

Communication Workers Union political smear of *World Socialist Web Site* falls flat on its face

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An attempt by the Communication Workers Union (CWU) to smear the *World Socialist Web Site* (WSWS) on its coverage of the Royal Mail dispute and undermine its standing among postal workers has failed miserably.

After the CWU Postal Executive twice suspended the ballot on its sellout deal with Royal Mail to prevent an anticipated rejection by the membership, they met with a tidal wave of criticism and protest. On Friday general secretary Dave Ward and his deputy Andy Furey issued yet another joint statement with Royal Mail announcing that a ballot would finally take place.

The CWU statement further claims that closed door talks with Royal Mail over the past fortnight had secured an agreement with management, which would review revisions (changing working practices to cut costs and increase productivity). This was a feeble attempt to spike opposition to its attempted sellout.

Underneath the CWU announcement on its Twitter page, a statement by the Postal Workers Rank-and-File Committee (PWRFC) published on the *World Socialist Web Site* was posted that refuted the union's earlier propaganda. It quoted Royal Mail Chief Operating Officer Grant McPherson stating that the company had undertaken "the biggest revision in the history of this business", combined with demands for yet "more efficiency". He made these remarks at a "Village Hall session" in London alongside managers and CWU officials.

The CWU's response to this posting was vitriolic.

"This forthcoming vote is for CWU members not for crackpot political organisations that aren't even based in the UK. Please don't @us with rubbish from that website. We can't wait to engage with our members –

whatever their views."

The nationalist screed and the description of the PWRFC and the WSWS as "crackpots" backfired, as postal workers directed their anger to the CWU.

- "You seem to be explaining yourself, you'd have to be a crackpot to sign our rights away, shameful, the big No is coming I hope you have been polishing plan B"

- "Only crackpots on here are running the union on behalf of RM instead of trying looking after the members. Like I've always said, management in drag. Maybe you could get a slot on late night channel 4."

- "You don't engage with members. Anyone showing a different viewpoint is immediately called out for being a bot or part of some 'crackpot political organisation.' Some humility might be nice."

- "However most of what is in that link is pretty much spot on. You say you want to engage with your members but every time any members asks an awkward question or puts a view that doesn't fit with your agenda you hide messages or block them etc or resort to insults as you have here."

- "It seems lost on them that WE are the union, and that they are only representing us and are being paid by us the members. I fear this could be the end of this union due to these overpaid senior Reps that are so out of touch with us plebs living on a pittance. Time for change."

- "What about fleet @DaveWardGS I am not a crackpot. Just a mechanic who you ignore."

- "Crackpot: Terry Pullinger attending AGMs telling workers that final salary pensions are a thing of the past."

- "Crackpot? Typically dismissive and arrogant there, unfortunately I'm no longer surprised by this smug

attitude.”

- “The only ‘crackpots’ I see are these clowns. Talking down to us, dismissing us or ignoring us. They genuinely think they’re better than us. Without OUR subs, they should think of that before responding next time.”

- “You are really clueless as to what’s going on aren’t ya!! We have gone from 85 staff to 64 in our office in the last 12 months, mainly due to this shit! Our office will have less than 50 before Halloween! Ur both crippling the job and the workforce! Is that what u want maybe!

This is the second attack by the CWU on the PWRFC and WSWS on its Twitter page. Its first attempt at red baiting came in the wake of announcing the joint statement on a “negotiators agreement” with Royal Mail on April 15, in its first attempt to end the national dispute by 115,000 postal workers. That statement’s claim that Ward and Furey had won a “ground breaking agreement” was immediately challenged by postal workers, including by one who had posted a screenshot of an April 12 article from the WSWS, “Growing support for UK Postal Workers Rank and File Committee” under a caption “Is it time we started looking at alternatives?”

The CWU launched a diatribe describing the WSWS as “a website run by absolute cranks” who have “zero interest in the welfare of postal workers”. This earlier attack also backfired—spectacularly. Postal workers pointed out that the CWU leaders had crossed all the red lines in the dispute, accepting a de facto pay cut and ripping up of terms and conditions while they had not seen a penny of strike pay for the 18 days of action.

Two months later the CWU is back to its old tricks, attacking the PWRFC and the WSWS to silence opposition and ram through a betrayal. The CWU bureaucracy fears the emergence of rank-and-file opposition like the plague, especially any challenge to its nationalist and pro-company outlook rooted in its privileged status as an industrial police force to suppress the class struggle.

Workers who want to fight, on the other hand, are beginning to base their opinion of who represents them on an objective assessment of their record. And the conclusion of many is that Ward, Furey and the CWU bureaucracy are stooges of management and that the Postal Workers Rank-and-File Committee and the

WSWS tell the truth and advance an alternative perspective based on a defence of their independent class interests.



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