

“We are fighting this war for the banks”: London post and transport workers denounce bombing of Iran

Our reporters
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The imperialist war against Iran, and Kier Starmer Labour government’s participation in it, is deeply unpopular among workers.

As with the genocide in Gaza, Britain’s trade unions are refusing to mobilize their members for industrial action against the Labour government’s participation in a war of annihilation—openly declared by the fascist in the White House, Donald Trump, and his Goebbels-like neo-Nazi henchman, Pete Hegseth—against a country of 93 million people.

Last week teams of Socialist Equality Party supporters distributed leaflets and spoke to workers operating and maintaining buses across West London and to postal workers at Mount Pleasant Mail Centre, Royal Mail’s central sorting and distribution hub. Despite finishing and starting exhausting shifts, workers engaged in a serious discussion on the strategy to defeat the war that they opposed.

Mount Pleasant Mail Centre

A postal worker, a member of the Communication Workers Union (CWU) said, “The war is criminal. It is aimed at stealing Iran’s resources. Have you noticed no one is discussing [Jeffrey] Epstein anymore? It’s gone from the front pages, and the media is happy to move on. The people running the post are billionaires. They are the same as the ones leading the wars out to steal the countries’ resources. They don’t care about us. We don’t care about them. What there needs to be is a revolution.”

Another veteran postal worker listed the wars he had lived through and said, “I am sick of the wars and the impunity granted. They seem to think they can do what they want. What about the Epstein files, that’s no longer in the news is it? To me it’s important workers in America start the fight, then we can all join in. Without that it is very difficult to do anything.”

Responding to the SEP demands for the building a new anti-war movement rooted in the international working class, he added, “I would join a general strike, but it has to be across the whole of Europe. Otherwise, it won’t work. We in the UK are now in deep trouble. Starmer has made us a target. Any general strike has to be European wide or it will fail. If we get that, then what happens?”

The team raised the need for new mass organisation of democratic class struggle, rank-and-file workers’ committees, prepared to take political power. “That is very difficult but is what might have to happen,” he replied.

Another postal worker expressing his disgust at civilian casualties in the bombing of Iran. “I hate wars. How do we stop this war? Protest is just not effective; it doesn’t do any good.

“We have the power to stop the war, but we have to become unified. It’s the same here. A billionaire is running things [The new owner of Royal Mail is oligarch Daniel K?etínský]. There is going to be a ballot for industrial action. A strike must be unified. The problem always is the scabs, those who look after themselves. The government represents one type of people. What do we replace them with? It’s going to need something drastic like a general strike.”

Another postal worker said, “Starmer refused to let

Trump use UK air bases, then backed off and is now involved in the war. He gave in to threats from Trump. Are they going to bomb us next?"

Another postal worker commented that "The attack on Iran is directed at cutting off the supply of oil to the main target, China."

Westbourne Park Garage

One bus driver member of the Unite trade union said, "It doesn't matter what they say it's all about. It's the people who are going to die and it doesn't make it right."

His colleague denounced "Another war we're being dragged into... It's a good thing I'm too old to fight in it."

Many workers identified the interests at stake in the war. One said, "We're fighting this war for the banks." Another said, "It's a business. They pretend it's about defending the country but it's about business. They treat Iran as a petrol pump."

A driver pointed to other wars justified with lies, "What did Libya do, what did Syria do? They did nothing to the US. In Venezuela just because they wanted the oil they [US] went in and kidnapped Maduro." To stop the war, he said, "We need to be thinking outside the system."

Another explained, "They did it [bombed Iran] without a UN resolution. Anything without that is a crime." He referred to the reported ground invasion of Iran by Kurdish militias from Iraq, "The US is using them, but they will be betrayed like they were in Syria."

One bus driver disagreed with calling it a "war" when defenceless civilians are slaughtered, "It's no more a war than Gaza was a war." He recalled, "Obama had a nuclear treaty with the Iranians, they agreed to monitoring. It was Trump who tore that up."

Another driver said, "We're being ruled by mad people."

When asked how he thought the war could be stopped, he replied, "That's the big question. Nobody's asking the big questions anymore. They don't want you to think about that."

One warned, "With the attack and the counterattacks, it could be World War III. We're not safe here either."

Another driver said, "We need peace, but the war is all about money. We would be happy to bring everything to a halt, go out on strike. But then who's going to pay the bills? We need powerful support when we do that."

Another said, "We went on strike here for more money, they wouldn't give us a decent offer. If we could stop the war by going on strike as well, I'd agree with that."



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