of crude anti-immigrant demagoguery can only give encouragement to bigots. And since Robinson's "Unite the Kingdom" march gathered 120,000 people in London (probably many more) and since Farage's Reform is leading in the polls, the Labour party is happily stealing the bigots' policies! In the meantime, the richest capitalists who accumulate record wealth on the backs of all workers can come and go as they please!

King's Cross railway station (London)**• An injury to one...**

Recently LNER has been systematically suspending, investigating and then sacking long term workmates - using all kinds of trumped up "charges". It's obvious why. They want to cut jobs to save on labour costs - and are picking on the most "expensive" workers, one by one. It's a policy decision - and we oppose it... collectively! So what are we going to do about it, collectively? [Workers' Platform 01/10/25]

• Reinstate them now!

Yes, we know their motives. And, in addition, it seems LNER managers think they can get away with targeting some of our workmates for simply

expressing a political opinion - in this case, support for the Palestinians! So now free speech is no longer our right? Or is this yet another excuse to cut our jobs? Either way, we cannot allow it! [Workers' Platform 01/10/25]

• We want our pay rise now!

Great Northern workers are still waiting for a pay rise! It was due in April! That's 5 months ago! Since then, the company has done nothing but delay. Sure, we're used to this bad habit of theirs - they do this every year. But we can't wait any longer... [Workers' Platform 01/10/25]

• £500 on the pay!

We hear rumours that GN might offer us the same 3.4% "increase" offered to



workmates at LNER. But we expect a pay rise in line with the rise in prices - i.e., our cost of living!! Official CPI inflation is 3.8%.

But inflation rates grossly underestimate the increase in living costs, so what about simply demanding a rise of £500/pm across the board? [Workers' Platform 01/10/25]

Mount Pleasant mail centre (London)**From our friends in the North**

The silence is deafening. When we need a union the most, the CWU leaders go missing in action. Our workplaces are under attack and not just from the bosses. The gaffer's favourite enforcers are at it too: fascist-admirers freely putting up flags and spreading their hate everywhere. Red shirt or blue, we will never support the blackshirts!

We're doing our best to fend off the far-right but we can't do it alone. We all need to make it clear that the working class are anti-racist and always have been - we are against divisions in our

ranks that make us weak! But Trade Union leaders excuse, rather than speak out against the behaviour of a loud minority and their hate! We know our history and it is a proud one that stands up to bullies.

We knew the Optimised Delivery Model - AKA Outrageous Deluded Madness - and their changes in delivery aimed at getting rid of the USO would never work. It has been proven we were right. However, just like Margaret Thatcher, Ward and Walsh are not for turning. Their latest message to delivery



workers shows no sign of helping to make our working lives better. Worse still, our mates on the post-2022 contracts can see no end to their exploitation. The deadlines have come and gone, like we said they would! We need to fight their ODM and their cuts - that's a fight worth having! □

• What we need to live on

So finally RM-PFS has come up with their pay offer: £13.85/hr (£12.60 outside London), which is peanuts. And the union officials dare to recommend this, claiming that it gets us up to the (already out-of-date) Real Living Wage Foundation rate? Why don't we just demand what we need - for instance, at least another £5 on our hourly rate? [Workers' Fight bulletin 01/10/25]

• Same pay cut? no way!

As for RM-PFS engineers, the offer is

the same below-inflation, real-pay cut 4.2% that our postal workmates got. What do we have to lose by refusing this offer, other than gaining a better one? [Workers' Fight bulletin 01/10/25]

• No heavy lifting

Processing managers thought we wouldn't notice that the maximum weight for a large parcel has gone up? It used to be 11kg max, and now we're handling 30kg parcels! Since IDS bosses merged the ParcelForce and RM processing networks over the summer, we're expected to deal

with pretty much everything - but of course we can't and won't! Our backs/arms/shoulders refuse! [Workers' Fight bulletin 01/10/25]

• One solution, revolution!

So, given the problem of processing these heavy parcels, management felt they had to come up with a "solution"... Lifting equipment? Vacuum lifters? Stackers?? Robots?? Nope, just "ask a workmate to help"! But they don't say where we'll find one... [Workers' Fight bulletin 01/10/25]

Canadian postal workers' strike over USO - when is ours?

On 25 September, 55,000 Canadian postal workers went on indefinite strike after the government announced changes to their equivalent of the USO. It wants to cut the number of delivery days, close delivery offices, and increase stamp prices - and end all door-to-door deliveries! It had already cut these, so that only 4 million households still receive mail to their doors, while most people must pick up their own post from

local "community mailboxes".

For the postal workers (still public employees of Canada Post, which is wholly owned by the government), this is just the latest in a series of attacks on jobs, conditions and the public service. Last November, they struck for more than a month over pay and benefit cuts, before they were forced back to work by a government order.

In fact, they haven't had a pay rise in

two years, during which time their union (the CUPW) and Canada Post bosses have been "negotiating" - but with no outcome! The CUPW is demanding a 19% rise; the bosses say they can't pay. Here in Britain we are facing the same kind of attacks and the same excuses. There's no question that we need to mount the same kind of fight! □

Ford Dagenham estate (Essex)
• The panther needs a proper rest!

On Panther machining, the day shift's down (again!) every Monday... But Ford just keeps us coming in to clean, or do bits and bobs, here and there! What annoys us is the way Ford puts it: they say it's a down-day and so we expect to be at home - and then we have to come here, instead... [Workers' Fight bulletin 08/10/25]

• Not budging either!

Panther assy's mini-shift's become an "only-managers and group leaders" shift! Hardly any of us are left - and now the score is cut further, from 300 to 200. So will Ford be trying to move even more mates to DDC?! Seems we were employed for a merry-go-round! [Workers' Fight bulletin 08/10/25]

• All permanent now!

Us temps, we're on 12-months rolling contracts... for some, to be reviewed in summer 2026. We might be beyond our probation by now, but we still don't know if Ford will be offering us

permanent contracts - and we want - and need - them now! [Workers' Fight bulletin 08/10/25]

• Ford's lesson to temps

Five weeks ago, a manager told to 50 Panther temps that they'd be doing overlaps over on Tiger... "A" shift would do 4hrs at the beginning of the shift, and "B" shift would do the remaining 4hrs. But just before the overlap started, a second manager (higher up on the manager ladder) told him off and cancelled the entire thing! We learnt then, not to waste any of our precious time doing OT. [Workers' Fight bulletin 08/10/25]

• Breaking free from the engine den

In the Den, lions have been asked to do Saturday OT again! Here we are, putting together F-150 engines, while we could be hunting antelope on the Savannah... Does anyone remember how we ended up here in the first place? [Workers' Fight bulletin 08/10/25]

• The strolling "force"

We'd been wondering who those



managers are, who we see aimlessly strolling around the estate every couple of weeks. Until it clicked: these are likely to be the "taskforce", "tasked" with finding future work for Dagenham... So almost two years after M&S and Ever-rat announced this "taskforce", it's morphed into a walking club? [Workers' Fight bulletin 08/10/25]

• Message received!

Some of us got a picture on WhatsApp showing a Ford meeting room screen with a rather rude message to CEO Jim The Axe Farley attached... And apparently it appeared on screens all around the world! At Dunton, Ford UK Chair Lisa Brankin had to leave a meeting in a huff, as she couldn't do anything about it... So, cheers to our IT workmates! [Workers' Fight bulletin 08/10/25]

BMW Mini centre (Cowley, Oxford)
• Rejecting the screw!

Nearly 650 of us voted against - or didn't vote for - the bosses' plan 2 weeks ago, and we sent our message: we've had enough of the "concessions" that BMW and the trade union ask us to agree to! This "shift shortening", which was really a massive pay cut, was just the latest. Over the years, the bosses have been eroding everything that older generations of workers fought for in this plant. Their abuse of the WTA system, their job cuts, and the 0% pay deal, are just the most recent examples. [Workers' Fight bulletin 07/10/25]

• The vote of feet?

Even though only permanent BMW

workers had a vote, they spoke for everybody in here, in telling the bosses to go jump!

We know managers still want to cut their wage bill, so of course they will look for other ways to do it. Now they've come back with something else, we can also come back with something else! [Workers' Fight bulletin 07/10/25]

• Taking the BMW!

Yes, on Tuesday, bosses published a new "WTA Profile" for next month - AKA a pay cut plan!

Each shift in Assembly, and most of Paint, is meant to lose 3 hours pay (at night premium rate!) in November. Didn't we just vote against a pay reduction? [Workers' Fight bulletin 07/10/25]


• No more "deterioration"!

And this comes after a union letter, which says that we now risk going unpaid over Christmas, and that "this situation could further deteriorate"! Union officials might be happy to let that happen, but we are not! They're just confirming that we can only rely on ourselves collectively, across all the different contracts and agencies in this plant! [Workers' Fight bulletin 07/10/25]

JLR's cyberattack cock up: billions for the boss... pay cut for the workers

On 31 August 2025 a cyber-attack struck Jaguar Land Rover's Halewood plant in Merseyside. Within a day, production stopped at 5 sites: Wolverhampton and Solihull, Nitra (Slovakia), Itatiaia (Brazil) and Chakan (India) - all of which supply parts for Halewood's Range Rover Evoque and Land Rover Discovery Sport.

How was this possible? In fact Tata Consultancy Services, JLR's IT contractor, had built a cloud-based "smart-factory" system in 2012, linking every workstation to a shop-floor control platform. Barcodes scanned at

each station feed real-time data, for "just-in-time" production: market forecasts instantly become production targets and orders are auto-sent to suppliers. But in 2023, an £800m upgrade to adapt the system for electric and hybrid models, omitted basic security. A single leaked password gave access to the cloud command panel. JLR had to shut down all operations tied to the cloud.

To "keep the supply chain liquid" and "protect tens of thousands of jobs", the government jumped in to help Tata out by giving it a £1.5 billion loan. JLR claimed it

was losing £50m per week - just one-sixth of the loan amount.

By 6 October, only Wolverhampton engine plant had resumed some output; the other four sites are meant to restart by mid-October. Around 40,000 workers in Britain have lost more than a month's pay, while tens of thousands of workers were laid off abroad. The only reaction from Unite the union was to criticise the company for not offering workers a hardship scheme... and then it "helpfully" advised them to apply for Universal Credit! ☐

International

The ongoing predatory wars in Africa

After two-and-a-half years of war in Sudan, it's estimated that over 150,000 people have been killed. Civilians are caught in the crossfire between the two rival military factions - the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF), each battling for domination.

The 500-day siege of the city of El Fasher by the RSF - the last major city of Darfur controlled by the SAF - means its population of ~260,000 faced famine and air strikes.

The advance of the RSF, which now controls most of Darfur in the West, has seen mass executions and widespread rape. An estimated 13m civilians have tried to flee the slaughter, starving on their way, to reach camps for the displaced. The RSF is accused of genocide, but in this ruthless war, both sides commit atrocities.

Sudan's civilians massacred

The RSF originated in Janjaweed militias, used by the regime of former dictator, Omar al-Bashir to suppress the 2003-4 Darfur uprising, alongside the SAF. However in 2019, a popular revolution finally ousted al-Bashir, who had ruled Sudan since 1989. The leaders of the uprising were unable to maintain their grip on power against Bashir's generals - who formed a temporary alliance to stage a bloody coup d'état.

Today's civil war is little more than a vicious fight between these rival "warlords" over control of Sudan's resources: gold mines, oil, rare earths - which is also why each side has its own regional backers who want a share of the loot. Egypt has always supported the SAF. Saudi Arabia is also supporting the SAF, but the UAE, usually Saudi's ally, supports the RSF, supplying it with sophisticated weapons



Displaced people flee the Zamzam refugee camp in Tawila, North Darfur

and drones. Western governments turn a blind eye, since the UAE also buys its weapons from them, and did their bidding when it deployed RSF fighters in Yemen to fight Houthis rebels. Ethiopia and Eritrea also support the RSF, which recently fought alongside Ethiopia against the Tigray People's Liberation Front, which in turn, supports the SAF!

African blood on British and US hands

The UN describes the situation in Sudan as the world's worst humanitarian crisis. But this is only one of many conflicts in Africa. The Ethiopia-Eritrea conflict - with Tigrayans in the middle - is simmering again (despite Trump's boast that he settled it!); a war which, between

2020 and 2023 displaced 5.1 million and killed over 600,000. The civil war in Somalia has continued on and off since 2009, with "official" federal government forces fighting an al Qaeda-linked Al Shabaab insurgency - resulting in maybe over 80,000 dead, so far.

As for the still ongoing war in the Democratic Republic of Congo (forget Trump's boast that he ended it), which has seen DRC government forces pitched against Rwanda-backed M23 militias for control of mineral rich East Kivu, it has displaced 7.8 million people while four million are facing starvation.

Of course, behind every one of these conflicts, lie the interests of imperialist countries which, indirectly through their regional proxies, continue to plunder the continent's rich resources. ☐

US imperialism attacking Latin America again

On 2 September, the US Navy blew a speedboat out of the water near Venezuela's coast, killing the 11 people on board. Then a second and a third boat were struck close to Venezuela in mid-September, killing at least 3 more people. A fourth boat was blown up off the coast of the Dominican Republic, killing another 3 people.

Trump claimed that the US navy was targeting "drug gangs", citing the Venezuelan Tren de Aragua, thus preventing cocaine from reaching the US. He also accused his pet-hate, Venezuelan president Maduro of leading the gang! Which of course is utter nonsense and even his own US National Intelligence Council dismissed the claim. It's known that the gang does smuggle people however, which

probably means that most of the 11 people on board the first speedboat were refugees, trying to escape poverty and violence.

The Caribbean under the US Navy's watch

These latest murderous acts are nothing other than an assertion of US military domination in the region. The US has deployed a total of 8 warships in the Caribbean, plus a nuclear-powered submarine and a mobile lander for taking troops on shore. On board the ships are 4,500 sailors and 2,200 marines are ready to be deployed. This armada is backed up by F-35s which can be deployed from an airbase in Puerto Rico.

So yes, the blowing up of boats in the Caribbean has everything to do with Trump warning "unfriendly" governments, such as Maduro's in Venezuela, that it can strike anywhere, whenever it decides to do so and with impunity. He has also signalled his hostility against Colombian president Petro, who was refused a visa to attend the recent UN summit.

Military force has always been used to keep Latin America under the US imperialist yoke. The latest deployment in the Caribbean under the pretence of a "war on drug trafficking", is a reminder to all those who try to assert their independence that they will face merciless US firepower. ☐

In addition to this monthly paper, we publish fortnightly bulletins in several large workplaces in the South East, a quarterly journal, "Class Struggle" and the "Internationalist Communist Forums" - a series of pamphlets on topical issues.

If you wish to find out more about our ideas, activities and publications, contact the Workers' Fight activist who sold you this issue of our paper, or write to us either by e-mail, at contact@w-fight.org, or by postal mail at:

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