

WORKERS' fight

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

INTERNATIONALISM TRUMPS NATIONALISM ANY DAY!

After the Strait of Hormuz was partially reopened, the oil price dropped, to the dismay of the oil merchants and their shareholders! One reason, at least, for Trump to again escalate threats against Iran and claim the peace deal "over".

It must have hurt his feelings when Iranians, in mourning for their assassinated leader, said he deserved to be killed. And maybe he was also upset that not everyone attending the NATO Summit on 7-8 July had agreed to comply with his demands over Iran, arms expenditure, Greenland, etc...

Perversely, he described the Summit as "great", saying there was "a lot of love" and "a lot of unity" in the room!

World Cup: great big love-in?

The word "unity" is being bandied around a lot. It was on players' armbands at the World Cup. FIFA's website featured team members from around the world repeating in different languages that "football unites the world".

Whereas, in reality, World Cup (and major league) football seems mainly to unite money markets and big business, as they line up to score big time, kicking billions around the field - a competition rigged only by how much they can pay.

And this year, "football unity" is courtesy of Trump, who also took over as Video Assisted Referee! He caused gasps when he overturned the red card of US striker Balogun - who was then allowed to play against Belgium (which won anyway!).

However, "world unity" is precisely what all normal working class people want to see. No more wars, open borders - away with passports - and let's use our planet's rich resources in the free interests of everyone. And let's also see a truly "beautiful game" on the football field!

So more's the pity that the talented



players who perform such amazing feats - with their amazing feet (and heads!) - are turned into golden geese, expected to keep laying golden eggs until they are badly injured, or just too old. They might - and do - become millionaires, but as the Beatles knew only too well, "money can't buy you love" - even if Donald Trump thinks it can.

Our prize is the world itself

Britain's miniature version of ultra-nationalist Trump - Nigel Farage - has given himself a big headache. He's resigned as MP and called a by-election to try and silence those asking questions about his millions - and his crooked mate, "Posh George".

The "good people of Clacton" are now meant to give their verdict on whether he is "Honest Joe" or not. Only, the other dishonest Joes in Westminster don't want to play - not even further-right rival, Rupert Lowe.

Farage grandly announced it was him against the "establishment". But even the Tories joined the chorus,

saying he *is* "the establishment", public school boy and millionaire... and that all this is just a stunt.

Farage and Lowe can eat their hearts out, though: if their "deport them all" rules against immigrants had been law, more than half the (hopefully!) winning English team wouldn't be here.

Behind their whipping up of terror against "illegal migrants" is simple racism. It's no coincidence that a stream of right-wing Tories and admirers of Enoch Powell has been flowing into Reform and its "Advance" and "Restore" spin-offs.

If they had their way, even Kane and Rice would have to go, given their Irish forebears! And Kemi Badenoch, too! She, at least, has cross-border credentials, which "trump" nationality - like footballer Balogun, who could have played for the US, England, or Nigeria!

However that's not the kind of internationalism we're after. Let us remind ourselves - as Marx wrote, back in 1848 - that workers have no country: and we have a world to win. □

International

DRC: imperialist powers bring war, not vaccines, while Ebola spreads

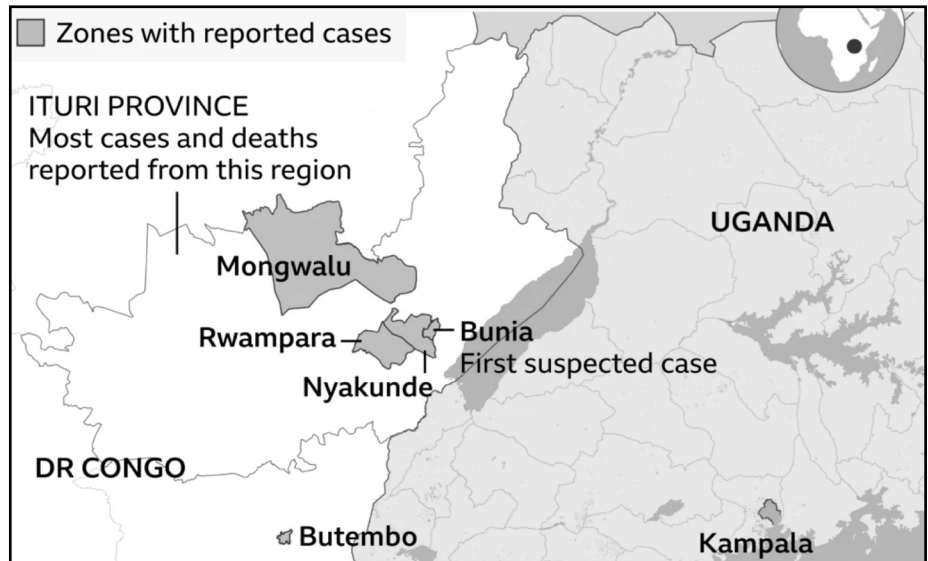
Since mid-May, an Ebola epidemic has been spreading through the Democratic Republic of Congo and Uganda. By 4 July, there were 1,561 confirmed cases, including 506 deaths. The real toll is likely to be higher, as healthcare workers lack the means to reach many of the affected areas. The outbreak has by now spread from Ituri province to North and South Kivu and Uganda's capital, Kampala.

This region is a mineral-rich mining area, devastated by decades of war, making large areas inaccessible to medical teams. The DRC's health system in these provinces scarcely exists: medical workers lack adequate gloves, masks and protective clothing. At least 75 healthcare workers have been infected and 17 have died (at the time of writing). Burial and decontamination teams are overworked and under-equipped.

Why is there no vaccine?

The current outbreak is caused by the Bundibugyo strain of Ebola, first identified in Uganda in 2007 and responsible for previous outbreaks. Virologists showed as early as 2013 that experimental vaccines could protect non-human primates against this strain. Yet no usable vaccine against this particular strain exists today.

And why? Because there's no profit in developing a vaccine for a disease that affects some of the poorest populations on earth. Had Bundibugyo Ebola threatened California or Greater London, pharmaceutical giants, backed by public investment from their respective states, would probably already have produced a vaccine. Remember how the first vaccine against Covid announced by a lab in Oxford bypassed years-long clinical trials to become available within months?!

**Death by Ebola... or war**

International donors promised \$910m in emergency assistance to the DRC in June. Yet to date, only around a tenth of this has been delivered. USAID and UK Aid have been cut even though health officials are well aware that these funds are a matter of life or death for DRC and other poor countries. They also know that viruses don't respect borders... What's more the brazen excuse of Starmer's government was that the money previously going to overseas aid was needed to fund defence!

Ironically, the mines in Ituri provide many of the rare metals required for today's IT-controlled weapons like coltan, cobalt, tin and tantalum. Worse, some of the weapons thus produced are sold to warring factions in the ongoing conflict in the region, which since 2021 alone, has resulted in 13,000 deaths and displaced 7.8 million civilians.

Better the devil you know?

Among these refugees, many resort to traditional healers if they get sick. For some, there's no other alternative. The legacy of colonialism and three decades of war have left Ituri devastated, without proper roads, electricity or clean water, let alone hospitals, medicines, or doctors.

Today the Ebola treatment centres hastily set up by the UN/WHO and MSF are met with suspicion. So while vaccines developed against the other Ebola strains can offer some protection against the Bundibugyo, even if they don't prevent infection, many simply do not trust western staff and refuse treatment.

If they die because of this mistrust, that's the direct responsibility of western imperialism, which fuels the violent "mineral grab" and holds the whole region and its people in its voracious clutches - and kills more people than Ebola ever could. □

Artemis III or IV?... Profits and wars come first!

In April this year, NASA's Artemis II mission sent 4 astronauts around the moon - "deeper into space than ever before". This was part of the preparation for Artemis IV - the first Moon landing since Apollo 17 in 1972.

Why the long time gap? Simply because, by the early 1970s, the US government had run out of funds. Its Cold War against the then USSR had turned into an extremely costly "hot" war against revolutionary nationalists in North Vietnam. And there was nothing left for more leaps into space - even for the richest state in the world.

Bezos and Musk to the rescue?

Today, NASA has only been able to relaunch its space programme thanks to interventions from multi-billionaires like Elon Musk and Jeff Bezos, in their own interests, of course. They need satellites and have thus developed their own space projects.

SpaceX and Blue Origin (owned by Musk and Bezos respectively) are meant to provide the spaceship and lander for Artemis. The

rocket has been enlarged (6-stories tall!) to enable its reuse. NASA warned against this in a report entitled: "Management of the Human Landing System contracts", since an enlarged lander would need: "multiple refuellings while in orbit around the moon, something never attempted before". Or so they say...

Unfortunately Bezos' Blue Origin "New Glenn" rocket, exploded on 28 May, during a test launch, setting back Artemis - perhaps indefinitely...

The Russians already did it

It's worth pointing out that the space program of the former Soviet Union, which was centralised and relied on collaboration (there was no competition between private companies, nor a "space market"!) had already pioneered refuelling in space and landing back on earth.

The first ever space station, Salyut-6, was sent into orbit in 1978, almost half a century ago. Its "Progress" freighters already allowed automated refuelling, and so supported continuous human presence on board.

"Progress" still refuels the International Space Station (ISS) today. As for landing rockets back on earth and reusing them, in 1988, the Soviets' plane-shaped Buran shuttle, orbited twice around the earth and performed the first horizontal landing. The Buran shuttle program was formally cancelled by Yeltsin in 1993, after the Soviet Union's collapse.

The final frontier will only be crossed under socialism

This only goes to show, however, that lack of progress in space exploration is not due to the lack of technological or scientific knowledge, but the backwardness and constraints of clinging to the profit system.

Today's commercial space programs are the only "progress" left, after successive cuts to NASA's funding. Just as its budget was cut by 67% when the US had to pay for the Vietnam war, today Trump has cut NASA's funding by 23%, diverting money to "defense", thanks to the cost of bombing Iran... □

The World Cup in the land of the World Cop

The World's biggest sporting event, the FIFA World Cup, kicked off on 11 June - in the (formerly) non-soccer-playing USA, of all places - hosted by none other than Donald J Trump! And he didn't waste any time before sticking his own foot into the game phoning up FIFA president Gianni Infantino and asking him to cancel a red card given to US striker Folarin Balogun, ahead of the team's quarter final match against Belgium. As in war, so in football: Trump makes up the rules!

With 48 teams and 104 matches in total, this is the biggest World Cup ever. Well, it had to be the "biggest and best", didn't it?

It is forecast to generate £6.7bn in total revenue - with £2.9bn in broadcasting rights alone. So the amount of money it will spin is also record-breaking. In comparison, the 2022 Qatar World Cup generated £5.7bn and the 2024 Paris Olympics "only" £3.3bn. The USA will host 78 out of 104 of the matches (26 will be played in Mexico and Canada), so US sports "entrepreneurs" will soak up most of that revenue as well...

Bookings and credit cards

And no wonder these figures are so high! Tickets for the group stages involving the host nations were selling "Category 1" tickets for over £2,000. The tickets for the finals were just shy of £6,000. But then there were the so-called "scalpers", or ticket touts, who bought large blocks of tickets and, having pushed the price up by making tickets otherwise unobtainable, resold them at a huge markup - as much as £9,000 a pop! It's reported that the most expensive seats were being listed (for whom?) at \$2,300,000 each!

In fact for the group stage games, there were originally Category 4 tickets selling for "as little" as £45 (already twice as much as 4 years ago, in Qatar), but these seats were so far away from the pitch that Trump might as well have built a wall around them.

FIFA made a 30% commission on all these sales, so it had no incentive to put an end to this utter extortion - quite the contrary! It expects to have made profits of £2.2bn in ticket sales and hospitality alone...

A domestic affair

Besides the cost of the match tickets, the cost of booking hotels, flights, transportation and concessions were all put up accordingly. No surprise there! There was a 50% increase in hotel rates on match days.

However, what upset many punters the most, was the \$20 (£15) they had to pay for a pint of beer (+tax and tips, of course!), and £73 train tickets to the MetLife stadium. Never mind that when the US won the FIFA bid in 2018, the



agreement was that transport to the stadiums would be free for match ticket-holders. This had been the case in Qatar in 2022 and Russia in 2018 - and even in London during the 2012 Olympics.

Aside from the very few who could afford it, most international fans will have had to make do with watching the games on large screens. But really, this "international" display of the most ever national teams participating, was sadly and pathetically domestic. Only 40% of fans were international residents, compared to the 65% who came to Qatar and 56% to Russia. And spaces weren't exactly being filled by domestic fans either. NJ Transit stated that their estimates of 60,000+ fans using the trains led them to close NY Penn station for all non-WC-ticket-holders. But in the event, they only carried 20-26,000 per match, leading to an average loss of £1.5 million per game!

Parking the Bus and the Plane

The reason for the relatively lower international demand wasn't just economics. 33% of visa applicants from non-European countries were denied entry to the US. While 42 richer countries could access a Visa waiver program and thus only pay \$40 (£30), the visas cost \$185 (£138). And 74% of Senegalese fans who applied were denied visas, as were 61% of Iranians, even after buying tickets. Surprisingly, it was even worse trying to get into Canada. It rejected over half of its applications, the lowest acceptance rates being from Pakistan - with only 9% of would-be fans being allowed in!

The treatment of the players was

hardly better. The Iranian national team was denied permits to stay in the US during the tournament. They had to leave the country immediately after the game. The Somali referee, Omar Artan, was also denied entry on the basis of alleged "terrorism connections"! FIFA at least still paid his wages, in the end. But many technical and coaching staff were not so lucky.

Ball boys to billionaires

As for the players, they are the golden geese - or prize race horses - of this super-profit game. They certainly get paid. But what they "earn" at the World cup per match is chicken feed (for instance, England players got £2,000 per match) and they give it to charity.

The most rated players already have eye-watering incomes, so that the actual amount becomes irrelevant; e.g., Cristiano Ronaldo (Portugal), earns around \$280 million per year, Lionel Messi (Argentina), \$135m, Kylian Mbappé (France), \$95m, Erling Haaland (Norway), \$80m, Jude Bellingham (England), \$50m.

Stars like Ronaldo and Messi, who also gain £s from brand deals with Nike and Adidas are the richest sports athletes in history - even richer than the president of FIFA, Gianni Infantino, who "makes" around \$6 million a year.

The \$50m prize for the ultimate winners might seem crazy, but it indicates the level of value - the golden eggs (including that solid gold trophy!) extracted from the players, the stadium workers, but even more so, from all of us, and which is sold back to us for our "entertainment"! □

Our society

Four years since the "strike wave": the missing link

The start of the summer of 2026 feels a lot quieter than 2022, so far. Four years ago, it was strikes by rail workers which marked the beginning of the 2022-23 "strike wave" across Britain. But today rail bosses - and the government - are once more squeezing workers' pay and attacking workers' terms and conditions.

Defeated by Unite's sectionalism...

For now, scattered and isolated disputes are taking place in various localities around the country. Workers at bus maker Alexander Dennis voted by 81% to strike over pay - their walk-out was scheduled for 1 July. Around 900 highly skilled workers who build wings for the Airbus A320 GKN Aerospace in Filton near Bristol have also been striking - on their own - after rejecting a 3.3% pay offer.

Then there are 1,200 frontline social care workers on the minimum wage, from 150 sites across England and Scotland employed by "Change Grow Live" (a large charity), who've decided to strike over pay.

These strikes have been called by Unite the Union - but as usual there is never any attempt to spread the action. Not even among Unite members in nearby workplaces! After 15 months of getting nowhere, thanks to Unite leaders' sectional approach, Birmingham's refuse collectors are still - in theory - on strike!

...and the British Medical Association's elitism

Similar sectionalism - or maybe elitism - from the BMA has meant that resident doctors have been striking on and off, in

"We demand better" demonstration, 2022



splendid isolation ever since March 2023, also getting nowhere. As if no other worker was in the same boat.

Finally this June they voted to end their dispute, accepting a new pay offer by 53% on a 57% turnout. This still leaves doctors' pay around 20% below its 2008 level and below what they demanded. Apparently 4,500 new specialist posts will be created over the next three years - still woefully inadequate considering that there were 47,000 applicants for just 12,833 positions last year!

Same lessons, then and now

At the height of the strike wave in 2023, more than 500,000 workers across Britain were involved in industrial

disputes - including large battalions from Royal Mail, the railways, the civil service, education and the NHS. Yet their strikes were kept separate by trade union leaders, who hid behind "the law" to avoid co-ordinating their forces. Their argument - as always - is that "solidarity strikes" are illegal. As if it were not possible, even within the law (and the wit of trade union officials) to ensure everyone is taking action on the same day!

By now, however, this has happened so often and so repeatedly, that the lesson is unmistakable. If we want our action to be effective we are going to have to build our own strike committees to organise our stoppages and to ensure that we really do "unite and fight". It's the only way to win. □

The only way to fight effectively is to join ranks

London Underground drivers are still facing TfL's latest attempt to extract more work from them. This time, it comes in the form of a proposed "voluntary" four-day working pattern: the same number of hours, but squeezed into longer shifts, beginning with a Bakerloo line pilot.

"Voluntary"? We've heard that one before. Once these rosters become normal, choice has a way of disappearing. TfL says no one will be forced off a five-day week; that working hours are not being cut, and that the remaining issues

can be sorted out through talks. But that misses the point entirely. The RMT is right to say that fatigue, longer night shifts, roster "flexibility" and safety are not minor details!

The RMT drivers' fight this spring showed both their strength and the limits of fighting alone. Strikes planned for March were suspended; action went ahead in April; May strikes were called off and on 2 and 4 June, RMT drivers walked out again. But during the strikes, many services still ran because ASLEF drivers

remained at work. That is divide and rule in practice, helped along, once again, by the union leaderships.

The whole TfL workforce is affected (or will be!) by the lengthening of the working day (and night, by one hour!). Besides, this screw is being turned everywhere, not just in TfL. To win this fight RMT drivers need to convince ASLEF drivers to join them - and then all the rest of their fellow workers - whether in the union or not! And it's a good reason for them to join...

Bus drivers got heatstroke!

The summer heatwave is hitting workplaces hard, and London's bus drivers are among the worst affected. With temperatures peaking near 40 degrees, the tiny cabin spaces drivers are crammed into can get four or five degrees hotter than that!

Speaking to press (with their faces blurred for fear of retaliation by the bosses!), drivers explained how they felt pressured into continuing driving, despite

the fact that they were risking the safety of themselves and passengers. Footage on social media, showing a driver fainting on the job, went viral. Bosses insist that all their buses are "air cooled", but drivers say that the "air cooling" system doesn't help - if it even exists in the first place.

TfL management also told drivers that they could request a welfare (heat relief) break without risk of punishment,

but we all know that they will take note of anyone who does so. Mayor Sadiq Khan even intervened - to back up the "no punishment" pledge.

With the climate crisis only getting worse, and more temperature records broken every year, drivers have no choice but to resist. Health and safety law provides for no upper limit for an acceptable working temperature. The workforce will have to impose it.

EMR train crash: workers know who to blame

On 19 June, two East Midlands Railway trains collided at Elstow, near Bedford, on a high-speed main line to London. The 16:40 service from Corby hit the back end of the 15:50 service from Nottingham, which had stopped to report a fault with its Automatic Warning System (AWS). Shaun Burton, the driver of the Corby service, was killed. 162 people were injured, including one of the guards; 53 passengers were hospitalised, 8 in a critical condition.

Less than a week later, the Rail Accident Investigation Branch (RAIB) released an initial report which already pointed a finger at the driver - saying that he went through a red signal. What the RAIB's report did not mention, is that Train Protection and Warning System (TPWS) wasn't fitted on that side of the track. TPWS automatically applies the brakes if a train passes a red signal or approaches one too fast, but it's only installed at "high risk" locations, such as junctions, and some station approaches.

The section of the Midland Main Line where the crash occurred had been classified as "low risk" in 2003 and therefore the Automatic Warning System (AWS), was the only protection against a SPAD - i.e., a driver error, leading to passing a signal at danger. AWS warns the driver, but can't stop the train automatically. The drivers' main union, ASLEF, said simply: *"If TPWS had been installed, this accident would not have happened"*.

The bosses knew it wasn't safe

While the full circumstances of the collision are still unknown, what's for sure is that pressure on the railway infrastructure had been increasing. Network Rail freight reports published in



June show that freight traffic rose sharply before the crash.

Following the reopening of Kirk Hill Bridge in April, freight tonnage increased by around 40%, while the number of trains during peak hours rose by 15%, reducing the margin for error on ageing signalling systems. Passenger journeys also rose by 25% over the previous two years!

The train that had stopped on the line ahead of the Corby-to-London train was a Class 810 Aurora unit, introduced in December 2025. As mentioned above, it encountered an AWS fault - but the RAIB doesn't mention whether increased operational pressures may have contributed. The Aurora fleet was introduced in a rush, ahead of the planned re-nationalisation of EMR in October. And just because these trains provided 46% more seats and 136% more luggage space! And though the new trains were

built ready for the European Train Control System (ETCS), its installation was delayed. So trains still operate on the older, less safe, signalling system. Had they had ETCS, the collision would have been prevented.

No, it wasn't "driver error"

The authorities will play down this crash. But the rest of us will understand its seriousness and what it implies about the state of Britain's out-of-date signalling and its disjointed and belated modernisation-on-the-cheap.

If "re-nationalisation" under "Great British Railways" is to remedy any of this, railway workers will have to take control of it, use our own un-self-interested experts, remove the profit motive entirely and turn railway transport into a safe public service. We can do it - but we'll have to use our industrial muscle! ☐

Car industry: job cuts to maintain shareholders' profits!

On 26 June, Volkswagen CEO Oliver Blume announced plans to cut 100,000

jobs - about 15% of VW's workforce - mainly affecting four plants in Germany. Blume blamed "growing risks in a world that has radically changed", referring to a "new" world in which Chinese EVs, whose quality now equals that of Western brands, are sold at roughly half the price.

They still beat BYD

Chinese EV companies, such as BYD and Geely have expanded rapidly, thanks to support from China's centralised state and a certain degree of industrial "planning" (when compared to the West). However Western manufacturers still dominate global car production: VW alone produced about 8.9m vehicles worldwide in 2025, more than double BYD's output.

Western companies also manufacture large numbers of vehicles in China - like Tesla, which produces 1m cars a year at its Shanghai factory. The market share

won by Chinese capitalists remains relatively small, yet Western companies still complain bitterly about the portion of the market that escapes them!

And they add tariffs

The fact is that the world automobile market is increasingly saturated, fuelling the tariff war that Western powers are waging against China. Washington, for instance, quadrupled tariffs on Chinese EVs from 25% to 100% in May 2024. But western carmakers also wage a tariff war amongst themselves: in May 2026, Trump raised US tariffs on cars imported from the EU from 15% to 25%.

Indeed, the supposed "Chinese threat" serves as a convenient justification for companies like VW to cut jobs and close factories in order to maintain their high profits in an increasingly competitive market - while making fewer workers produce more!

Class Struggle n° 127

Spring/Summer 2026

- After the 7 May elections, the cat's among the pigeons!
- Is Britain's far right growing beyond its traditional strongholds?
- On the 100th anniversary of the General Strike
- United States "vs" Europe: the rivalries of the imperialist gangsters

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Their politics

Burnham's "Manchesterism": there's nothing new under the sun

Andy Burnham has promised "change" for "ordinary" people. He says he will apply what he has learnt as Mayor of Manchester for nearly 10 years, when he takes over as Prime Minister.

Apparently his "Manchesterism" and a "Number 10 in the North" will end Westminster-centred politics and powers will be devolved to the local regions in England.

He's going to have to find the funds to improve the lives of the "left behind" up North though. So how will he do that, if he has promised to "respect the fiscal rules" set by Reeves and Starmer.

Respecting the rules

In one of his first interviews Burnham was asked if he knew what these rules were - and he dismissed the question. He was taunted for not knowing. But he knew.

And there lies the problem: because he cannot afford to get the bond markets spooked by borrowing too much. The government is already paying over the odds in interest for a public debt of 95% of GDP. And that's because of what's referred to as "sticky" inflation: that is, price hikes (not in the government's control) which stay high, aggravated by the latest oil crisis due to the Iran war. Of course, the government could impose price and rent controls - but no business-friendly Labour government worth its salt would even dare. The last time this happened was in the 1970s, when the working class was on its feet...

Their other option is more simple: put up taxes.

Starmer didn't try either of these solutions, and Burnham has already pledged not to, in advance - even if he didn't have to! Nevertheless, he is tying his own hands. And thus would have no option "within the fiscal rules" to make cuts and submit gracelessly to the Tory demand that the welfare budget is cut to fund defence and other requirements.

The bosses' upper-class mouthpiece, *the Economist*, on the other hand, criticises Burnham for not proposing "simple tax rises" in its leader of 27 June. It continues: "He claims he can find the money for more defence by cutting welfare, through 'preventative' schemes rather than



'crude cuts', whatever that means. He plans to invest in infrastructure by finding the flexibility within the existing fiscal rules to eke out more borrowing. Rather than focus on making taxes more efficient, he has needlessly told voters that he will not increase the biggest revenue-raisers [i.e., taxes] - the same straitjacket that forced Sir Keir into painful fiscal contortions".

In fact Burnham boasts that in Manchester his achievements were above all, because of his good relations with local business. So no breaking of the rules, then, and no breaking of the crisis either...

Feeding the private sharks

Burnham has also promised the "biggest council house building program since the post-war period". But this will rely on capitalist property developers, out to make a profit, come what may. In fact, he suggested he'd let them build on "public land" to "reduce costs".

In reality, his much-talked-about "Bee Network" bus system in Manchester is really just an example of a Public-Private-Partnership: PPP, something he would have learnt all about, when he was in the governments of Tony Blair and Gordon Brown between 2001 and 2010.

In place of the totally independent bus providers who decided on their own routes (obviously only running those which were profitable), Burnham created a TfL-style body to centrally

plan which bus routes to run. But the running of these bus routes is also still contracted out to private companies.

So when Burnham talks about "greater public control of essential services, like water, housing, energy and transport", it's precisely PPPs that he has in mind - i.e., keeping the door open for private companies to continue to make fat profits from the local state, and council taxpayers' money!

Yes, politics has "de-evolved"!

So what will his local "devolution" change? What difference will it make whether "Number 10" is in "the North" or "the South"? Burnham says everything will be better with more "local" decision making. As if local councils' main problem in the last 20 years wasn't chronic underfunding, subsidies to the bosses and the cuts in services which came with serial privatisations... and therefore, vital services cut to the bone!

In the meantime, the bosses and their media are helpfully reminding him that the state's cupboard is bare, and over-borrowed, so he'd better not have any fine ideas of properly funding elderly social care, for example. And especially not by taxing them...

Changing this or that prime minister, no matter how "nice-looking" he or she may be, achieves little or nothing, of course. The law of profit remains the basis of this system, and to change that, it's a revolution we need, not devolution! □

Their politics

Mahmood's latest move to the right

Just months after suspending refugee family reunion rights and imposing longer qualifying periods for settlement in Britain, Home Secretary Mahmood has announced yet more new rules against refugees and would-be migrant workers.

Asylum seekers will now be expected to repay the cost of their accommodation - when, and if, they are granted the right to work - to the tune of an arbitrary £10,000. In fact it's a nasty tokenistic attack which is designed purely to appeal to the anti-immigrant section of the electorate.

Inhumanitarian

Her latest measures also strip many

migrants who've been victims of "modern slavery" of legal protection, if they make late claims or have criminal convictions. Worse, she is replacing the current asylum appeals system with a process designed to deport applicants more quickly, in effect disregarding any right to protection.

Mahmood declares that "*Britain has always offered sanctuary to those fleeing war and persecution*", and then immediately adds that the system must be "*controlled and not open to abuse*". She is trying to show that she can be just as tough as any Tory and to prove it, she's reinstating Theresa May's "*hostile environment for immigrants*".

Her hostile environment

As a result, anti-immigration raids have reached record levels: 17,400 raids since the government took office! In Woolwich alone, at least two raids happen every week. Against this attack on their communities, local anti-raid networks have organised rapid alert systems and mobilised neighbours to resist.

In the old days local people had to protect themselves and their neighbours from the violent attacks of racist skinheads and the National Front. Today, they have to protect themselves from Labour's immigration police. □

Brexit: ten years later - a majority for rejoining!

Ten years ago, on 23 June 2016, "Britain" voted to leave the EU, or so we've been told ever since. In fact, 17.4m people voted to leave, only 37% of the registered electorate, and 16.1m voted to remain. Another 12.9m did not vote. This result was hardly decisive, yet David Cameron's Tory government dared not invoke the "advisory" status he'd given the referendum. The result would thus be "honoured".

Cameron had called the referendum in the first place, hoping to shut up his "Eurosceptic" MPs, worried by the challenge from Nigel Farage's upstart Brexiteer UK Independence Party, UKIP.

Blame Brussels, blame immigrants

At the time, unemployment was still high and wages still stagnant, after the banking crash of 2007-08. Moreover, he and his Chancellor George Osborne's austerity policy had made the working class pay for the crisis, with huge public spending cuts, forcing councils to cut jobs, services, youth and homelessness programmes.

The Eurosceptic faction who remained in the Tory Party organising themselves behind Boris Johnson, aligned itself with Farage to campaign for "Leave", claiming that it was the EU which drained state finances, and was therefore responsible for the lack of funding of the NHS and the fall in working class living standards. The slogan on the side of a bus was: "*We send the EU £350 million a week*

- *let's fund our NHS instead*". And Farage added that it was also the "foreigners" - especially black and brown immigrants fleeing wars, like the one in Syria, currently ongoing, who were the cause of working class poverty in Britain!

Shall we now go back in?

A week before the vote, the Labour MP Jo Cox was brutally murdered by someone shouting "*Britain First*". That same day that Farage fuelled xenophobia and anti-migrant hatred, by unveiling a huge poster featuring a queue of migrants and refugees and the words "*Breaking point*".

Once the vote - narrowly in favour of

Brexit - was declared, Cameron promptly resigned. Theresa May, a Tory Remainer who took over, spent nearly three years trying to settle the terms of Britain's EU exit before Brexiteer Johnson replaced her as PM in July 2019.

Ten years later, 57% of those polled think Britain should rejoin the EU. A new study by researchers at King's Business School finds that Brexit has left the economy 6-8% smaller than it would have been - and that inward investment is 12-15% down. This provides more ammunition for those who are arguing for Britain to rejoin. What would be good, though, is the return of freedom of movement! □



Midwifery crisis: more reports won't deliver change

So at the end of June, two major reports, one by Donna Ockenden and another by Valerie Amos - concluded that Britain's maternity care crisis is not a series of isolated scandals, but a "*nationwide failure*".

Maternal deaths have risen from 8.8 per 100,000 in 2017-19 to 13.6 in 2020-22 - a 55% increase! In 2022-24, the rate was 12.8 per 100,000, still around 45% higher than in 2017-19. The risk of death is even greater for black women

who were nearly 3 times more likely to die!

Underfunded, understaffed

Ockenden's review covers the period between 2012-2025 and examined 2,026 cases. It found that substandard care - including staff shortages, poor training, botched investigations and missed warnings - contributed to injury or death in 444 maternity and 76 neonatal cases.

Amos, on the other hand, looked at

over 10,500 public submissions, including from 450 families and 9,000 staff across 12 NHS trusts. She came up with similar findings.

The Royal College of Midwives said the reports exposed "*chronic understaffing and a decade of under-investment*". Its June survey of 3,523 members found 77% had worked unpaid hours in one week, 77% said units were not safely staffed, and 93% said staffing levels affected the care they could offer.

King's Cross railway station (London)**This hot glass roof needs a hole in it!**

This year, again, King's Cross station has been transformed into hell on earth for passengers and workers alike. The glass roof has turned the station into a greenhouse.

When it was designed in 2011, Britain had already had heatwaves. In 1976, in the hottest summer in Britain recorded so far, temperatures stayed at 32°C for 15 days! In 2008 Kent recorded 38°C. Nevertheless heatwaves were not taken into consideration when designing the new roof. In fact, at the time Network Rail boasted on their website: "...once complete, 7,500 clear glass panels and over 1,400 photovoltaic panels, which will reduce the station's carbon footprint by

10%, [replacing] the yellowing fibreglass installed in the 1970s, creating a better environment for passengers".

A Network Rail boss added: "The glass panels will make the station brighter, more environmentally-friendly and a better place for passengers to be". We're not sure that the hot and bothered passengers and workers find it a "better place".

Yet over £450m was spent to refurbish the station and its roof. Yes, under capitalism, vast amounts, generating huge profits for the construction industry, are spent, not only not improving anything, but often making everything far worse. The King's Cross roof is a case



in point.

In a society where workers decide, we'd put in ventilative cooling, solar control glass, special e-coating, or selective tinting... these are some possible solutions, but we don't expect the bosses to try any of them. □

• Black box

"Black boxes" in trains have to be bolted to their chassis; they're given the utmost protection. But drivers don't even have a seatbelt. And with a smaller nose cone the new Auroras have even smaller crumple zone. Yes, workers are expendable - we can be replaced by another at the same cost; unlike their trains... [Workers' Platform 24/06/26]

• Overcrowded lines

We actually don't yet know the full details of last week's Bedford crash and what

factors contributed to it. But what we do know, is that the number of trains on the East Coast Line has increased, especially since the December timetable, so that trains leave within a few minutes of each other. How safe is that? [Workers' Platform 24/06/26]

• No space, no time

For instance at Newcastle, you can have a TransPennine train, a Lumo train, a freight train, and a couple of LNER trains within the space of half an hour. And if trains arrive a few minutes late (or even seconds), the intervals between trains are squeezed... In

fact there aren't enough platforms for them all to stop at. [Workers' Platform 24/06/26]

• Rest days should be for rest!

TSSA has called strikes on West Midlands Trains on 9-11 July over equalisation of rest-day working pay. Roster Clerks are out on July 9 and Duty Crew Train Managers and Control Staff on 10-11 July.

In fact nobody would agree to work rest-days in the first place, if our wages were sufficient to cover living costs!! The rest of us on the railway could just as well join this fight! [Workers' Platform 08/07/26]

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

Like beagles being forced to smoke cigarettes, management's trying to make us join the ranks of animals being experimented on. Union leaders Dave Ward and Martin Walsh's Delivery Method 2026 (DM26) is being tried on us, but it's rubbish and it won't last - because we're just not working it!

But we're wondering what keywords were fed into their AI-generated delivery method. Because it certainly isn't "fair", "equal", "manageable", "robust" or "caring". There's no way that Walsh dreamt up DM26. It's surely got to be the

result of the computer being asked to go along with the bosses' wishes and find out how to exploit us to the maximum! The result is more ZX81 than supercomputer. If DM26 really is the fevered dream of the industry's version of HAL9000, then us humans don't need to worry about the computers taking over.

Because DM26 requires so much human intervention we may as well reopen the book-room. And that's its Achilles heel. It was supposed to free everyone (ha-ha) and all it's done is make everything unworkable. The bosses have



to micromanage the operation more than ever. And the minute a spanner gets thrown in the works it goes to pot (and we know how to throw a spanner). We've all been here before and just like all the other bright ideas from management, this one is heading for the dustbin of history... □

• Temp goes up, shift length comes down

Another week, another heatwave. It's difficult for us on days to sleep at night. But for those on nights, sleeping at home during the hottest part of the day is impossible!

And since we're going to be struggling to get enough sleep, shortening the night shifts is what we need! In fact, medical research has shown that the max length for night shifts should be 6 hours with a break

in the middle - and shorter still, when it's this hot! [Workers' Fight bulletin 08/07/26]

• We can stop too

The Parcel Sorting Monster gave up and broke down last week. But we're not surprised. The Monster seems to go on strike a few times every month, considering managers squeeze everything they can out of it, 24/7. In fact, they try to squeeze just as much out of us - until we decide to stop, just like the Monster does! [Workers' Fight

bulletin 08/07/26]

• Dump the trash

These scanning in/out machines don't work - they regularly fail to register our cards when we scan them. But then the shift manager comes complaining to us, warning us that we'll be disciplined if we don't scan!

Why bother us with this? It's obvious it's the system at fault. If they don't want to throw it out, we can certainly help with that! [Workers' Fight bulletin 08/07/26]

BMW Mini centre (Cowley, Oxford)**Action over pay: why are we waiting?**

After BMW insisted on reducing our basic working week to 35 hours, our 8¾ hour shifts were extended throughout June. Early shifts had 30 minutes added (so just as before!), and late shifts 45 minutes. Yet, as we are only paid "working time credit" for this, our pay for June was cut! All we have heard about our pay rise that was due on 1 January is that "talks are ongoing" and that there's a proposal to cut our breaks. A visiting BMW boss pleaded poverty because BMW's precious profits were down!

At the Swindon plant, where Mini bodies are pressed, management and full-time plant officials brought shop stewards into a meeting about the pay offer. But when they realised this was in order to pressurise them into backing a 2.5% offer by threatening jobs and the plant itself, the stewards refused to recommend the offer.

Some managers then went public, touring the lines to try to sell the overdue deal. No doubt the bosses will be up to similar tricks at Cowley. We need any "negotiations" to take place in full view



of all of us, not in secrecy. To make that happen we obviously need to stop work! ☐

• Back to the future

The temperature got as high as 42 in some areas of the plant last week! And of course managers tried to give us hardly any heat relief, until we complained, and then we got a few more 5 minute breaks. But no cold drinks were brought round like they used to be. And if there's going to be more heatwaves in the future, we need to impose breaks and demand cold drinks whenever needed! [Workers' Fight bulletin 30/06/26]

• Our breaks are priceless

While it's still all quiet about the pay deal, we hear the bosses want to cut our breaks again, like they tried to last year. Back then we said "no way!", and

nothing's changed. We know no lump sum will ever make up for a permanently shorter break. [Workers' Fight bulletin 30/06/26]

• We'll have our say!

And as usual, the bosses want to exclude us Staffline workers from any vote on the breaks. But we don't need a ballot to vote with our feet! This place can't run without the Staffline majority, it would just take us walking out to stop everything! [Workers' Fight bulletin 30/06/26]

• United we stand

At the same time, there's a rumour that Unipart wants to cut the breaks in ILC/AC too. We're obviously against shorter breaks anywhere in this plant! [Workers' Fight bulletin 30/06/26]

• Sunstroke-proof minis!

In Body-in-White, the number of convertibles has tripled! From 330 to 900 cars per week... These models demand more parts and are a pain to deal with, but we don't get the extra time needed for each car! So how about WE set the threshold for what we can do? [Workers' Fight bulletin 30/06/26]

• Exposing BMW's forgery

Processes keep changing for the worse... but the process sheets remain the same - and completely out of touch with reality! And when we point this out to management they claim we're in the wrong?! So how about we stick with the old processes and if the line stops, so be it! [Workers' Fight bulletin 30/06/26]

Ford Dagenham estate (Essex)**• Robots don't sweat**

On Panther it was blazing hot! The heat radiated by the machines made work unbearable... But while managers granted us human workers some heat relief and breathers outside, we wondered if this heat break didn't have more to do with their concern for the robots in machining being too hot to run! [Workers' Fight bulletin 01/07/26]

• The AC doesn't reach us

DDC was slightly cooler, but we could still feel the heat coming off the lines! Many amongst us in assembly and those of us bagging the engines were pouring with sweat... So how about us stopping to cool down, whenever WE think it's too hot? [Workers' Fight bulletin 01/07/26]

• Pay & pensions need to rise

Some of us older Ford workers retiring this July don't qualify for the final salary (defined benefit) pension - which at least pays a bit more than the new(er) scheme(s). We should never have allowed Ford to get away with cutting pensions. By now, the rising cost of living has outpaced them... But we can still "fix" this! [Workers' Fight bulletin

01/07/26]

• All out for more?

The Lineside pay rise is meant to kick-in Wednesday, but we still don't know if it's 3% or 2.5%... However, even 3% would only add ~£10/week for most of us... In other words, just enough for a fancy dinner out... at McDonalds! [Workers' Fight bulletin 01/07/26]

• Three strikes and out!

LLL management is handing out disciplines like it's going out of fashion. It's obvious what they're up to: they want to be able to sack the most senior workers to save on their labour costs. Well, we're not having it. And we know how to make their "savings" far too expensive! [Workers' Fight bulletin 01/07/26]

• Go 4 strike

G4S numbers were cut down using the pretext of CCTV! So we've been left - among other things - with the annoying car-boot checks that CCTV can't do and we don't want to do! On top of it, we didn't get an actual pay rise - just the yearly minimum wage increase! Time to join forces around the estate and Go 4 more? [Workers' Fight bulletin 01/07/26]

**• No cuts to our numbers!**

After Transport Operations managers hinted there may be job cuts due to them cutting the ships to the Jetty from 2 to 1, we "hinted" we might go on strike... Now management has backed down, claiming they had no intention of cutting jobs in the first place! OK, but we know exactly what to do, if they somehow rediscover that "non"-intention... [Workers' Fight bulletin 01/07/26]

• "No slamming!"

It's been busy on Autotech, trying to fix these DPD Transit doors that keep falling off. Ford claims it's down to drivers closing the doors too hard... nothing to do with their lousy parts... Maybe what they really mean is that Transits are not made to be driven at all. [Workers' Fight bulletin 01/07/26]

International

Colombian election: far-right wins, but that's not the end of it!

On 21 June, Abelardo de la Espriella, a far-right lawyer who made his fortune defending narco-traffickers and paramilitaries, was elected president of Colombia. Turnout was high, at 64%, and the result was tight: Espriella beat left-wing candidate Ivan Cepeda by just 200,000 votes. But Colombia's electoral infrastructure is run by a company whose owners were convicted in a US bank fraud scandal, so it's no surprise several thousand electoral fraud claims have already been reported.

The election was also held at gunpoint: in the landlord-dominated central regions and Antioquia, both paramilitary strongholds, Espriella won 75-90% of the vote. Yet despite the violence and assassinations of union leaders and community organisers, voters in the poorest regions, mostly Indigenous and Afro-Colombian, backed Cepeda by around 80%.

A degenerate ruling class

Outgoing president Gustavo Petro, Colombia's first left-wing leader, said his aim was to "develop" capitalism and drag the country out of feudalism. During his four years in office, the minimum wage rose by 75%. But only a minority benefited: over half of Colombia's 24m workers are "informal" workers.

His government bought 700,000 hectares of idle land, handing half to 77,000 landless families - a drop in the ocean, when only 1% of landlords hold 80% of the land! But even this minimal reform was too much for Colombia's landlords and their paramilitaries. As for Congress, riddled with corruption, it blocked even a modest reform of the health

system.

Espriella, a friend of paramilitary boss Salvatore Mancuso and backed by Trump, reportedly vowed to "gut the left" - showing the true face of Colombia's ruling class.

The working class hasn't spoken!

A decade after the peace deal with FARC (the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia or "Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia", a formerly left-wing nationalist guerilla organisation), violence hasn't stopped. Paramilitaries now run narco-trafficking in the countryside, while dissident FARC factions and the ELN (National Liberation Army), who no longer fight for landless peasants, are taxing coca crops and running cocaine labs.

Poverty has barely fallen: 35% of Colombians remain poor. Youth

unemployment stands at 15%, but reaches 25% in the poorest areas. Infant mortality, though down, is 10.5 per 1,000 births - well behind Chile or Uruguay - and reaches 30 per 1,000 in poor regions. There's no room for reformism in this rotten system!

The inevitable disillusionment with left governments which, against all odds, promise reforms, has meant the right winning elections across the continent: in Bolivia, Ecuador, and Chile, where a "Communist" lost to a Pinochet-admirer, Jose Antonio Kast.

But Colombia's 24-million-strong working class - in oil, coal and gold mining, the ports, and a growing manufacturing sector - is part of the huge continent-wide working class. Organised across borders, it remains the only force that can bury this corrupt, violent system and help build a future for all of humanity! ☐



Colombian workers on general strike in 2021

Earthquake in Venezuela: where was the heavy equipment?

On 24 June, two earthquakes - of magnitudes 7.2 and 7.5 - struck north-central Venezuela, with the capital Caracas and the coastal state of La Guaira among the hardest hit. At the time of writing, there are 3,811 confirmed dead and 16,740 people injured, but over 38,000 are missing.

International coverage of the disaster focused on public anger against Delcy Rodríguez, who has been acting president since Nicolás Maduro was captured by

Trump in January. Of course, what was desperately needed, was heavy machinery and rescue technology which only the US could have provided on the spot! During the crucial first days after the earthquakes, shocked survivors had to search through the vast piles of broken concrete and brick with their bare hands and picks and shovels.

Claiming the high moral ground

The Venezuelan government could not have

been prepared for these earthquakes, let alone the aftermath. The last massive quake due to the San Sebastián fault was October 29, 1900. At the time it caused extensive damage to the coast near Caracas.

Venezuela is an underdeveloped and poor country, with an economy usually dependent on imperialism (the USA in this case). It's been in crisis, made worse by US sanctions, for over a decade. If its health system was decrepit before the quakes, now it's completely collapsed. Buildings - many of them built under social housing schemes - weren't earthquake-resistant and have now completely crumbled. Unsurprisingly, Venezuela doesn't have a national alert system for earthquakes. Some people had an app on their phones to receive alerts - but these give just 2 minutes' warning, if that.

Indeed the real scandal is that richer, better-equipped countries (the USA!) haven't provided more relief and machinery (as in Turkey in 2023) to pull people from under the rubble, or the necessary food and medical help. After all, they proved they can carry out speedy and effortless operations when it comes to capturing presidents in their beds. ☐



Rescue efforts in La Guaira

Lebanon and the Middle East: peace can only come from revolution

On June 26, the Israeli and the Lebanese governments signed the first stage of a "peace" agreement. It's really an agreement for a war to annihilate Hezbollah. Israel is to remain in occupation of southern Lebanon, until *"the verified disarmament of non-state armed groups and dismantlement of associated infrastructure"*. That is, Hezbollah's military defeat.

A US-led "military coordination group" is to be established to coordinate this war, and the Lebanese army is obliged to start "disarming" Hezbollah in the south of the country. This lays the groundwork for yet another civil war in Lebanon, yet again overseen and egged on by the US and Israel.

Already, Israeli attacks in Lebanon have killed more than 8,000, since October 2023, and around 1.2 million Lebanese people, out of a population of 6 million, have been displaced. The next phase of this war threatens to be even bloodier. On the other hand, on the Israeli side, just 36 soldiers and four civilians have been killed by Hezbollah's attacks.

For the US and Israel, this deal is part of their ongoing war against Iran. The defeat of Hezbollah is, for them, a blow struck at the Iranian regime. And



A man installing a Hezbollah flag on the balcony of a damaged building in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley, March 2026

it's in total contradiction to the latest US-Iran "peace" deal, which agrees to *"immediate and permanent termination of military operations... in Lebanon"*.

What is the end goal of the US and Israel in all this? At the moment, there doesn't seem to be one. That is, one short of the complete destruction of the whole Middle East! Israeli politicians, like Naftali Bennett, are starting to talk about Turkey as *"the new Iran"*!

The hope of revolutionaries can only

be that this expanding war across the region sparks a social revolution. If the working class and poor of the Middle East (including in Israel) take the lead, they could begin to overcome the system put in place by these warmongers and the imperialist predators in the shape of Washington, Westminster, Paris and Berlin... The task of workers in the imperialist heartlands - like here in Britain - is to do the same. ☐

Ukraine/Russia war: desertions to escape death!

The war in Ukraine has entered its fifth year, and the days when volunteers queued outside recruitment centres are long gone. The grim reality of soldiers sent off to die in trenches quickly exposed the cynicism of the Russian and Ukrainian states, which, far from *"protecting the lives"* of their populations, have sacrificed over half a million soldiers and civilians in their geopolitical chess game.

Forced conscription

The phenomenon of desertion in Russia (with more than 70,000 known cases in Europe alone) has received some attention in the West. The BBC even produced a documentary highlighting the brutality of the Russian regime leading to these desertions. But it

fails, unsurprisingly, to mention what is happening on the Ukrainian side.

Ukraine is an "ally", and indeed their proxy against Russia - which means it enjoys the favour of the Western media. Yet, from the very beginning of the war, the Ukrainian state imposed a blanket ban (renewed every three months and still in force today) preventing men aged 18-65 from leaving the country, trapping them as cannon fodder in the conflict.

In fact, the same border controls used by the EU to keep refugees out were employed by the Ukrainian state to keep Ukrainians in. Thermal cameras, drones, fences and military patrols are just some of the obstacles faced by those attempting to flee to neighbouring countries such as Romania, Hungary and Poland.

Soldiers refuse to die

The first signs of a "conscription crisis" in Ukraine appeared as early as 2023, particularly after the failed Ukrainian counter-offensive that summer. By 2025, the number of draft evaders had reached 300,000. In January this year, Ukraine's Defence Minister, Fedorov, admitted that 2 million men (50% of those eligible for military service) are *"missing"*!

As the number of desertions and AWOL cases has grown, the conscription age was lowered from 27 to 25 and the state shifted to more violent recruitment methods, including the kidnapping of men by recruitment "agents" in supermarkets, petrol stations and outside nightclubs. They are shoved into minibuses (hence the term *"busification"*), taken to recruitment offices and from there to the front.

The EU helping the butchers

In March 2026, 4.3 million Ukrainian refugees were under temporary protection in the EU. But at a meeting of EU interior ministers in Luxembourg in June, a proposal was discussed to exclude Ukrainian men aged 23-60 from temporary protection - many of whom are eligible for military service.

This would clearly open the door to the extradition of Ukrainian refugees, who could then end up at the front. But whether EU border police are capable of locating these men and sending them to war is another question entirely! ☐



Poster from the Ukrainian foreign recruitment centre webpage

250 years since the American Revolution - high time there was another!

Donald Trump has conflated celebrations for the anniversary of the American Declaration of Independence - on 4 July 1776 - with his own birthday, calling them a "TRUMP RALLY"! No surprise that he just couldn't resist! In contrast to Trump's primitive backwardness, in 1776 American revolutionaries of the "13 Colonies" struck a decisive blow against British rule. This rising bourgeoisie broke free of the constraints that had been placed on their development, providing a blueprint for France's "bourgeois democratic republic" which, in 1789, sounded the death knell for feudal rule in the western world.

A people in arms

Protests first broke out in the 1760s, aimed at wresting better terms of trade from the colonial power, and reducing taxes placed on the colonies. By the 1770s, this had turned into a guerilla war against British outposts.

The best known was the "Boston Tea Party", in 1773. Around 100 "patriots", sneaked onto 3 British East India Company ships moored in Boston's port, and dumped £2.25m worth of tea (in modern equivalents) into the water in protest against "taxation without representation". Two years later, a full-blown war broke out, which was to last 8 years, before Britain admitted defeat.

In the Revolution's early years, only men who owned some property were enlisted in militias. But as the war dragged on, "paupers", i.e., those without property, were enrolled with promises of land. Slaves were enlisted by both British and American forces and promised their freedom. It was this poor labouring population who really won the war for independence.

The revolution is rolled back

The rising American bourgeoisie certainly wanted independence from Britain, but independence in order to get even richer, not for a propertyless majority. However, faced with the necessity of finding troops for the militias, their representatives were obliged to put themselves forward as speaking for the labouring classes who were doing the fighting.

This explains some of the language in the Declaration of Independence, for example that the "people" are justified

Painting showing the surrender of the English General, Burgoyne, at Saratoga to the American Revolutionary Army, in 1777



in throwing out a power that has become destructive of their needs. It asserts that "all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights, that among those are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness".

In the US Constitution which followed just ten years later, these "unalienable" rights were changed to "life, liberty, or property". It no longer recognised that "all men" were created equal, as slaves were now only considered 3/5 of a person!

The 55 delegates who met to write the Constitution in 1787 were among the richest in the country. Most had property in slaves, manufacturing, shipping/trade companies, large land holdings, and/or banking interests. And they saw the need for a strong power to protect their property - not simply what they themselves owned, but what their whole class owned. And not only from competing capitalists, like the British, but also against a rebellious poor population at home.

The social revolution: then and now

After gaining independence, small farmers discovered that they were facing a new state power intent on taxing them just as voraciously as before. They rebelled,

staging armed invasions of the new Congress. Adding to this instability, was the rebellion of slaves.

It was this rag-tag army, of small farmers and slaves, which had just defeated the largest economic and military power in the world, which now claimed its own "rights" against its own bourgeoisie.

What made their threat against the newly independent government possible was that the revolution had been fought by a whole armed people. But now the propertyless majority were aiming at a social revolution. To defend their class position, the wealthy businessmen implemented political reforms - and they could afford it - starting with the 1787 Constitution.

A statement of democratic rights for the population was the result, added to the Constitution as its first ten amendments. They never guaranteed the "democracy" they proclaimed, however. It was the readiness of the population to fight for them that imposed them.

For the rule of US capital - which today dominates the whole world - to be overcome, it will require precisely such readiness to fight. This is the task of today's American working class - and all the rest of us! □

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

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

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