

WORKERS' fight

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<http://www.w-fight.org>
contact@w-fight.org

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

In this biased society, he who pays the piper calls the tune!

The talking heads in the media and in the "corridors of power" must take us all for fools! As if the broadcasting media - whether the BBC or any other - can possibly be "neutral"!

To show its "impartiality" over the Israeli government's systematic destruction of Gaza and deliberate massacre of civilians, the BBC in fact went one better - and so did Channel 4 and ITV. Every time the slaughter being carried out in Gaza was reported, they invited Israeli defence spokespersons, publicity agents for Israel's government and best of all, the hysterical former Israeli ambassador to London, Tzipi Hotovely to comment... "for balance".

And their "comment" was always to claim that this was a "justifiable war" against the terrorist organisation Hamas, while denying that it was a merciless slaughter to eradicate and ethnically cleanse as many of Gaza's Palestinians as possible, which it evidently was (and still is).

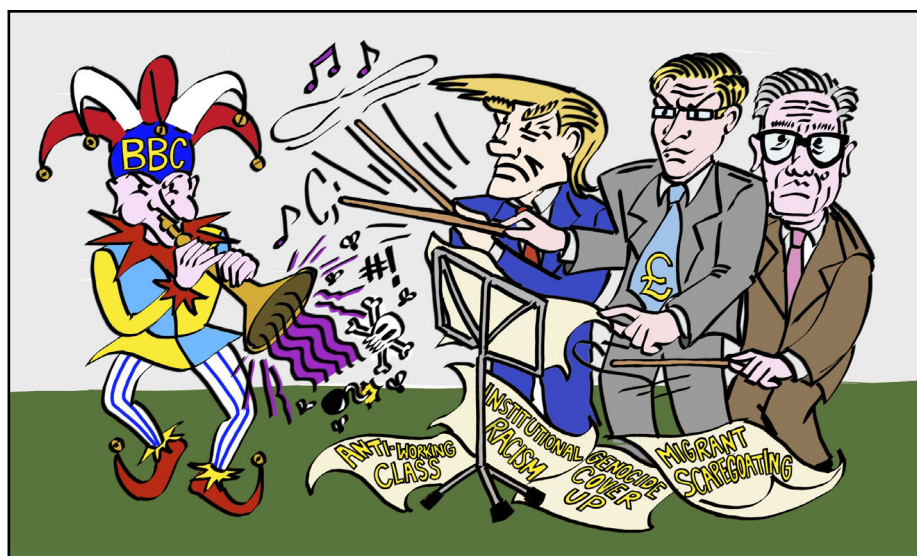
Their not-so-hidden agenda

Ironically, Michael Prescott - the ex-journo now PR boss, who is responsible for this row over BBC "bias", had accused the BBC of pro-Palestinian bias!

Apparently he doesn't accept the findings of the "independent" Centre for Media Monitoring, which found that the BBC had given Israeli deaths 33 times more coverage per fatality than Palestinian deaths.

Then again, Prescott is a close associate of the pro-Israeli-Zionist Robin Gibb who helped launch GB News. And while Prescott (also a business advisor to Starmer!) denies any rightward bias himself, his "exposé" was published in that well-known "unbiased" and 100% neutral newspaper, the Daily Torygraph!

The BBC director general and news CEO may both have resigned, but only because they were threatened with a \$1bn lawsuit by none other than that



paragon of truthfulness, Donald Trump!

This may all seem a little too good to be true for all those opposed to public broadcasting and ad-free TV, of course! Because if the BBC "house" falls down, then there'll be no more choice; it will be commercial viewing and listening only: the profit system will have conquered the whole of the media's territory. Which is hardly in our interests...

Tilting the balance

Clearly, the BBC (and the rest of the mainstream media too!) cannot avoid reflecting the class bias in this society.

Whether nominally private or public, dependent or independent, the message is the same. Whether it's a licence fee collected by the government which pays the broadcaster, or whether it's a private consortium, "he who pays the piper calls the tune"...

And the tune gets pretty jarring at times. As mouth-pieces for the ruling political establishment in Westminster, the state institutions and beyond, the official media's main objective is to help maintain the status quo. In other

words, the dominance of the boss-class over the rest of us.

When have we ever seen the BBC championing strike action, cheering workers on, or praising a militant shop steward? Even resident doctors, the backbone of the NHS, are cast as greedy villains.

Just watch today, how the incredibly timid Employment Rights Bill is discussed in the media. This Bill offers workers even less than the accepted norm in other rich countries, in terms of the right to a proper contract, to sick pay, to unfair dismissal rights etc... but while the objections of the bosses, the Tories and Farage are constantly aired, little or nothing is broadcast "in balance"...

So no, "neutral" doesn't exist... And to pretend that this is the case, is really one of the biggest fakes of all!

And yes, as workers, we intend to show our own totally impartial bias against the exploiting class, their institutions and their media, until we have successfully "unbalanced" and overturned them! ☐

International

Trump's "drug war" on Venezuela is a "war" for oil

Trump's "war" against Venezuela has escalated. The aircraft carrier, USS Gerald R Ford, carrying 4,000 sailors and (potentially) 90 aircraft, has arrived in the Caribbean - joining warships docked off Trinidad. This is the largest US military deployment in the region since the 1989 invasion of Panama.

Since early September, Trump has been ordering helicopters and drones to blow up fishing boats in the Caribbean under the pretext of clamping down on drug smugglers. At least 18 vessels have been hit and 76 people have been killed - many of them ordinary workers and fishermen. In October, this included two Trinidadians.

Persad-Bissessar nods her head

Yet the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago has applauded these actions. At least the island's opposition leaders have shown a little more scepticism towards Washington's motives... And of course, another of Trump's champions, this year's Nobel Peace Prize winner, Venezuelan Maria Corina Machado, has celebrated these attacks on "narco-terrorists"!

In response to US intimidation, members of CARICOM - a bloc of Caribbean and Latin American countries - have made it clear that they have no interest in any military confrontation. Even so, they have politely asked US Secretary of State Marco Rubio to give advance notice of any future military operations and to explain their purpose.

The "legality" of Trump's attacks

The USS Gerald R Ford, the world's largest warship, with other navy ships deployed in the Caribbean



on Venezuela has been questioned - particularly his authorisation for the CIA to invade Venezuela and assassinate President Maduro. But imperialist powers have always got away literally, with murder, regardless of "international law". And who, in this profit-driven system, would hold them to account, anyway?

Trump's real objective

The United States' economic interests lie in Venezuela's oil reserves - the largest in the world. These were nationalised in 1976, preventing the US from exploiting them as freely as it wished. In retaliation the US has subjected Venezuela to severe

sanctions - which have now been in place for over a decade and which have pushed the majority of the population into desperate poverty, forcing many to join the migration "caravan" to the US.

The answer to the plight of the population - and this applies to the whole region - certainly lies in a united socialist states of South America (and the Caribbean!) as a first step in the overthrow of capitalism at home and US imperialism abroad. But that would mean overcoming the "socialist" illusion fostered by Maduro and his predecessor Chavez, and especially not throwing out the socialist baby with the somewhat dirty bathwater of this regime. □

Trump's military build-up in the Caribbean: remilitarising Puerto Rico

A huge US military build-up has been underway along Puerto Rico's southern coast. It has included the USS Iwo Jima, an amphibious assault ship, 10,000 troops, including Marine Corps F-35 fighter jets, Air Force MQ-9 Reaper drones, plus surveillance aircraft and

support personnel. This is supposedly for US "regional readiness". In other words, the ongoing targeting of vessels in Venezuelan waters supposedly belonging to "terrorist drug cartels" - is only part of the US objective in the Caribbean.

In fact the US defence force is "reactivating" former colonial bases in Puerto Rico. Its history as a US colony dates back to the invasion of 1898. Later, US military bases were established in Ceiba, Vieques, and Culebra; the Roosevelt Roads, Ramey Air Force Base, Fort Buchanan, and Camp Santiago - built to "confront perceived threats", from Nazi submarines in World War II to the Cold War "Soviet threat", including the 1962 "Cuban Missile Crisis". The island of Puerto Rico was nicknamed the "unsinkable aircraft carrier" of the Caribbean.

The population reacts

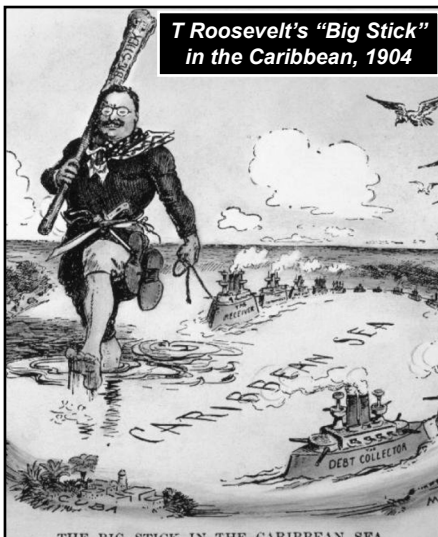
At the height of the Cold War, the US military controlled 13% of Puerto Rican land. Entire communities were uprooted. Agriculture and fishing collapsed and environmental damage was extensive.

Decades of bombing left Vieques littered with unexploded ordnance and contaminated with heavy metals, causing respiratory illnesses and cancer. The death of a civilian guard in 1999, during a bombing exercise, ignited a mass movement that finally forced the Navy's withdrawal in 2003. But contamination remains, and clean-up is incomplete.

Simulated nuclear testing

On 21 September, an unarmed (but potentially nuclear) Trident II D5 ballistic missile was launched from a submarine off Florida, its blazing trail visible from Puerto Rico. The US Navy said it was a "success". But for whom, is the question... A resident of Vieques told a local newspaper: "for years we lived with the sound of bombs, planes at all hours, while sleeping, at school. The trauma comes back".

Trump's administration claims that the US is "protecting democracy, maintaining regional stability and tackling narcotics traffickers". In reality the US is reasserting its regional dominance using Puerto Rico as its colonial pawn. □



RMT demands tubeworkers' "right to stay"!

In July, the government increased the salary threshold for visa-sponsored foreign workers to £41,700 a year. This meant that over 100 job categories were removed from the Skilled Worker Visa scheme - including Transport for London's "Rail Travel Assistants" (RTAs) - the backbone of TfL, who do everything from ticketing, to manning barriers and platforms, to providing info and passenger assistance.

The changes were introduced with a transitional period of just 3 weeks. It means many workers in permanent posts won't qualify for visa extensions when their current visas expire. In fact, they'll lose their jobs and their right to stay in Britain!

TfL pays a starting salary of £31,000 for graduates, and it is now telling candidates who need sponsorship to check whether they meet the new threshold before applying. For trainee station staff, pay ranges from £35,300/year up to £41,800/year - only the top rate being above the new minimum threshold - and by only £100!



The RMT has held pickets and protests against the new rules. Officials have also met with ministers, but the Home Office's response has been: "net migration must come down"! Never mind that these workers are essential and currently in

post. Union officials have now handed a letter to Keir Starmer, asking him to protect these workers' rights. Fat chance, of course, since it's his Home Secretary who is responsible for attacking them. It'll take more than a letter to reverse this! □

Resident doctors' strike: fighting the "vacancy" shortage

The British Medical Association (BMA) has launched a 5-day strike of resident doctors from 7am on 14 November to 7am on 19 November. Out of a 55% turnout this time, 90% voted for industrial action. This strike is only the latest episode in the dispute that began in March 2023, and which has involved 11 strikes amounting to 49 strike days.

The doctors' demands haven't changed: to reverse a 26% inflation pay cut since 2008, they need a 29% pay rise. Currently a newly-qualified doctor earns £38,831. However costs they are obliged to cover, like paying off their £50,000 medical school debt, accommodation (they must often move post every 6 months), exam fees of £1,000 to gain specialist qualifications, may total £18,000 a year. They are asking for reimbursement. They are also asking for a night shift premium and a minimum of 11 hours rest between

shifts, which one would have thought was already mandatory!

Doctors also on a waiting list!

But just as pressing is the national shortage of speciality training places for residents - 20,000 are waiting for a placement! But Health Secretary Wes Streeting has refused to consider the doctors' plight. He said "We will not raise pay further in 2025-26 because public finances are strained, but we will fund 1,000 extra training places". He later increased this to 2,000 places. Never mind the fact that in England alone, there is a shortage of 33,000 specialists.

In the meantime those doctors waiting to train are working in non-training posts, as Locally Employed Doctors (LEDs) - a position introduced in July 2022 as part of a 10-year "post Covid Roadmap". When Starmer's government took over in 2024, Johnson's 10-year plan was

kept intact. LEDs are on short-term contracts, are paid 5-10% less, must pay their own exam fees, and do not get an accommodation allowance, despite being expected to be on call at night, at or near the hospital. But keeping residents as LEDs allows the government to cut the budget of the NHS by tens of millions of pounds (figures not published!).

The vast majority of resident doctors are actually senior trainees, who've been stuck as LEDs for 10+ years and are probably experienced enough to be regarded, and used, as specialists!

Lone-striking is a loser

Worse, however, is the fact that in 2025 more than half of junior doctors faced unemployment at the end of their two-year foundation contracts, largely due to bottlenecks in speciality training places. Last year, 10,685 doctors left the NHS - the highest number on record. The reasons given: quite simply, poor pay and working conditions, and above all, lack of training posts...

Obviously the NHS needs these doctors - but the funding is entirely inadequate and to save costs further, the government is in the process of cutting 10,000 NHS posts - having just abolished NHS England.

It would seem that the only way that all the staff in this huge and vital institution will gain even a fraction of what they need, is by taking strike action all together and putting forward collective demands. It's a simple solution, but in order to implement it, workers on the ground would need to organise themselves, independently of the union machineries - and that's not so easy! □



Their society

Budget: Reeves is in a black hole

At the time of writing the budget has not yet been announced. Although it is obvious from all the speculation - and even Rachel Reeves' own pre-budget "scene-setting" speech - that she would need to raise taxes in order to balance her books. The consensus is that she should never have promised not to, even if her promise was only made to "working people"...

But as is to be expected, there is a huge outcry against any kind of tax rise - and from all quarters. As if the state is today not the main funder *and* investor *and* subsidiser of the capitalist class... It is true that when it becomes very indebted, (90-100% of GDP!), it can still keep borrowing without defaulting, unlike poor countries such as

Argentina... But nevertheless, if it is to fulfil its "milch cow" role in the economy how else, except by imposing tax rises?

The advice from former chancellors - even Tories like Ken Clarke - is that the best tax to put up is income tax - since increasing VAT is inflationary... But it's possible that Opposition and even some Labour voices would call for Reeves to resign if/when she breaks her pledges.

In fact, in the context of ongoing crisis in this period of capitalist decline there's no possible "win" for any chancellor, no matter who - the only answer is "crashing out" of capitalism! Which of course can't happen this side of a revolution! ☐



• Statutory maternity/paternity pay - scandalously low

A petition from the group "Maternity Action", with over 100,000 signatures over the low level of statutory maternity pay was submitted for parliamentary debate last month. As the campaign "Pregnant then Screwed" points out, "*Maternity pay is an abomination. How is anyone meant to survive on £187 a week, which is less than half the minimum wage - the lowest amount someone can live on*".

You might be able to take 52 weeks of maternity leave "legally" without getting

the sack - but only 39 weeks are paid. For the first six weeks, you might get 90% of average weekly pay, but after that, it's a flat rate of £187.18 a week, or 90% of your wage, whichever is lower!

But there's a catch, even then: to qualify, you need to have worked for the same employer for 26 weeks before the 15th week of pregnancy, earn at least £125 a week, and notify your employer well in advance!

Twenty years ago, statutory maternity

pay was around two-thirds of the National Minimum Wage. Now it's less than half.

Paradoxically, women in Britain can legitimately take the longest maternity leave among developed countries, but are among the worst-paid; Britain is in the bottom 5 out of 38 OECD countries. In fact when adjusted for full pay, pregnant British women get just 12 weeks at this level, compared to 16-25 weeks in other OECD countries.

• Maternity units: gross understaffing, gross overworking

Maternity and neonatal units in 14 hospital trusts are currently under investigation, including in Shrewsbury and Telford hospital Trusts, the Nottingham Trust and major teaching hospitals like Oxford's John Radcliffe and Birmingham Women's and Children's Trust. East Kent, Morecambe Bay, Sussex, Bradford... are also under investigation.

Health Secretary, Wes Streeting, insists that the national investigation into

the failure to prevent preventable deaths of babies and mothers - with a report due in December - will "*drive accountability*". After years of damning reports, scandals, and empty promises, who really believes that the same governments that have spent years cutting NHS funding will suddenly hold themselves or these Trusts to account? There have been a string of maternity reviews dating back to 2022, which point to the same problem:

grossly understaffed obstetric units.

Today, according to the Royal College of Midwives, there are 46,606 midwives on the register - but England alone is still 2,500 short. And in the wider NHS there were 25,632 general nursing vacancies. Midwives and nurses are working enormous amounts of overtime - an estimated 100,000 extra hours weekly - to fill the gaps! That, in itself, is criminal.

• London's housing: simply unaffordable



Affordable homes in London - and elsewhere - are few and far between, whether for rent or to buy. But now the requirement that new developments offer 35% of their homes at so-called "affordable" prices has been cut to just 20%. Apparently this was meant to be an incentive to developers after the rate of housebuilding in London fell far short of the 52,000 annual target, because the developers had gone "on strike".

Anyway, "affordable housing" can cost up to 80% of market rents or prices - often

not affordable at all! It never substituted for the mass low-rent council housing which "just about" (but not quite) met need, after World War Two. Thatcher forced councils to sell homes without replacing them, swelling waiting lists and diverting billions to mortgage lenders and a new generation of private landlords specialising in "buy to let". And since most of these landlords have active mortgages, the rise in interest rates pushed rents up even further. But as these rates fall, renters don't see their rents falling in accordingly!

• A French model for young workers

Low-rent accommodation for young workers hardly exists. Charities provide patchy "supported" hostels for some young people who'd be homeless otherwise. But increasingly, this is left to dubious private operators who offer insecure, short-term dormitory accommodation (no privacy!) to which councils refer young homeless

people, who cannot afford anything better on minimum wage, precarious contracts.

In France there are young workers' hostels or "foyers", provided by the state or local authority and fully subsidised youth organisations for anyone under 25 years old - so for instance a room with a bathroom will cost as little as £87 per month! These

"foyers" have private rooms or apartments with collective kitchens much like student accommodation. One can only wonder why this system which provides cheap and dignified accommodation has never been adopted here in Britain? Could it have anything to do with the pressure of the private landlord lobby? Well represented among MPs?

• Water companies; shareholders need drying out

The Environmental Performance Report into water companies makes it clear: England's water system is leaking... What's more, there has been a 27% rise in serious pollution incidents.

Thames Water, the largest company, claims it's "on the brink" with £15.6 billion of debt. Yet it paid out £195.5 million in dividends to shareholders in 2023 and 2024! Since privatisation in 1989, water firms have paid £78 billion to shareholders, while investment in repairs fell by over 16% between 2020 and 2023. And this, despite raw sewage flowing into rivers for 3.6 million hours in 2023 alone!

Last year, 1 trillion litres of clean water leaked from ageing mains, enough to supply 7 million people for a whole year. And yet the water bosses still claim they're "investing for the future"! The National Audit Office warns it would take 700 years to replace the country's dilapidated water system at the current rate...

To address the problem, ten new reservoirs are meant to be built - including long-delayed Fens and South Lincolnshire



schemes. But they won't be finished until the late 2030s... at best!

And who pays? In fact higher water charges (an average increase of 26%), are meant to fund the investment

programmes. As if charges aren't far too high already. But since each reservoir will cost £2-3bn - the accrued dividends paid to shareholders so far, would easily cover the cost...

• Energy companies: our debt versus their profit

Energy bills are still £500 a year higher on average than 3 years ago, and they show no sign of coming down. Gas prices are the main driver of this increase - accounting for £215 of this £500 increase in bills - since most households in Britain still rely to a large extent on gas heating. The rising cost of electricity accounts for

£67 out of that £500.

But energy bills are not only made up of the cost of the actual energy used. In the past 6 years the "standing charge" that energy companies add to bills has tripled, so that for a "typical" household paying the price cap of £1,754 a year, £320 of this is the "standing charge"!

This is meant to be the operating costs of energy suppliers, but of course, the biggest "hidden cost" added onto bills, is the profit companies are making. The trade union Unite found that £500 of that "typical" household bill is actually pure profit for energy companies, even after they've "invested" in their networks!

• Take them over!

Of course, energy bills have been so unaffordable for so long now, that there's a record amount owed to energy suppliers: households are apparently in debt to the tune of £4.4bn! In fact, the price cap already includes an extra £52 charge for every household in order to pay off some of this debt! And the regulator, Ofgem just

announced another £5 added to bills to pay off even more! Never mind that in 2024, energy companies in Britain made £30bn in profit - they could easily write off all £4.4bn of debt, and reduce bills overnight.

Instead, the energy bosses are trying to blame the government for high bills, pointing to taxes and extra levies on

energy bills to pay for investment in new energy infrastructure - which the energy companies will benefit from in the future, without having to pay for it themselves! So yes, the only way to cut bills, would be to cut out the parasites - the privatised energy companies, and their greedy shareholders!

Schools' "unauthorised absence" fines: penalising the poor

Petitions on "holidays during term" and "school absence fines" with over 360,000 signatures were debated in Westminster last month.

The Education Penalty Notice (EPN), introduced in 2022, under Sunak's Tories, imposes an £80 fine (increasing to £160 after 21 days) for 5 unauthorised absences (or 10 half-days) within a 10-week period. Late arrivals, absences reported by parents after the start of the lessons, or any non-medical absence are considered "unauthorised". Sickness beyond 2 days requires a medical note, or becomes unauthorised. Moreover, a 3rd offence within 3 years leads to a referral to a magistrates' court and a possible fine of up to £2,500 and a possible criminal record.

Frenzied fining

In 2025, this scheme generated £40 million from roughly 450,000 notices. Yorkshire and the Humber, contributed to 14% of the revenue despite accounting for just 9% of England's pupils. But parents in this region are hard-pressed: 15% are on zero-hour contracts, and only 38% of families can afford childcare. What's more, black pupils are 2.5X, Romany pupils 3X and special needs pupils 4X more likely to be fined!

One incentive for this "fine frenzy" and daily attendance monitoring, is the "attendance-uplift" grant. This pays £150 per pupil for each percentage-point above the national attendance benchmark of 94%. So for e.g., a school with 1,200 pupils, with a score +1% above the benchmark can get

£180,000 extra funding.

Trying to survive the cuts?

This increased dependence by schools on an "attendance grant", is the direct result of the 2010-15 austerity policies, which cut school budgets by £1.5 bn. There followed the removal of the 2020 "Pupil-Premium-plus" (£400 m) and a 2022 freeze on "term-time childcare" funding (£1 bn)!

The government hasn't backed off - and insists the EPNs must stay, to keep kids in school and to prevent parents taking them on holiday during term time. No wonder. The travel industry organisations VisitBritain and ABTA say that the EPN has generated £600m of extra revenue by pushing families to buy tickets during the school holiday price peak!

Their society

Employment Rights Bill: still no guarantees for workers

The government's Employment Rights Bill is reaching the final stages before being made law, more than a year after it was first published. The changes proposed are hardly very onerous on bosses - which doesn't stop them from protesting vociferously!

So for instance, the ban on "zero-hour

contracts" - doesn't ban them. Instead, there's a "*right to guaranteed hours*". But it only applies if you "regularly" work more than the minimum number of hours in your contract; what counts as "regular" will be decided only after the bill becomes law. And anyway, there are exceptions. Employers can simply offer

a fixed-term contract with "guaranteed hours": i.e. not a permanent job! The "*right to guaranteed hours*" can also be ignored if a union and a company agree to do so in a collective agreement. Given the capitulation of union officials to bosses, this looks very likely! □

• "Fair" for whom?

In order to enforce the various "new rights" which the Employment Rights Act will bring, a new Fair Work Agency (FWA) has been created, to "*ensure companies comply*". It's telling that the government has appointed former Tony Blair advisor, Matthew Taylor to lead this new body.

Taylor also wrote a review of "working practices" for Theresa May in 2017 - in fact this is where he first put forward the idea of a new FWA, alongside many other new "rights" which are now in the Employment Rights Bill! Which kind of says it all.

Indeed, it's in the bosses' interest to

have a "regulated" jobs market, just as it was in their interest to have a minimum wage, brought in by Tony Blair in 1997. For the biggest employers, government regulation ensures that they are not out-competed, thus preventing a threat to their profits!

• New deputy Labour leader... and who cares?

Lucy Powell, previously sacked by Starmer as leader of the House of Commons, is now the deputy leader of the Labour Party. She beat the other candidate, Starmer-loyalist Bridget Phillipson. Starmer himself endorsed neither candidate, probably guessing it would only increase the vote of the other!

It was never clear exactly why Starmer sacked Powell, but accusing a then Tory (who since joined Reform UK) of a "dog whistle" about grooming gangs on BBC radio's "*Any Questions*" made her a hate figure of the far right. Her victory

statement that "*we won't win by trying to out-Reform Reform, but by building a broad progressive consensus*" was a bit of a reprimand to Starmer's "*trying to out-reform Reform*".

Powell's 87,407 votes gave her a margin of nearly 14,000 over Phillipson. But what stood out was that the turnout among the Labour membership was only 16.6%! In other words 83.4% of eligible Labour members - 809,699 of them - didn't even bother to vote. And nobody put the validity of such a miniscule endorsement into question!

• Big retailers shooting themselves in the foot

The number of big retailers announcing job cuts this year is growing. Sainsbury's announced 3,000 job cuts and the closure of 61 in-store cafes at the beginning of the year, followed closely by Tesco announcing 400 job cuts, including staff at its in-store bakeries. And in March, Morrisons announced 3,600 job cuts and the closure of 17 stores!

Then it was the turn of Poundland, which in June announced the closure of 68 out of its 800 outlets (80 more are under review) and two distribution centres, cutting at least 2,000 jobs. Pepco Group, a rich company with a revenue of over £6bn, sold Poundland for £1 to the US retail investor Gordon Brothers, blaming "*challenging trading*

conditions". Never mind that Pepco Group has managed to pay dividends to its shareholders, while depriving workers of their livelihoods!

But how could "trading conditions" be other than "challenging", when inflation is sky-high and real wages are decreasing? In fact, this mad profit system fuels its own demise by depriving tens of thousands of workers of their wages, through massive redundancy plans, and as a result cutting workers' purchasing power even further. Until retail workers, and workers in other industries, decide to put the brakes on this vicious cycle - by striking back together!

The epidemic of anti-migrant hysteria

Hadush Kebatu, who had been mistakenly released from prison, was easily found. Three days later he was deported back to Ethiopia. He had been described as a "*dangerous sex offender*", when the facts of the matter hardly warranted his being taken to court, let alone being given a jail sentence. He had tried to kiss a 14 year-old girl as well as an older woman and said he wanted to have a baby with both of them. Undoubtedly the exaggeration of these incidents was "helped" by anti-migrant bigotry on the part of all those involved, including the police, the judiciary and the media. And it provided the opportunity for the far-right to mobilise outside the Bell Hotel where he'd been staying, in order to wave their flags and claim that their children were under threat from asylum seekers!

Then attention turned to Brahim Kaddour-Cherif, a young Algerian who had also been mistakenly freed from jail. The public was misinformed that he too, was a "*sex offender*". He was found 9 days later.

Asylum-seeking has been deliberately conflated with criminality and danger to the "public". And just to highlight this constant "threat" every TV news broadcast includes footage of migrant dinghies being brought to land by the coastguard. No doubt the government imagines that by joining the xenophobic chorus of Farage and Robinson and Co., it will draw attention away from the real preoccupations of working people, like the cost of living crisis and the NHS!

One or two polls claim that the issue of immigration is the public's top priority - polls which question (but what do they ask, exactly?) 1,000 over-18s online... But despite the constant migrant-bashing the public is still more worried about the broken economic system and blames the government, rather than asylum-seekers for this!



AI and China

The AI bubble: a financial crash in the making?

On 2 November 2025, the major stock markets, NASDAQ-100 (hi-tech) and S&P-500 (main companies cross-sectors), fell by 9% (\$1.5tn, equivalent to the GDP of Australia!) and 5% (\$3tn, equivalent to the GDP of Britain!) within a few hours. This fall, was triggered by Nvidia - the high-end microchip manufacturer - as it had missed its forecast earnings by \$240m on the previous day.

Already on 9 October, Jamie Dimon, CEO of JPMorgan Chase, the most profitable bank worldwide (\$48bn profits, ranked 12th worldwide by market value) had commented: "Asset prices are high, you know, in some form of bubble territory".

Never too big to fail

Nvidia is part of the "magnificent seven", the major tech/AI companies (Microsoft, Alphabet, Amazon, Meta, Apple and Tesla) which drive the "AI bubble". That is, the speculative frenzy which increased their market value by 50% since April 2024. Nvidia's share value's been inflated to the point that it's registered as the top company worldwide - worth \$5tn, equal to Japan's GDP (3rd largest economy)... As for the "magnificent seven", altogether, they're worth \$18tn or 4 years-worth of the US federal budget!

This fall came as no surprise, since on 20 October, David Solomon (CEO of Goldman Sachs - 4th biggest investment-bank) and Ted Pick (CEO of Morgan Stanley - 5th biggest), notable for their "investment advice", released a joint "research note" warning investors that: "AI-related valuations were 'sky-high'" [...] "the market could see a 10-15% correction" as it happened... Something they reiterated



in a joint letter after the "correction" took place on 4 November, claiming: "AI-stocks are unsustainable".

The fall last time

This AI bubble recalls the Dotcom bubble which burst in 2000, due to the opening to the public of the World Wide Web and the speculation around an "e-market". Bets on stock had been building up since 1995, led by the "big five" (Cisco, Intel, Microsoft, Oracle, IBM), until it burst in March 2000. The NASDAQ crashed by 78%! This caused the collapse of 400

tech-companies, resulting in an increase in unemployment from 4% to 6% - 2 million jobs were lost!

But back then, the "big five" represented only 5% of the world GDP, and the Dotcom bubble was confined to the hi-tech sector. Today's AI-bubble represents 15% of world GDP, a significant share of which is in non-tech industry - as shown by their 50% share of the S&P 500's market value! This time the AI bubble has just slightly "corrected" itself... It's not burst... yet. □

Extreme UV tools embargo: a US monopoly!

Nvidia's reduced November "earnings forecast", was due to a delay in production of its Blackwell GPUs - its most powerful microchip, allowing new AI programs to be produced in record time.

These Blackwell GPUs are produced in one single factory located in Taiwan, owned by TSMC (Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company). Nvidia owns the design patent of the microchip, which is then contracted to TSMC which has the highly sophisticated machines - extreme ultraviolet (EUV) tools - necessary to carve the nanoscopic (4-5nm!) pattern on a silicon wafer using a UV laser beam.

EUV tools (\$150m each), take 2-3 years to be built and set up - so new EUV tools are only expected to be available by 2027! These machines are produced by one single company based in the Netherlands, called ASML (Advanced Semiconductor Material Lithography). TSMC's EUV tools are scarce: these machines run non-stop 24/7 to meet microchip demand. So when there's the slightest technical issue, orders

have to be rescheduled - as happened to the Blackwell GPUs.

US rules the chips

However, the real bottleneck was caused by the US "AI Diffusion Rule", which added licensing requirements on EUV tools for any manufacturers with "Chinese exposure"! Only three microchip manufacturers, Samsung, Intel and TSMC, are allowed to have EUV tools - with TSMC specialising in the 4-5nm technology that Nvidia's designs need.

ASML's US-enforced monopoly on EUV tools, increased the market value of ASML-TSMC-Nvidia by 83%, between March and October. This artificially-raised profit margin is what the AI bubble rests on, resulting in Nvidia's market valuation of \$4.68tn for only \$29.8 billion real profits - inflated 158 times!

The inflationary Trump-tariff

In June, the 10% US-tariff on semiconductor components imported

from China, including components used in Blackwell GPUs, but also sub-assembly components of the EUV tools shipped from China - boosted its price further!

It is worth noting, that under Export Administration Regulations, the US can impose an embargo on any product with "US origin technology" (components)... even when the final assembler is a foreign company!

China can do it - and cheaper?

But the real source of ASML-TSMC-Nvidia high-margin profits - three times above the world average - comes from its holding publicly-funded EUV tool patents - worth \$1.5bn of US, Japanese and EU research funds!

The November pin-prick in the AI bubble, was the result of the doubts of investors in the capacity of ASML-TSMC-Nvidia to hold the monopoly until 2027: China is exploring different ways to make EUV tools, with trial production planned for end-2025 - although still at much lower 20nm precision! Remember Deepseek... □

Uprisings

Gen Z protests: only workers' revolution will change the system for good!

All around the world, so-called "Gen Z" youth have been on the streets demanding political change. Insurrectionary protests have dislodged vicious, corrupt and incompetent rulers - in Bangladesh last year, in Nepal in September, in Madagascar in September/October.

The Madagascan army hijacks power

The most recent youth mass protests were at the end of September: students in Madagascar took to the streets demanding an end to water and electricity cuts. Despite the government's repression, which left 22 dead, the so-called "Gen Z" youth fought the police and adopted political demands: an end to corruption and the resignation of the President Rajoelina. The appointment of a new Prime Minister on 6 October didn't prevent demonstrations from continuing.

But then, on 11 October, some soldiers joined the students, turning on their officers and telling their fellow-soldiers to "point your weapons at those who order you to fire on your comrades-in-arms"! An army unit called the CAPSAT - which had helped overthrow the government back in 2009, to bring Rajoelina to power, led the mutiny. A new chief of staff was appointed by the CAPSAT and on 13 October, it took control over all military forces. Rajoelina fled the country and Colonel Randrianirina was "chosen" interim president.

The protesters initially welcomed the army mutineers. But the intentions of the army officers became clear, when on 13 October, they patrolled the streets and ordered Gen Z demonstrators to go home. However the youth have not had their final word. The appointment of businessman Rajaonarivelo as PM was met with more protests. And no wonder, since none of the problems that motivated the mobilisation have been



Fire at the Singha Durbar complex, which houses the office of Nepal's Prime Minister and other ministers, September 2025



resolved!

The insurrection in Nepal

Early in September, it was the Nepalese youth that rebelled. The so-called "Communist" government (nothing to do with Marxism or Leninism, despite its name) restricted various social media platforms, which were being used to denounce the government. Of course they were also a vital means of employment and communication.

The youth protested. But when 19 high school students were killed, the violence escalated. The parliament building, the Supreme Court and the Singha Durbar - were torched. And at least 300 local government offices across the country were burnt. The Kantipur Media House, Nepal's largest private outlet, was set ablaze. The PM and other officials were dragged out of their homes and beaten. Faced with the determination of the protesters, the decrees restricting social media were finally repealed and the government resigned. But the revolt continued, as well as the repression: a total of 75 protesters were killed and 2,113 injured.

The army chief Ashok Raj Sigdel, together with several senior officials of the Supreme Court, decreed the dissolution of the National Assembly. But he was forced to meet with the youth leaders and agree that they should have their say on who was to act as interim leaders. The youth voted on Discord - appointing former president of the Supreme Court Sushila Karki Prime Minister. Elections are due in March 2026.

The Bangladesh "July revolution"

In many ways what happened in Nepal - although on a much tinier scale - is similar to what happened last year in Bangladesh, where the youth managed to topple the 15 year-long authoritarian regime of PM Sheikh Hasina.

The anti-government protests in Bangladesh had been sparked by

Hasina's re-introduction of a "jobs quota" in June 2024, which reserved jobs for the children of the veterans of the 1971 war for independence. The determination of the youth struck a nerve among the population, especially amongst the unemployed poor. The massive protests of July were met by repression and violence not seen since the war of independence: over 1,500 protesters were killed and 20,000 injured! Nevertheless Hasina was forced to flee; the army changed sides and the Nobel prize-winning Muhammad Yunus, the "banker of the poor", was then invited to take over as interim leader.

But in Bangladesh, workers also went on strike - starting in August 2024 and again in March 2025. There were illusions about the provisional government, which were dissipated when Yunus accused the strikers of being in the service of foreign powers and of being enemies of the "July revolution".

Lessons for the future!

Whether it is Madagascar, Nepal, Bangladesh, but also Morocco, Peru, Kenya or Sri Lanka - and finally Tanzania - the sham democracy which rules over the population is always inherently unstable, due to the huge gap between the small class of rich and the masses of poor in these countries. In this context, the military is always ready and waiting in the shadows to restore order.

New elections, under the same system, or no elections and military dictatorship, means only more of the same for young and old - or worse, like in Sudan, where the population is caught in the crossfire between warring military factions.

"Generation Z" has shown its potential, however, to lead a revolt. The missing ingredient, however, has been the political programme of revolutionary communism, which relies on the organised force of the (armed!) working class, the best defence against a military hijack of an insurrection. □

Spain: fifty years since Franco's death

The 20th of November marks fifty years since the death of Spanish dictator Francisco Franco, the army general who ruled Spain from 1939 until his death in 1975. He came to power after leading a military uprising against Spain's Republican government, sparking a revolutionary civil war in 1936.

The conflict lasted three years and is often described as a struggle between fascism (represented by Franco) and democracy (defended by supporters of the Republic). However there was a third side - workers organised by the revolutionary syndicalists, anarchists and communists - and Trotskyists. Caught between the reformism and "left-wing" nationalism of the Stalinist communist party and the socialist (or social democratic) republicans on the one hand, and Franco's army on the other, the revolutionary forces were unable to win through. Their proletarian revolution - which had started earlier on in 1936 and which had spread to the biggest

industrial centres was finally defeated.

A perfect tool for the bosses and the church

Franco's victory was won with help of fellow fascists, Hitler and Mussolini. They had provided weapons, bombs and aircraft to bomb the revolutionary forces. Franco was thus able to establish an authoritarian, anti-communist and ultra-Catholic regime. All political parties and independent trade unions were banned, except for his own Falange Party and state-controlled organisations.

Tens of thousands of opponents - including trade unionists, communists, socialists and anarchists - were imprisoned, sent to forced labour camps, or executed. The last political executions took place as late as September 1975.

One of the regime's shocking legacies is the "fosas comunes", or mass graves. Tens of thousands of people were buried in unmarked sites - in fields, along

roadsides and in cemeteries.

The Spanish bourgeoisie won't rock the boat too much

When Franco died on 20 November 1975 aged 82, so did his dictatorship. A "constitutional monarchy" was established - although with the same King, personally appointed by Franco! Political parties were legalised again. However, successive governments have tried to sweep the events of the civil war and military dictatorship - 1936 to 1975 - under the carpet through the so-called "pact of forgetting".

In 1977, parliament agreed to proscribe prosecutions for crimes committed during that period, such as arbitrary executions and torture. This law remains in force today, although a 2022 reform has begun to change this. But these legal battles are more symbolic than anything else. The fact that no one has ever been convicted, just reflects how comfortable the Spanish bourgeoisie has always been with its Francoist past.

A tentative digging-up

In the early 2000s, the first exhumations of mass graves began, but it was only in 2022 that the Spanish state took full responsibility for this. That same year, the ultra-nationalist groups that used to gather (and still do) each 20th of November to honour Franco, were also banned. Yet many of the ideas that shaped his regime remain alive today, particularly within parties such as the Conservative People's Party and Vox, a far-right party.

Today, the history of what took place between 1936 and 1975 is absent from school curricula, and the events of the Spanish revolution are deliberately downplayed. Since 2019, Spain's government has called itself the "most progressive in [the country's] history" - a coalition between the Socialist Party and other left-wing groups such as the Communist Party. But almost a century on, Spain's ruling class still fears the same thing Franco did: the working class taking society into its hands. □



"Left" politicians win in Ireland and US: but what changes?

On 11 November, Catherine Connolly was sworn in as Ireland's President. The role is little more than that of a figurehead. Nonetheless, her victory as an "independent" candidate is being called a victory for the "left" and "hard left". Some are even comparing it with the election of Zorhan Mamdani as New York's mayor. Both supported Palestine, and both focused on the lack of affordable housing for young people.

But what does this really have to do with being "left"? One doesn't have to be "left" to express horror at the killing of tens of thousands of men, women and

children in Gaza and the demolition of the country. As for housing, even a right-wing paper like the *Financial Times* agrees that young people need housing they can afford.

In fact, what both these elections really indicate is deep apathy and disillusionment with the political mainstream. Although they have manifested this in different ways.

The turnout in the Irish presidential election was only 46%, and what is more, there were an unprecedented number of spoilt ballots - 213,738 or 13% of all ballots cast! There were three candidates

to vote for, and two were nominees of the parties in the ruling coalition which has been in power since 2011. So what did this really mean? An endorsement of Connolly for what she stood for, or a reaction against the social degradation presided over by the ruling parties?

By the way, the turnout in New York was even lower, under 40%. Nevertheless those who think democracy equates to voting in elections and winning them, were ecstatic, since this was the highest turnout in the NY mayoral election since 1969! Well, as the saying goes, everything is relative!

King's Cross railway station (London)**An unprecedented train stabbing: what can and can't be prevented**

The crew on the train from Doncaster were terrified by what happened... But we all did our utmost to protect passengers who were even more terrified, and were crowding into the tiny bar and kitchen. Some were hurt and bleeding. Several of us came face-to-face with the attacker. Brave Sam ran forward with frying pans to try to stop him.

In Huntingdon, we were told to get off the train - but the building we were meant to go to was locked! So we had to wait in the cold on the platform to give statements. We'd been told that we needn't worry as taxis would take

us home. But there were no taxis. We had to jump on the last coach booked for passengers back to Peterborough/KX. Since then, top managers haven't even contacted us to ask how we're coping - or not. But we did see David Horne sharing the limelight when Alexander congratulated the driver and signaller...

The Transport Secretary was right to say that not much can be done to prevent this kind of unprecedented attack. But we know there are rail safety issues which must be addressed. Only guards are trained in how to close/lock fire/safety doors. We don't get real-life evacuation



training; there isn't even a first aider on every train; we need practical hands-on refreshers in all safety aspects! We have a long list. But let's start by demanding that under the new renationalised "GBR" there is a guard on every single train! ☐

• End lone working!

By the way, lone working must also end for good... For instance, in LNER, at night there's only 1 Duty Team Leader/dispatcher/passenger information provider/control-liaison for dealing with problems on the station... Lone working is also the norm in the smaller GN and LNER stations. It's unsafe, fullstop! [Workers' Platform 12/11/25]

• Unwelcome?

LNER managers decided to bring in "security workers" on trains. They're not even on every service. And some

of them don't seem entirely sure why they're there. In fact, a few of us only realised they were on board after a manager's email told us they weren't allowed to sit in First Class and that we should report them if they did. What a wonderfully warm welcome that was! [Workers' Platform 12/11/25]

• From bad to worse?

A broken rail on the East Coast line on Monday was declared "black status" - the highest level of ongoing disruption. It affected all trains at both KX and St Pancras, so when services did run, they were absolutely packed. But the EMR

bosses did not bring in 10-car trains to fit everyone in - the ones in service were just 5-cars long. Were they trying to make things worse?! [Workers' Platform 12/11/25]

• Can't do? Won't do!

Do Gate Gourmet managers really think one person can be in 4 places at once?! Not only are there two separate delivery points on the 9-car Azuma where we must deliver catering supplies, but the 10-car Azuma has four delivery points - two for its buffets and two for its kitchens, which are all miles apart... [Workers' Platform 12/11/25]

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

There's nothing more frustrating than when you're told that what you see with your own eyes is not true. We're constantly told that there's no mail; there is. It's not busy; it is. It can all be done; it can't. Luckily we all know how to read a clock because if we didn't, we'd be told it wasn't time to go home!

Despite the completely worthless union officials telling us the Optimised Delivery Method (or Outrageous Delivery Madness) is on hold, we're all seeing

our letter frames still being decked out in pink, yellow and blue, according to delivery priority. If the plan is on hold, why is this still carrying on? The truth is that the union leaders have been told it's business as usual - and the changes are happening with or without them.

We also cannot believe that our mates on the inferior contracts are being told to wait up to 3 years before they're deemed worthy enough to get the same as us. And now the union leaders are telling



them it's their own fault because they won't join the union?! Is this how trade unionism works in the 21st century? Workers offered nothing, and then told it's their own fault the bowl is empty? ☐

• Pressure already too high!

We can already see what a mess DOs will be in, as Black Friday, Cyber Monday, etc., approach. All around the country, we hear the turnover of new starters is sky-high. If DUMs think the rest of us will rush around to deliver all these mounting packets, they can think again! [Workers' Fight bulletin 12/11/25]

• Pretty Disastrous Assist

And by the way, the Postal Delivery Assistants (PDAs) cannot be relied on - they sometimes send us down a

dead end, and they organise the order of delivery in a very illogical way! Those of us who've been delivering long enough to know our way don't use them, but agency workers and new starters are expected to trust these bloody things?! No wonder the turnover of new workmates is so high! [Workers' Fight bulletin 12/11/25]

• Save our backs!

The heavy parcels are increasing in numbers as we approach Xmas and the only solution managers have come up with is... to get temps to help us! Aren't temps just as prone to get sprains and strains from lifting these heavy parcels

as we are? We hear from mates in other MCs that they do have electric lifting equipment. We need this in here ASAP! [Workers' Fight bulletin 12/11/25]

• We want the interest too!

RM-PFS cleaners are still waiting for our backdated pay - we're told we'll see the lump sum in our November pay... That is, 7 months late!! And since it comes as a lump sum, it'll be taxed... so how much of the back pay will actually end up in our pockets? [Workers' Fight bulletin 12/11/25]

BMW Mini centre (Cowley, Oxford)**Saying no to their shift in shifts!**

After we voted to reject BMW's "Gear 1 shift" proposal last month, union officials completely washed their hands of any consequences. The letter they sent afterwards, was the last straw! In it, they criticised us for rejecting the offer which they'd "recommended", claiming their aim was "workforce stability", and even threatened us that "the situation could deteriorate further..." Yes, they've proved yet again that they're hand in hand with the bosses.

So this month, BMW will cut one and a half hours off our pay each week, when we voted to maintain a 37-hour shift! And we lose more WTA hours to this extra October shutdown and two weeks added to the Xmas shutdown, leaving the majority of us at or near the negative

limit.

We've had enough of the bosses getting away with whatever they want; this is why we voted "No"! We all know our pay was frozen in January. In fact our take home pay is now the same as it was in 2018! At the time of that "0%" deal, Unite officials assured us jobs wouldn't be at risk, yet 50 workers were dismissed after the ballot, and 180 more before summer shutdown.

When the Mini first started, Unite (then T&G) recruited agency workers into the union; yet we don't even get a vote in any of these ballots - despite now making up the majority of the workforce.

In Rudolph & Hellmann, many left the union in protest when Unite officials sold us out. But it's made no difference. We



can't expect these management allies to sort out anything for us. What we need to do, we can only decide together on the shop floor - whether we're employed by BMW, Staffline, R&H, G&P or any of the agencies or contractors! The company doesn't mind losing the odd employment tribunal, but it can't ignore our collective action! ☐

• Contracts to replace the old

Management wants even more "demonising" (job cuts) in Rework, and some of the older workers are being asked when their retirement date is! It's our right to decide when we want to retire, so managers can keep their noses out of it. Because what they certainly don't want to talk about is a decent retirement package. If they want us to go earlier, they can pay us off the last few years of our contract. [Workers' Fight bulletin 04/11/25]

• Cut out the freeloaders!

Quality control contractor, G&P hasn't asked the agency "Planet Recruitment" to call some of us in for 3 weeks now. As if we didn't need extra mates everyday!

But then, even G&P's own contracts are the same lousy zero-hours.

If BMW can't supply regular enough work to its contractors, we need to force it to take these jobs back in-house!

[Workers' Fight bulletin 04/11/25]

• A Swindon-Cowley fight-back needed!

In Swindon subassembly, the same people are kept on the more difficult jobs without rotations! An issue we have at Cowley too.

We know this is all about filling the absence/shortage gaps, but also trying to get some of us to leave by the backdoor... So how about flexing our collective industrial muscle? [Workers' Fight bulletin 04/11/25]

Ford Dagenham estate (Essex)**• Overtime = new work-mates needed!**

In Lion Machining, it's full on! Management is constantly asking us to do covers on week days and Saturday/Sunday overtime - days and nights...! We're not getting any younger though, so why aren't new workmates brought in to share this workload? [Workers' Fight bulletin 05/11/25]

• Chill with the machines?

We've been told the schedule will be rising after Xmas, since Lion Machining will be supplying Argentina, and South Africa... on top of D'ham! But the machines are not getting any younger either - they're 25 years old! So we're looking forward to a breakdown cuppa. [Workers' Fight bulletin 05/11/25]

• Too long already!

It seems the 144 shift is now looming... since Fords keeps announcing new orders for Lion parts! But why should any of us subject ourselves to 12-hour shifts?! What we need is shorter shifts, really. [Workers' Fight bulletin 05/11/25]

• Cough up!

ISL (maintenance) is not paying us night shift/unsocial hours allowance! This, despite working on lates and moving from DDC plant to DEP plant... The manager's response was: "you'll only get it if you work after 10pm!". Well OK, so we stop at 6, when the allowance should kick in and wait with folded arms. No premium, no work. Simple as that. [Workers' Fight bulletin 05/11/25]

• Our underpants stayed dry

Monday last week on the Tiger bay, we could have gone for a swim! A big pipe burst and we ended up in some areas with a pool of water two feet deep. Never mind though, some of the managers still went round telling us to carry on working! Maybe they got wet behind the ears? [Workers' Fight bulletin 05/11/25]

• We needed Noah

These panicking bosses then expected us cleaners to clear the water out of the plant. As if we were Moses (plural!) and able to part the DDC "sea" by waving a mop. They didn't even bring us a pair of galoshes... Nor even an ark. [Workers' Fight bulletin 05/11/25]

**• The ship's taking water**

On Panther machining, we also had a flood! The day before the audit came in, a fire-alarm sprinkler valve on the ceiling started making a funny noise. When we mentioned it, a manager told us: "what's this fuss about? This is normal!"... A few minutes later, it was panic on the bridge, since the valve had burst and gallons were pouring! [Workers' Fight bulletin 05/11/25]

• Scaring them off!

We were told, during this "Europe-wide" audit, that Ford Valencia plant management made a big show for managers, with Flamenco dancers and tapas to welcome them... Here at D'ham, we joked about putting on our best dresses and offering them some cockles on a stick - we don't want those snoopy managers anywhere near! [Workers' Fight bulletin 05/11/25]

Palestine: the treachery of the so-called "peace" plan

Since the "ceasefire" was instigated (but, of course, not imposed!) by Donald Trump on 10 October, the Israeli army has to date (11 November), killed 242 Gazans and injured 622. It has bombed Gaza 124 times, demolished 52 buildings, shot at civilians 88 times, raided beyond its yellow line 12 times and managed to detain 23 people.

Out of the 31 days since this non-ceasefire, there have been only 6 days on which there were no violent attacks, deaths or injuries! Nevertheless Hamas has continued to deliver hostages' remains - albeit slowly and with difficulty, due to the obvious problem of tons and tons of bomb-blasted rubble covering the territory and the lack of equipment.

Justifiable "retribution"?

On one day - 29 October - as many as 109 civilians were killed including 52 children. This particular bombing was described as a "retaliation" after the IDF claimed that an Israeli soldier had been shot in Rafah. Hamas denied its involvement. Trump said it was justifiable "retribution".

But anyway, the Israeli military routinely conducts "psy-ops", spreads disinformation and arms bandit gangs and Hamas' rivals. If in any doubt as to US/IDF's Machiavellian treachery one only has to recall the deadly fiasco of the private, US-backed so-called Gaza Humanitarian Foundation - currently suspended.

Truth doesn't set you free tho'



The poster for the documentary
"Breaking Ranks: Inside Israel's War"

At least now some of the truth which has been denied and suppressed both in Israel and in the countries who support Netanyahu's terrorist government like Britain, is now being "told" by mainstream media. For instance ITV's documentary "Breaking Ranks: Inside Israel's War" in which former Israeli soldiers describe with shame and regret how "anything that moves" became a target, how they were encouraged to burn homes and to use young Palestinian boys to "go in first" if a booby trap was suspected - the so-called "mosquito protocol".

Of course, telling the truth about the horror will not bring back to life the 69,179 confirmed dead (83% civilians according to Israel's own estimates) nor heal the wounds of the 170,700 injured.

And now the IDF has shifted its full attention to the West Bank.

So now what?

So what is to be done? In fact the poor and the working classes in the Occupied Territories, their brothers and sisters in Egypt, Lebanon and Jordan and beyond - but also in Israel - do have a weapon which, if used well, could change the balance of forces in their favour: their ability to withdraw their labour and bring the region's economy to a standstill.

Building the kind of cross-border revolutionary organisations to carry this out is both possible and necessary. Ultimately however, it would require unity under only one flag: a red one. □

Maccabi Tel Aviv and the "political football"

Aston Villa FC of Birmingham played Maccabi Tel Aviv in a Europa League match on 6 November - but with no visiting fans. They had been banned from attending. Despite this, the match was allocated 700 police, and 11 people were arrested around rival protests outside the ground, mostly for things they shouted at each other.

Starmer had more or less guaranteed that these protests would happen, by publicly opposing the proposed ban by the West Midlands Safety Advisory Group. This group is made up of councils and emergency services. Starmer's knee-jerk reaction to their proposal was to declare that "We will not tolerate antisemitism on our streets", implying that the SAG was capitulating to pro-Palestine protesters. And of course for the Starmer establishment, being

pro-Palestinian and anti-Zionist equals "anti-Semitism".

Her unprecedented ignorance

The Tories and Reform echoed this lie, but went further, claiming that Islamists (SAG?) now control Birmingham! Culture and Sport Minister, Lisa Nandy criticised the ban as "unprecedented". Which was news to West Ham fans, who were banned by UEFA for a match in 2023 - among countless other examples.

The SAG unusually published its advice, confirming what anyone with half a brain already knew - that there was a very real risk of Maccabi hooligans causing mayhem - as they always do. Before a match in Amsterdam last November, they randomly attacked local Muslims and sang chants

praising war atrocities against Palestinians.

Remember Peter Hain?

Yet Labour doubled down on its position to allow the fans in, even after police cancelled Maccabi's home league match with Hapoel Tel Aviv due to fans' violence on 21 October, before kick-off! Eventually, Maccabi itself refused to sell its ticket allocation.

Maccabi's chief executive told BBC Sport that "politics should never be drawn into football", though even Israel's affiliation to the European, rather than Asian, football federation is obviously political! Maybe everyone's forgotten by now that the sports ban against South Africa is often credited with bringing down apartheid. Or is this not a good time to bring up such an analogy?

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:

BM Workers' Fight - LONDON WC1N 3XX.