

Reinstate all victimised reps and postal workers! End the CWU-Lord Falconer conspiracy at Royal Mail!

Postal Workers Rank-and-File Committee (UK)
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Do you have information about workplace victimisations? Are you a sacked or suspended worker or rep? Get in touch and join the campaign using the form below. Your anonymity will be protected.

A mass campaign must be launched mobilising Royal Mail's entire workforce for the reinstatement of all colleagues victimised, sacked, and suspended during the year-long dispute.

Since July 2022, more than 400 union reps and postal workers have been sacked or suspended in the largest number of victimisations during an industrial dispute since the 1984-85 miners' strike.

The Communication Workers Union (CWU) bureaucracy has mounted no opposition to management bullying, harassment, and intimidation. On the contrary, their pro-company "Business Recovery, Growth and Transformation Agreement" pledges the CWU's support for this war on postal workers.

On top of those suspended and sacked, thousands of long serving colleagues have been forced out through unreasonable changes to working conditions. Many have resigned due to ill health, including PTSD, caused by targeted bullying and brutal workloads. Colleagues with decades of service have been left virtually penniless through reduced entitlements for ill-health and early retirement agreed by the union. This is "fire and rehire" through the backdoor. Senior staff are being replaced by new entrants on inferior terms and conditions, the bitter fruit of a company-union slave charter rammed through against the membership.

The Falconer Review: a conspiracy against workers

Dave Ward, Andy Furey and the national postal executive are holding out the fig-leaf of an independent review into mass sackings and suspensions, headed by Lord Falconer. But the review, devised by Royal Mail and CWU officials at conciliation service ACAS, is a conspiracy to bury any fight for mass reinstatement, including freezing all normal appeal

processes.

Falconer is a trusted representative of the ruling class. He advised the National Coal Board during the 1984-85 miners' strike and is a friend of Tony Blair, who appointed him Criminal Justice Minister and then Lord Chancellor of Britain. It was Falconer who reportedly helped overcome legal objections to Britain's invasion of Iraq—a war crime that killed more than 250,000 Iraqis.

That such an individual is being promoted by the CWU to investigate workplace victimisations is obscene. The CWU has agreed that "All decisions on the conduct of the Review will be for him [Lord Falconer] to decide in his absolute discretion."

The Falconer Review is the outcome of high-level state intervention. Former Trades Union Congress (TUC) General Secretary and retired ACAS Chair Sir Brendan Barber approached Falconer to head the review. Both are connected to the Blairite wing of the Labour Party, led today by Sir Keir Starmer. Falconer's review had two essential aims: 1) to sweep the explosive issue of workplace victimisations under the carpet, blocking any industrial and political fight for reinstatement; and 2) enabling Royal Mail and the CWU to implement their national agreement against the workforce.

Amidst the biggest strike wave in Britain since the 1980s, the Labour Party worked behind the scenes with Royal Mail, the CWU, and in ACAS talks headed by Barber to end the dispute. They did the bidding of a Tory government that was imploding under the impact of the deepest global crisis since the 1930s.

Victimised workers abandoned

Throughout the dispute, Royal Mail was given a blank cheque to remove anyone they viewed as an obstacle to workplace revisions and a ruthless company culture. Sackings have been enforced by HR processes amounting to a kangaroo court. Victimisations include:

Craigavon Delivery Office, Northern Ireland: two reps

sacked, one for union activity supporting a female delivery worker allegedly bullied by management, the other for challenging unagreed workplace revisions.

Glasgow Mail Centre, Scotland: CWU rep on the nightshift sacked for using the word “scab” in a personal social media post, and for describing the dispute as a battle of “rich against poor”.

Coventry, England: union rep for Parcelforce LGV drivers sacked by email on trumped-up charges of gross misconduct after 15 years’ service.

Liverpool, England: postal worker sacked for using the word “scab” in an email.

Hull, England: postal worker suspended for challenging management inaction over sexual harassment of female colleagues. Victimised and later sacked despite apologising for minor swear words on social media during the dispute.

Workers responded with walkouts, sit-ins, and votes for industrial action under the CWU’s Rule 13 demanding reinstatement for their reps. They were opposed by CWU national and local officials. At Craigavon, after CWU members met outside the office and voted unanimously for Rule 13 strike action to defend their suspended Reps, Dave Ward and the national executive blocked their democratic mandate.

Royal Mail’s mass victimisations must not be allowed to stand. There is too much at stake. During the 1980s, the Thatcher government’s mass victimisation of miners was aimed against the entire working class. Having isolated the striking miners, the TUC and its affiliated unions seized on the miners’ defeat to block any future challenge to the corporations and the state. Under Tory and Labour governments, the trade unions oversaw a decades-long suppression of strikes, and the biggest redistribution of wealth from the poor to the rich in history.

The fight for mass reinstatement must come from the rank-and-file. Ward and Furey revealed last month that just 200 cases had been referred by the CWU to Lord Falconer, thereby excluding hundreds of victimisations. Falconer’s review process enables top officials to weed out those they regard as “troublemakers”. Meanwhile, those with cases before Falconer have heard nothing for months. Phone calls and emails to CWU head office are ignored. Sacked reps who have challenged their treatment have been deleted from CWU social media platforms.

Launch a mass campaign for reinstatement!

In April, Ward declared: “This union leaves nobody behind”. But the CWU’s unaccountable bureaucracy has colluded with Royal Mail’s victimisations every step of the way, keeping members in the dark.

It is time to break the wall of silence surrounding victimised colleagues! If the company succeeds in railroading members out of their jobs, a new benchmark will be set. Last month’s sacking of six delivery workers at Prenton DO for taking tea breaks at two local pubs shows the new regime in action. Similar cases are being reported elsewhere.

Royal Mail’s mass victimisations cannot be defeated individually, either through the Employment Tribunal or Lord Falconer’s Review. Both are designed to leave workers at the mercy of the capitalist state, isolated and defenceless, while an orchestrated campaign against the entire workforce proceeds.

The attacks at Royal Mail are part of a global assault. In France, President Macron has imposed widely hated pension reforms, attacking striking workers with tear gas and rubber bullets. In the United States, the Biden Administration has banned nationwide strikes by railroad and dock workers. The ruling class coordinates its agenda globally, and the working class must do the same.

A mass industrial and political campaign can defeat the company’s intimidation tactics, appealing for support across Royal Mail and from workers throughout the UK and internationally.

The demand must be raised for the immediate and unconditional reinstatement of all reps and workers sacked or suspended during the Royal Mail dispute, and all those targeted in its aftermath. Meetings at mail centres and delivery offices should pass resolutions and set-up rank-and-file committees to lead this fight.

Information about victimisations must be publicised to expose the extent and nature of this orchestrated vendetta.

Victimised workers must not be starved into submission. Our dues money and other assets must be used to support victimised workers during their hour of need. The rank-and-file must take control, drawing up plans for a work-to-rule and other measures, including all-out industrial action, to win our colleagues’ reinstatement.

The outcome of this campaign will be determined by the collective decisions and actions of rank-and-file workers. We appeal to all colleagues to get in touch. Send in reports from your workplace, share this statement with your co-workers, and help plan the fightback for our future. An injury to one is an injury to all!



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