

WORKERS' fight



No 172 - 13 April 2026
donation 50p
<http://www.w-fight.org>
contact@w-fight.org

ISSN 2040-400X

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

THEIR WARS AND THEIR ELECTIONS: DO VOTES "TRUMP" BOMBS?

From one day to the next, Trump's statements change - but there's method in his madness: when the oil and financial markets cough and splutter too much, he has to rein in his tongue.

As soon as he announced the 2-week ceasefire, the oil price dropped 15%, and stock markets surged... Then oil jumped again after his post-Islamabad tweets, threatening a blockade of the Strait of Hormuz and of "Iranian ports"...

Of course Trump didn't cease his fire because hedge funds were losing or speculators and oil profiteers winning. No, his eye is on his voters and the November "mid-term" elections at home. Since almost all Americans are obliged to buy petrol ("gas") to get around, for lack of public transport, they've been horrified by the sudden 60+% price increase! And hell forbid they blame "their" President for the war he promised he'd never make!

Trump's "Untruth Anti-social"

It should have come as no surprise that Trump withdrew his tweeted threat that "a whole civilization will die tonight" if the Iranian leadership didn't agree a deal to his liking. He wrote in the very same "tweet", that the regime change he'd aimed at was already achieved and that maybe there could be a very sweet deal. War Secretary Hegseth duly announced a US victory and added thanks to "God" in the spirit of the ancient Christian Crusades. Indeed, blessed are the killers of innocent schoolgirls, sisters and brothers, mothers and fathers...

This gallery of murderers and thieves also took credit for opening the Strait of Hormuz, even though it was already open to tankers and cargoes, provided that they were not considered "hostile" by Iranian officials. Now apparently they are going to take credit for closing it again!

At the same time, Starmer was



playing international statesman, visiting the Gulf states. He was apparently promoting his latest "coalition of the willing", modelled on his great success viz-a-viz Ukraine. (But that war continues...). This new coalition was meant to open the Strait of Hormuz... Except that now it seems that it will be Trump's US navy, not the Iranians, blocking it!

Piggy-in-the-middle

Of course, "Sir" Keir is trying his best to appear loyal to Trump, despite the general (albeit mild) disapproval expressed by most EU leaders over the war and despite Trump's hurtful taunts. And as always, he aims to appeal to voters who've left his Labour ship over its starboard bow, ostensibly to support Nigel Farage's Reform...

But sadly, despite all efforts, Starmer remains "one of the most unpopular prime ministers ever". By posing with Gulf oligarchs, he is unlikely to improve either his, or his party's, fortunes. And by blaming Iran for the war and the

current price inflation instead of the US-Israeli perpetrators, he appears even more ridiculous.

What's more, Starmer has nothing to say about the massacres in Lebanon due to Netanyahu's relentless pursuit of Hezbollah, or the almost daily deaths in Gaza, where disease and hunger are widespread and where Palestinians remain confined inside the Israeli government's concentration camp.

Whether the end of the Iran war will bring down the price of fuel at the pump, or energy bills and food costs - which already went up beforehand - remains to be seen. But it's unlikely.

So let us be clear: the only way for the working class, here, in the US, or the Middle East, to benefit from the cessation of US/Israeli military terror, is for us to fight the profiteers and war-mongers in our own way: by means of stoppages and strikes to force our wages up and their prices down. And to organise to build an internationalist socialist society, for a future without war. ☐

International

Israel's latest war on Lebanon

At the time of writing, Israeli jet fighters continue to bomb villages right across the south of Lebanon. The Israeli "Defence" Force - IDF - claims it's targeting Hezbollah. But by now, 5 weeks into this latest Israeli military invasion, everywhere and everybody has been targeted.

On Wednesday 10 April Israeli jets dropped over a hundred 1,000-pound bombs on a densely-populated, popular residential area of West Beirut. Already 350 dead bodies have been retrieved; 1,165 people were injured. These strikes were obviously intended to target civilians and to overwhelm the city's medical facilities.

An unstable sectarian state

By indiscriminate killing, the Israeli army's twisted strategy is no doubt, as always, to try to turn the population against Hezbollah. It isn't working: with few exceptions (among the elite minority of pro-Zionist Maronite Christians) people blame the perpetrators - i.e., Netanyahu and his army.

This latest bloody offensive has so far killed over 2,000 across Lebanon. "Peace talks" between the Israelis and the Lebanese government are due to take place. But nobody really believes in them: the government has little authority or credibility, thanks to its inbuilt religious sectarian "power-sharing" arrangement: the president must be a Maronite Christian, the prime minister a Sunni Muslim and the speaker of parliament a Shia Muslim - invariably a member of Hezbollah, which has long been a legitimate party of government.

Another Israeli occupation...

This latest campaign by the IDF was triggered by the sudden US/Israeli attack on Iran on 28 February, which killed Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei - also revered by the religious Shia Muslims of Lebanon who make up over a third of the population.

On 2 March, in accordance with its military alliance with Iran, Hezbollah responded by launching several low-tech rockets into northern Israel - doing minimal damage. But that was enough of a pretext for the IDF to proceed with a full-scale invasion. Its stated aim is the creation of a buffer zone - by occupying all southern Lebanon's territory up to the Litani river. But quite obviously it's after much more than that. Netanyahu's government wants to obliterate Hezbollah.



Israeli bombardment on Beirut's southern suburbs, on 2 March 2026

Remembering Sabra and Shatila

The Israeli army has invaded/occupied Lebanon many times. Most notoriously, in 1982, when its aim was to crush Yasser Arafat's Palestine Liberation Organisation which had been given asylum by the then Lebanese government. The IDF's aim was to install a pro-Israel regime in Beirut.

After fierce battles in and around the capital, the PLO leadership was eventually forced out of Lebanon, along with most of its fighters. And then, when the far-right Christian Maronite Phalange decided to finish off the remaining Palestinians and Shia Muslims living in the area of the refugee camps of Sabra and Shatila, Israel's General Sharon and his soldiers facilitated this merciless slaughter. They provided a protective shield and lit up the camps so that the Phalange could proceed with its rape and butchery.

As many as 3,500 were killed in the space of 48 hours. Women had their throats slit and their bellies ripped open. Young men were castrated, some were scalped, and some had the Christian cross carved into their bodies... all while Israel's Sharon looked on.

From militia to government

It should be no surprise that the events of 1982 had the effect of recruiting many young men and women to the ranks of militias to fight the Israeli army and the Maronite Phalange. Iranian revolutionary guards undertook to train them and these various groups (including even some young communists) eventually converged into the "army" which became known as Hezbollah, officially launched in 1985.

After the Taif Agreement of 1998 which ended Lebanon's civil war and initiated a semblance of power-sharing among the different religious groups, Hezbollah was able to build a solid political wing and organise representation for the poverty-stricken Shia majority - which up until then had been denied it.

The current bloodbath

When Gaza was attacked after 7/10/23, Hezbollah began sending rockets into Israel in support of Gaza's Palestinians. But by 2024 the IDF was targeting its response into Lebanon. It assassinated most of Hezbollah's leaders with bunker-busting bombs and killed, maimed and blinded its operatives - and bystanders - by blowing up the pagers they carried. Despite a US-brokered ceasefire signed that November, IDF strikes continued. And by now, due to the current escalation, 1m mainly Shia Lebanese have had to flee their towns and villages in the South and the Bekaa Valley.

Of course the IDF cannot "kill off" Hezbollah. Hezbollah exists because the IDF exists; because a Zionist, anti-Palestinian, anti-Muslim policy exists at the heart of the Israeli state, backed by Washington (no matter who is "commander-in-chief"), and which aims to keep its regional Israeli policeman armed and ready to enforce US/imperialist policy.

For sure this means any war against the IDF-US armies is "asymmetric". But "winning" for the weaker side - whether Hezbollah, or Hamas, or Iran's Islamic Republic - is merely to survive. They will do so. Winning against imperialism however, will take a secular class war across the whole region. It's a revolutionary project for the future. ☐

Society

7 May elections: there'll be change, but no change!

In the run-up to the local, regional, Mayoral and Scottish and Welsh Assembly elections, Labour is frantically trying to fend off competition from both right and left. Starmer's government has already adopted policies designed to appeal to Reform voters. Whether this will change any minds is doubtful. Most Reform voters are disillusioned Tories. Disillusioned Labour voters simply don't vote any more. And those who used to support the expelled left-wing reformists like Jeremy Corbyn are now turning to the Greens. This is why Labour has been focusing equally on anti-Green propaganda ahead of these elections.

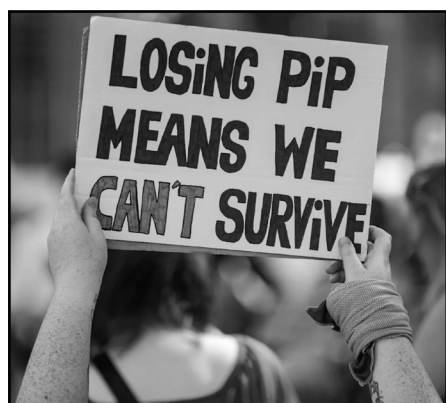
In the London borough of Newham, for instance, where Labour has complacently presided over urban decay for decades, election leaflets are popping through letterboxes with a photo of Green leader, Zack Polanski and an obscure quote

from him which nobody can understand, while warning that the Greens have "NO RECORD" of delivery in Newham (where they never had any influence anyway) and then criticising the Green record... in Bristol! In fact in boroughs like Newham, Labour's main danger is from pro-Palestine independents and ex-Labour councillors after Starmer gave his 100% support to Netanyahu in the first year of his war on Gaza. They won't forgive him.

Anyway, the anti-immigrant, welfare-cutting and anti-working class agenda which has watered down the already minimal reforms in the new Employment Rights Act, together with Labour's imperial, pro-US policy in the Middle East are enough to ensure significant Labour losses across the electoral board. What a pity this won't restore social services, improve housing or fill potholes. ☐



Benefit cuts are now law



Nine months after MPs voted welfare cuts into law, they are beginning to hit the disabled. From 6 April, unless new claimants meet strict new criteria, their health-related Universal Credit will be halved from the already-poverty-level £97/week to just £50 and frozen until after 2030! They will now have to prove that they have a "severe" and "lifelong" condition or that they are terminally ill.

The new "lifelong, no prospect of improvement" test will exclude people who had serious strokes, cancer, even schizophrenia - anyone for whom partial recovery "cannot be ruled out". DWP

secretary Pat McFadden, following in the footsteps of his predecessor Liz Kendall, justifies these cuts to "incentivise" disabled people "into work". As if the bosses feel "incentivised" to offer appropriately accessible jobs: these simply don't exist!

The government's own assessment admits that this new measure will push 250,000 more people, not into jobs, but into poverty. Charities put the figure at 400,000. And while the government attacks the most vulnerable, we are told that the priority is expenditure for warfare, not welfare.

New attacks on migrants: for a world without borders

In early March, just when media attention was mostly focused on the war in the Middle East, the Home Office passed new anti-migrant laws in its ongoing efforts to out-reform Reform UK.

Their selective and vicious targeting

First, it has stopped issuing student visas for Cameroon, Sudan, Myanmar and Afghanistan - as well as skilled worker visas from Afghanistan. It's the first time the government applies such a "visa brake" and the goal is to prevent those entering on such visas from claiming asylum, after what it claims is "widespread visa abuse".

The government hasn't published data on how these countries compare to all the others in the surge in asylum claims, but it says that those from students of these four countries rose over 470% during 2021-2025. Which of course makes sense as the years-long conflicts and civil wars in these regions

are only getting worse.

In Sudan alone, the United Nations talks about the world's largest humanitarian crisis. In Afghanistan, women and girls are banned from attending university and secondary schools... But never mind. This measure effectively closes off one of the few remaining "safe and legal" routes for people fleeing conflict and instability. And students who had already secured their places and scholarships at British universities might lose these overnight.

She keeps on trying to score anti-migrant points

Home Secretary Shabana Mahmood has also made the status of refugees temporary and more precarious. Cases will be reviewed every 2.5 years - instead of the former 5 years, after which it used to be possible to apply for Indefinite Leave to Remain. Now, checks will also be stricter.

The government will also be

"offering" 150 families, whose asylum claims have been refused and who are living in hotels, up to £10,000 per person - "capped" at £40,000 per family - to return "voluntarily" to their countries. If they refuse, they will be removed by force! On top of it all, they will only be given 7 days to choose which way they'll be forced out of Britain...

Such payment schemes aren't new - especially since some countries won't "take returns of their nationals". But this new payment looks like a rather desperate attempt by Mahmood to try to clear the long asylum claim backlog. In that she completely underestimates the determination of refugees and asylum seekers to seize the opportunity of the better life they have risked their lives for.

What's more, as war, famine, and climate emergencies keep spreading around the world, more people will flee to safer countries. Which just makes getting rid of this catastrophe-inducing system - and its increasingly reactionary politicians - all the more urgent!

Society

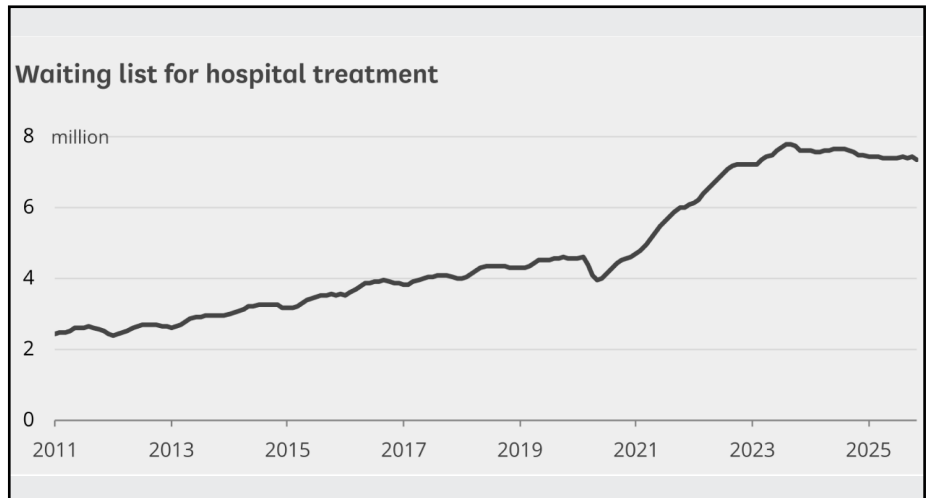
NHS: no, the waiting lists don't come down!

The latest "British Social Attitudes" survey, part-sponsored by the government, has found that only 26% of British adults were satisfied with how the NHS runs. On its website the government pointed out that this was an achievement (!) - since it was an increase of 6 percentage points since 2019! It adds that "dissatisfaction" had fallen from 59% in 2024 to 51%. Patients and NHS staff can only let out a loud groan...

Being seen isn't enough

Health Secretary Wes Streeting also points to the "fall" in waiting lists in England by 370,000 since June 2024, despite "one of the busiest winters ever" and despite the doctors' strikes, to 7.25 million. But this means that 6.13 million individual patients are still waiting an average of 18 weeks (almost 5 months!) to be seen for specialist examination, diagnosis and treatment.

The "median" waiting time to see a consultant is still over 3 months (13.6 weeks). Then we read in the statistics that in January, only 61.5% of patients started treatment within 18 weeks. Others waited substantially longer. And 136,000 patients have been waiting over a year for treatment! In other words you might be "seen" faster these days,



but often it won't be by anyone with the expertise to initiate appropriate treatment.

Who wants to be a patient?

Of course one way to cut waiting times is to avoid allowing patients to join the list in the first place. Under the NHS "Advice and Guidance" scheme, GPs are discouraged from referring patients and are told to "seek advice" instead - the equivalent of "phone a friend". In

fact, the government openly boasts that 1.1 million patients were treated without joining a hospital waiting list and is demanding a 25% referral "diversion rate" in key specialities.

This is not surprising. As of September 2025, the NHS in England still had 100,000 full-time equivalent vacancies, including 25,500 vacant positions for nurses and 7,250 for doctors. The government isn't reducing waiting times; it's merely covering them up. □

Abortion "decriminalised"? Still a way to go

On 19th March 2026, the House of Lords voted in favour of a House of Commons amendment to the Crime and Policing Bill, which will stop the prosecution of women who end their own pregnancies - that is, it will "decriminalise" them. It's a small step forward for women's rights, even if there is still a long way to go before women have free choice and full control over their own bodies.

In fact on paper, abortion remains a crime. The 1967 Abortion Act did "legalise" abortions up to 24 weeks of pregnancy, if certain criteria were met. But laws dating back to 1861 under the "Offences against the Person Act" and

"Infant Life Preservation Act 1929", are still in place in England and Wales. This means that if a woman acts outside of the strict provisions of the 1967 Act, she can be found guilty of a criminal offence, which provides for a maximum sentence of life imprisonment! Neither does the new amendment decriminalise providers and facilitators of terminations; they can still be taken to court.

In Northern Ireland, when the law was changed in 2019-22, abortion was made unconditionally legal up to 12 weeks of pregnancy. In other words the conditions of the 1967 Act were removed for the six counties (i.e., 2 doctors to

sign that continuing the pregnancy would endanger the health and/or mental health of the woman). Unfortunately, after 12 weeks all British women including in Northern Ireland, fall under the same restrictive 1967 law, regardless.

This is increasingly a problem. There has been a recent rise in the number of investigations of women and girls accused of abortion offences and this criminalisation seems to be a new phenomenon. The new amendment (it is still not "law", however) will improve matters. But the fight for women's full autonomy isn't yet over, not by a long shot!

Sick pay on day one, but it's a pittance...

From April 26, Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) will be paid from day 1 and the conditional "minimum required income" to qualify for it, has been removed.

Currently, if a worker is sick and there is no agreement to pay full basic wages - so-called occupational sick pay (OSP, a right won by past struggles) - employers are only obliged to pay SSP, at the miserly rate of £123.25/week, and then only if a worker qualifies. He/she must meet the minimum Lower Earning Threshold (LET) of £125 week and have been sick for at least 4 days. The first 3 days are "waiting days" and do not qualify for payment!

And never mind if sick workers are left with no income whatsoever!

It might seem that these changes will be an improvement, but there will be no increase to the SSP rate, despite the ever-increasing cost of living. And the poorest workers - who fall under the LET, will still only get 80% of their wage!

What's also shocking, is the number of workers without OSP agreements who must rely on this minimum amount to survive when unwell. A 2018 IPSO MORI survey showed that 50% of employers paid only SSP.

Today, in railway stations like King's

Cross, Euston or St Pancras, cleaners employed by Mitie or Churchill and food deliverers employed by Rail Gourmet/Gate Gourmet, only get SSP when sick. And workers directly employed by train companies must wait a minimum of 6 months to get OSP. State-owned LNER has a 2-Tier system based on how long someone has been employed, cutting OSP by half for workers employed for less than 5 years.

The only acceptable sick pay should be 100% of wages from day 1 and for as long as needed. But this will require a fight by all workers.

Their society

Gamblers on death and destruction make a killing

In just one month, following the start of the US-Israeli war on Iran, the price of oil has risen by an average of 60% - although it's been jerking up and down depending on Trump's tweets. While this has already caused a rise in inflation, petrol prices and home energy bills for ordinary people, it's brought a bonanza for speculators and oil companies.

The French oil giant, TotalEnergies, bought up every cargo of oil produced in the UAE and Oman in March, completely cornering the Gulf oil market, and making over 1 billion dollars, according to the Financial Times. One expert called it "probably the biggest position by any one player in oil markets in history, in terms of financial gain".

Meanwhile, US oil companies made an extra \$5 billion last month from the higher oil price, and are estimated to receive \$65 billion more over the year!

And there are plenty of other



speculators who have made a fortune already from this war. The oil price didn't rise steadily over the last four weeks - it shot up to \$120 per barrel, before falling below \$100 again, and then back up to nearly \$120 at the end of March. With

each rise and fall, capitalist gamblers raked in a fortune, while the rest of us are expected to pay the price. And of course not least the populations on the receiving end of Trump's and Netanyahu's missiles and bombs. ☐

The bosses "doth protest too much"!

Parts of the government's Employment Rights Act come into force this month. Workers will now be entitled to sick pay from day one, as opposed to Day 4 at the moment (see the article on page 3). And there are a few other new rights, such as parental leave from day one. As limited as these changes are, this hasn't stopped bosses making a huge fuss. They complain that employing workers will be "too expensive" with these new rights, including, especially, the 4.1%

rise in the minimum wage on 1 April...

But most of the Act will only come into force next year, and even then, the government needs to pass further laws to specify what the changes actually are! For example, the Act includes a right to "guaranteed working hours" for "low-hours workers". But who is a "low-hours" worker? And how many hours are "guaranteed"? This still has to be worked out. And of course, the bosses will be fully involved, and will be making many

more loud protests. In fact, this has already started, with the CEO of Marks and Spencer, Stuart Machin, complaining that the government will "ban" Saturday jobs! Of course what he really means is that he might have to give teenagers proper contracts instead of employing them on a casual zero-hours basis without any guarantees. Poor Starmer, he just can't win - even when he's bending over backwards for the bosses!

Reform UK: filling the political vacuum...

Half-a-million protesters - according to the organisers - joined a national "Love, Hope, Unity" demonstration in London on 28 March, organised by the "Together Alliance" against the far-right and Farage's Reform UK. Participants included celebrities, trade unionists, anti-racist campaigns and left-wing organisations, along with the Greens and Labour party groups.

Even though the Labour government's anti-immigrant policies have gone quite far, Reform demands even stronger measures e.g., removing legal protection and international constraints that limit deportations, and denying housing and benefits to all "illegal" immigrants.

Splitting the Tories

Farage has succeeded in recruiting the right-wing of the Tory Party. Many of its leading figures have joined - including Robert Jenrick and Suella Braverman, who were both cabinet ministers in Rishi Sunak's Conservative government.

Of course Farage's more outrageous attacks on immigration policy are really

a cover for this millionaire's policy of austerity for the poor and handouts for the rich. And while his spokesperson for home affairs, Zia Yusuf, said Reform will respect the triple lock on state pensions he also said it would reinstate the 2-child benefit cap.

Farage as champion of the Chagossians?

On other issues, Reform goes along any available populist line. Earlier this year, Farage suddenly discovered the rights of the Chagossians! He opportunistically rallied behind a group of islanders protesting against the government's decision to hand sovereignty of the Chagos Islands to Mauritius. He even threatened legal action against the government.

Of course Farage can now claim a victory on the back of Donald Trump, whose tirade over Starmer's "stupid agreement" offering Mauritius £3.4 billion in exchange for leasing back the Diego Garcia military base for 99 years, has resulted in the government shelving the offer.

...but our fight is a different one

Farage is careful to distance his party from more extreme figures such as far-right activist Tommy Robinson, so as to appear respectable. However the same can't be said of party members, who keep getting sacked or suspended for racist comments and behaviour. But it suits the other parties vying for parliamentary and local council seats (and some among the far left) to place Reform in the same basket as Robinson et al.

This was the case for Labour and Green activists who used the "Love, Hope, Unity" demonstration as a launching pad for their election campaigns for 7 May.

Of course, the real fight against the politics of division will have to take place in the workplaces and the streets in order to unite our ranks against our common enemy - the bosses and the upstart politicians who pretend they have our interests at heart. Their attempts to deflect our anger towards our fellow workers from abroad just won't work.

Mount Pleasant mail centre (London)

From our friends in the North

Meet the new boss, same as the old boss, so sang The Who. We all watched the circus that was the parliamentary committee hearing into the postal service. Madness is defined as doing the same thing over and over again expecting the result to be different. As ever with the union officials, it was groundhog day. When will they learn that neither parliament, nor the Labour party, are our friends? The enemies' enemy never is.

What we witnessed was Jack

Manningham-esque levels of tampering with the gas lights. Just like his wife Bella in Hamilton's play "Gas light", we were left agog at the "news" that nothing is prioritised and the mail never fails. Even Jack kept the gaslighting in the house. Without a flicker of doubt, three witnesses to the committee said that the testimony of postal workers simply did not reflect the data. So the figures don't lie, but workers do?

They can gaslight us all they want. We know the truth and the truth is the job



is being smashed to pieces. We wonder if the government's golden share will be just like Willy Wonka's golden ticket? If ever there was a time to find out, it is now. Renationalisation is the only remedy for the chaos. A public service run for the public, not the bosses of the industry - nor the union leaders! ☐

- **Our feet...**

Union leaders made a big deal ahead of CEO Kretinsky's "grilling" by the Select Committee in Parliament last week over the chaos in deliveries. But as usual, it was just a lot of hot air and statistics. "Prioritising" parcels over letters was put into question again, just as it was 4 years ago, but this Committee changed nothing last time, and won't this time either. We know exactly what could, however! [*Workers' Fight bulletin 01/04/26*]

- **It's the cuts which are impossible!**

Yes, the MPs obviously didn't ask the right questions - like: "Aren't the job cuts the main reason why letters aren't delivered on time?". Instead, Kretinsky was able to get away with justifying non-delivery by complaining that the government's Universal Service

Obligation is just impossible to meet! [*Workers' Fight bulletin 08/04/26*]

- **It's not me, guv!**

What a cheek too, for Kretinsky to blame his attacks on our Ts&Cs as "necessary" because of competition from other parcel companies! He went as far as "advising" the government to "step in" to improve employment rights in other parcel companies... you couldn't make this up! [*Workers' Fight bulletin 01/04/26*]

- **It's still too late**

The union's "Letter to Branches" explains that our pay rise, which we thought was due on 1 April was always going to be late. They say it's based on the average of Jan, Feb and March CPI inflation, so can only be calculated after 22 April! And since that average is very likely to be over 3%, the rise will be "re-negotiated" anyway! So bosses and union leaders

take it for granted that our pay rise won't happen when many other bills do, like council tax, water bills, phone/TV bills, etc.? [*Workers' Fight bulletin 01/04/26*]

- **The pay rise we need**

Besides, why is our pay rise calculated according to the lowest inflation index - even if (for obvious reasons!) it's the government's "official" measure? This never reflects the real increase in the cost of living which we feel in our pockets! [*Workers' Fight bulletin 01/04/26*]

- **Cheap tech**

On deliveries, some of us have issues with our PDAs... which is probably another case of the bosses buying cheap software to cut costs. Like the sat-nav system they use, TomTom, which is 15 times cheaper than Google Maps - and 15 times less accurate... [*Workers' Fight bulletin 01/04/26*]

King's Cross railway station (London)

- **The pay rise and fight we need**

We in LNER are meant to get a pay rise on 1 April. But neither LNER nor other companies (Avanti, EMR, GN...) have even made an offer yet! RMT officials have nevertheless declared a "dispute"... but what exactly are they disputing? We're all in favour of a fight - and we have a long list of issues to fight over, from pay to hours of work, OSP/SSP, breaks, holidays... Should we call a meeting and invite them? [*Workers' Platform 01/04/26*]

- **They need our cure!**

As for our occupational sick pay, this needs a total overhaul: many companies don't pay it, others only pay after day 3; and of course nobody can live on it. When you're sick you need more money, not less! And BTW, if we're hurt on the job the bosses put us onto sick pay - which for most of us is a pay cut! When they're liable! [*Workers' Platform 01/04/26*]

- **Invitation to "dispute!"**

And then there's the way OSP is implemented e.g., if you're an LNER driver/guard you get full pay if you're off sick, but the rest of LNER workers lose attendance allowance. And for the first 6 months in the job you only get the SSP pittance (£123.25/week from April)... Seems we need a "dispute" to demand full pay for all! [*Workers' Platform 01/04/26*]

- **We'll shoot them both!**

Siemens managers at Hornsey keep saying "it's GTR" who's piling up orders and rushing us. But it's they who've halved our teams, it's they who pay us £4,000 less than similar GTR jobs and it's they who offer such a lousy pension scheme... Do they hope we'll turn our fire on GTR - instead of them? [*Workers' Platform 01/04/26*]

- **No workers, no time!**

Yes, as a result, we've barely finished repairing the trains before they're back



again in the maintenance depot needing to be fixed all over again. Their cuts and speed ups are exactly why trains keep breaking down. [*Workers' Platform 01/04/26*]

- **All in-house, now!**

When it comes to the cleaning here on site at Hornsey, whether we're directly employed by GN, contracted to Churchill, or agency, we're all on low wages - only slightly above minimum wage at best - and what's more, agency mates are on zero-hours contracts! It's clear what needs doing - and it concerns all of us - not just cleaners..! [*Workers' Platform 01/04/26*]

BMW Mini centre (Cowley, Oxford)

Electric BMWs versus the rest...

It's nice to see that local politicians do take some notice when BMW sacks dozens or hundreds of us. But senior Labour councillor Linda Smith wasn't protesting that the 180 sackings of agency workmates last year are part of the chronic undermanning and overexploitation that make life worse for the rest of us. Nor was she proposing a sanction against the company for imposing casualisation. Rather, she wanted to invite transport secretary (and Swindon MP) Heidi Alexander to Cowley to lobby for a

relaxation of zero-emission sales rules!

BMW will certainly miss the target which was set for 33% British car sales to be Zero Emission Vehicles this year, and so will get fined for each emitting vehicle sold. But car companies, so far, seem prepared to pay the fines, as they know there is a market for cheaper petrol cars!

In fact BMW has "strong concerns" that "future sales requirements do not reflect current levels of demand for battery electric vehicles in the UK". Yes, maybe not for BMW's vehicles, since there



are much cheaper models from China available. What's more, Jeremy Clarkson, reviewing BMW's iX EV recently for *The Times*, said it drove "like a National Express coach"! Ouch. ☐

• Down with "live to work"!

How can anyone make ends meet these days?! Rents, mortgages and food were already high enough and prices are going up even more now... Many of us in here (including some of us on Staffline/BMW wages) do two jobs to make ends meet! One job should be enough. [*Workers' Fight bulletin 07/04/26*]

• We'll win together

It's nearly two years since we had any pay rise, and prices have been rocketing all that time! Everyone needs hundreds of pounds more each month, and we know the union officials and their negotiations won't "win" this for us. Only our joint action, across

all sections of the plant, will get us the money we need. [*Workers' Fight bulletin 07/04/26*]

• Let's change things here

During the past two weeks many workmates took early retirement and many others left, looking for something "better" at Siemens - where workers are supposedly made permanent after 6 months! But here we're stuck with the same old problem - BMW has stopped handing out any new contracts! [*Workers' Fight bulletin 07/04/26*]

• A fight for permanent jobs?

So, many new mates were brought in recently, among them lots of "old" faces - people with whom we worked years

ago, before BMW sacked them! Welcome back! And let's all make sure that if they leave again, it's because they want to! [*Workers' Fight bulletin 07/04/26*]

• What bosses' promises are worth

By the way, it's 25 years this month since BMW started hiring agency workers here. It's worth recalling the promises that were made at the time to make this then-unprecedented casualisation look better. Agency workers were "eligible for consideration" for permanent contracts after 6 months... Twenty five years later, even more agency workers are in the plant! [*Workers' Fight bulletin 07/04/26*]

Ford Dagenham estate (Essex)

• Laying off the war?

Ford's last shipping disruption excuse "due to the war" already ended before any ceasefire was declared! After lay-off days over the past two weeks, we're now working at the usual "normal" rate... How long until Ford comes up with another reason to lay us off? Should we lay Ford off first? [*Workers' Fight bulletin 08/04/26*]

• Time is up!

Us Ford temps are still in limbo! While we've seen some senior Ford workmates leave during these two past weeks, but we still haven't been handed permanent contracts... Why should we have to wait any longer? [*Workers' Fight bulletin 08/04/26*]

• Won't do without paid leave

On LLL, it felt great to have a paid break for a change this Easter... since we don't have lay off pay! We know bosses are "compelled" to pay bank holidays, but how about forcing them to pay for lay-offs for everyone as well? [*Workers' Fight bulletin 08/04/26*]

• Our version of a walkout

For a few hours on Wednesday, TOPs workmates prevented Ford's contractors from loading cars onto their Transporters. We're opposed to Ford contracting out these formerly "Ford" jobs (8 for transport drivers and 7 for trailer drivers): we stand for equal pay and Ts&Cs for equal work! [*Workers' Fight bulletin 08/04/26*]

• Enough is enough

Can TOPs bosses stop pretending that these contractors are a "temporary" fix? They say they need time to find LGV+1 drivers, but they have them under their nose... those very same contractor drivers, many of whom could be on Ford's Ts&Cs. So no car loading until they get their Ford contracts? [*Workers' Fight bulletin 08/04/26*]

• The wrong type of ship!

Jetty bosses decided to "trial" another shipping co, Polaris. It was a total disaster: the ramp was too wide and 3-4 inches above the landing. We had to drive vehicles at snail's pace to avoid damage to underbodies (or diving into the Thames!). And getting trailers in/out with our tugs was a nightmare.. What's



more, these ships only fit half as many tall vans and wheeled trailers. [*Workers' Fight bulletin 08/04/26*]

• Better don't play poker

Ford said they trialled Polaris to put pressure on CLIdNt to offer a lower price. It seems this didn't work. And we saw managers' faces fall when they came to take videos of Polaris on the Jetty, as they slowly realised how little clue they have about anything... [*Workers' Fight bulletin 08/04/26*]

• Playing at catch-up?

Den bosses say we need to catch up with the production time lost due to the long Easter weekend... So now they're offering Saturday overtime, which so far, has been turned down by most of us. Funny, but their target isn't ours... [*Workers' Fight bulletin 08/04/26*]

International

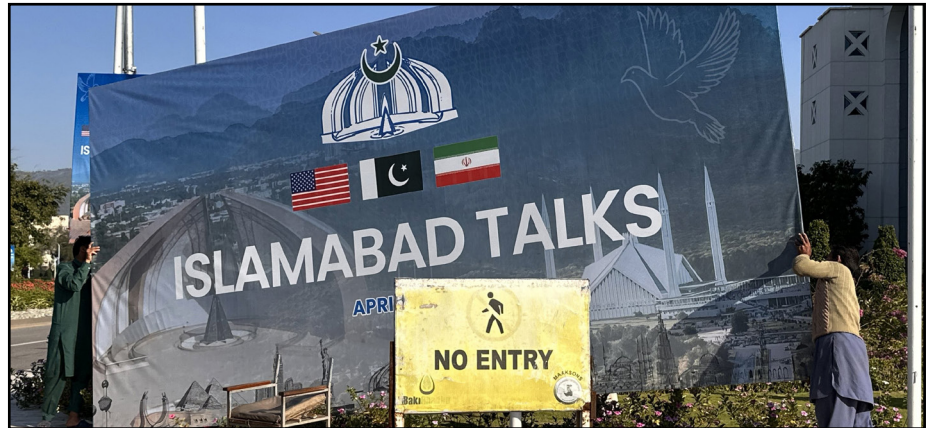
Trump's war on Iran: cease-fire, or not?

So, is Trump's "Operation Epic Fury" against Iran over? Or will it resume? Unfortunately, since Trump's cleansing of the ranks in Washington the "peace" negotiations in Islamabad were left to his Vice President, the backwoods fundamentalist, JD Vance, who was just back from supporting the far-right Victor Orban on the eve of Hungary's presidential election. Joining him were Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner and his golf-buddy Steve Witkoff. After 21 hours of talks, they left the negotiating table, declaring "no deal". Whether they'd understood the issues, is another question.

One would however, have thought that these political representatives of US capital (for all their faults!) would have wanted, above all, to calm the craziness of the oil market and the yo-yo of stocks and shares that this war has been causing. And make a peace deal, ASAP.

Inflation hits everyone, regardless...

What's more, Trump and the Republicans face mid-term elections in November and nobody - including his MAGA base - wants to carry on paying \$5/gallon for "gas"! The inflationary effect of this war, directly affecting fertilizers, plastics, vital chemicals like helium used in computer chip production, sulphur and nitrogen compounds - contrary to Trump's claim that this "ain't his problem" - affects the US even if it's virtually self-sufficient in



oil. "America First", sadly for Trump, does not mean an America independent of the world market...

Trump summarised the outcome of the failed US-Iran talks on his Truth Social. His grandiose declarations and threat to finish the job on Iran, were for the benefit of his own "Maga" domestic audience to prove he was still as great as he claims - and "had won the war".

What can never be compensated

The talks "went well", tweeted Trump, but had got stuck "on nuclear" as well as the possibility that ships might have to pay tolls in order pass through the Strait of Hormuz.

Never mind that it's common knowledge that the "nuclear" issue is a red herring and that even the bombing of Iran's nuclear facilities in June (which supposedly destroyed all of their capability to enrich uranium) was a pretext. As is this story about tolls.

That said, the Iranian negotiators certainly want all sanctions lifted - after 47 years of their imposition! - and their assets unfrozen, as well as some kind of compensation for all the destruction caused. The 168 Minab schoolgirls, teachers and parents killed by 2 US Tomahawk missiles, whose images the Iranian delegation brought with them to Pakistan, cannot - of course - be brought back to life. And that was, no doubt, their point. □

Lebanon, Gaza, the West bank: the massacres continue

The Iranian leadership demanded an end to the Israeli war on Lebanon as a condition for making a peace agreement with the US. This was ignored. At the time of writing the IDF bombing campaign continues



Tent camp in Gaza, April 2026

unabated in the South.

Conspicuous by their absence at peace talks in Pakistan were the Israeli politicians who started this war in the first place. However, separate peace talks between the Lebanese government and the Israeli government are meant to be taking place in the US - with Trump's officials as mediators! Is this even plausible?

Gazans still stuck in a concentration camp

Then again, the Gaza Board of Peace is doing an excellent job of ensuring that the ceasefire in Gaza is ignored, so perhaps a similar set-up for Lebanon would suit Netanyahu's savage ultra Zionists down to the ground.

In Gaza, 738 Palestinians have been killed since the ceasefire on 10 October last year. The population remains imprisoned, without proper access to medicines, food, water, energy - all the basics, in fact. On

the West Bank Zionist settlers continue their occupation of Palestinian land and their killing spree supported by the IDF. The death toll since 7 October 2023 is almost 2,000!

A death penalty for throwing stones?

And now the cherry on the cake for these savages is the passing in the Knesset of a law imposing the death sentence solely on Palestinians who are convicted of a "terrorist act" - something entirely open to interpretation. Palestinian children throwing stones at a member of the IDF, for instance?

This is the crowning achievement of their racist apartheid - and they openly celebrated it with champagne in their parliament - a disgusting scene which was broadcast on international TV. The sooner these barbaric Zionist fundamentalists are kicked out by the working class of the region, along with the sectarian Israeli state, the better. □

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.