

energy



OUTRAGE

offshore energy workers speak out **FLASH BULLETIN 5**



**Wishing you a very happy
and safe Christmas**

Together let's make 2025 a better year!

The cartoon featured on the cover was sent in by a member asking if we could use it as a Christmas card for Branch members. He suggested this year offshore workers have got their own version of the three-wise-men from the Christmas nativity, in the shape of Prime Minister Keir Starmer, Energy Minister Ed Milliband, and Chancellor of the Exchequer Rachel Reeves.

There's a couple of glaring differences obviously, the main one being they are not all men! Other differences include, but are not limited to; none of them are bearing gifts or at least not for offshore workers; they are not following a star, more a political ideology; and workers across the industry have serious doubts about just how 'wise' these three are!



In Outage 4 back in August, we asked whether the new Labour Government would be 'Saints or Sinners'

For most offshore members the opinion is definitely – Sinners! We expect pensioners, refinery workers, car factory workers and others have a similar view. The fact is the workers party, the Labour Party, has not got off to the best of starts. But hey, things can only get better right?

RMT and the Offshore Energy Branch will continue to push for the 'change' that Labour promised the country. For offshore workers that change must include a credible plan to provide a 'just transition.' This is our priority!

We'll let our cartoon creator, who is obviously a wise man himself, explain his thoughts;

Christmas Card?

Hey Outage,

I drew this cartoon thinking you could maybe use if you're doing another edition before Christmas. If your no, maybe you could make a Christmas card for offshore members because this mob are no bringing much Christmas cheer for us offshore. I know we had to get rid of the Tory mob, but I was hoping we'd see something positive from Labour. Right now the only thing I'm seeing is a P45! By the way, I get it that they are no 3 wise men (cos one is a woman) but you get my drift about bringing gifts at Christmas.

Anyway, see what you think and if you want to use it then go for it, you'll make my Christmas! All the very best to the team and all the troops offshore. Here's hoping you can change the minds of this mob and make the New Year a better, maybe even happy year!

Details provided.

Remembrance

For over 20-years, when I'm at home, I've attended the Remembrance Sunday Service in Dundee on behalf of RMT. For the last 3-years as a representative of the Offshore Energy Branch, I've laid a wreath or remembrance cross for Merchant Navy Ratings and United Nations civilians, both of which I have worked as in conflict zones.



The Merchant Navy suffered appalling losses during the World Wars; in WWI 3,000 vessels were sunk and 15,000 seafarers killed; in WWII 4,700 vessels were sunk and 29,000 killed. Percentage-wise they suffered more losses than any allied service, and were only marginally lower than front-line German and Russian forces. After WW1 King George V granted the then Mercantile Marine the title 'Merchant Navy' for its war contribution, but the service hasn't always been recognised or treated fairly for their efforts. Seafarers home on leave, even survivors from vessels that were sunk, were spat at and handed white feathers as they never wore military uniforms. The largest seafarer casualties occurred during the Arctic Convoys in WWII, yet the Arctic Star wasn't established until 2012, and the Merchant Navy wasn't given permission to march at the

Genetaph until 2000. Hardly the acts of a grateful nation for the major sacrifices made.

I don't wear a poppy to celebrate war, it's to remember those that went off to various wars. They were mostly reluctant participants, who only wanted to return to their homes and families, but ended up in far-flung graves. My poppy includes a badge with 4 flowers on it; the remembrance flowers of the UK (poppy), France (cornflower), Belgium (daisy) and Germany, (forget me not), this is to remember that war effects societies in all countries.





Opinion - Are doldrums in the plan?



The word “Dunkelflaute,” is a German word that translates as ‘dark doldrums’ and it perfectly describes the weather encountered over the UK and NW Europe in early November. During these periods of little or no sun and wind, generating energy from solar or wind power is, to state the obvious, ‘difficult!’

Herein lies the problem for the Westminster Labour Government and its relentless push to be carbon free by 2030 at any cost. Take the energy mix in the UK on November 6th; because of this extended ‘dark doldrums’ period, wind generated just 4.1% of power and solar 0.9%. Around 29% was from Nuclear, Hydro and others, over 65% was from gas! Most energy experts say 2030 cannot be done and 2035 is more achievable. Meeting the 2030 target would require us

to construct and install five times more renewable and infrastructure projects than we have completed in the last 5-years. They would all have to be built and be operating by then. It appears the only person who thinks this is possible is Energy Minister, Mr Miliband.

Despite warnings from experts, Westminster maintains the ban on new North Sea drilling. At the same time, New Zealand, who brought in a ban in 2018, has revoked the ban because of energy security concerns and a consumer price crisis. Meanwhile, we are importing more LNG which has a 33% larger carbon footprint than coal!

The Department of Energy under Miliband ghosts and gaslights industry trades bodies, unions, the workforce, and communities. We have heard briefs that workers in the industry are ‘dirty energy workers’, while little interest is shown in a Just Transition. Maybe we shouldn’t be surprised when you consider those advising Miliband. His senior special adviser is Tobias Garnett, the former legal strategist for Extinction Rebellion; and adviser Dale Vince, CEO of the ‘green’ electricity provider Ecotricity (which received substantial subsidies from central government in 2021/22) has been a donor to Just Stop Oil and the Labour party! Does this explain the contemptible way the oil and gas industry, and more importantly the workforce, have been treated since July 4th?

We’ve mentioned in previous articles that Mr Miliband risked being seen in the oil & gas industry communities the way Margaret Thatcher was seen, and still is seen, in coal communities! It took Thatcher a couple of years, we would suggest Ed Miliband has sadly achieved this status in under five months!

Give us a Plan Ed!



Festive cheer!

There was a time when the troops offshore could enjoy a drop of festive cheer on UK platforms and rigs. On the majority of installations, the rationed 2-beers and a small wine, were standard for Christmas and New Years dinner. That all ended after the Brent Delta platform suffered a massive explosion on January 1st 1989. It was alleged the platform management team were all drunk. The truth is a different story, but the outcome saw alcohol banned from all UK offshore installations.

Thirty-five years later a member has sent us a picture of a beer they found in a supermarket. She suggested it would be the perfect tippie for offshore energy workers as it is called – “Offshore”! A new one on us, a pilsner brewed in Cornwall apparently. Well, no one will be partaking of a ‘swally’ of Offshore, offshore, but we might give it a go onshore, purely for research purposes! All the best!



Sorting out a drouth!



Our man at the bar was spotted coming into a pub in Aberdeen after getting out of a taxi with a couple of holdalls. A member sent it in saying; ‘he had a drouth that needed sorting urgently!’ So urgently he didn’t take the time to get out of his coveralls and only a beer would do! We would guess it was maybe a 3-weeker and possibly a weather delay on top? Or maybe he wanted to get into the festive spirit early, who knows.

And ‘who knows’ is our point. We don’t really need to know, we just want you to share your funny stories or pictures and maybe give us all a laugh. We could all do with a laugh, that’s for sure! Thanks, and all the very best!

Aberdeen University recognises RMT Rep



Jake Molloy

On November 25th 2024 our former Regional Organiser, Jake Molloy, was awarded an Honorary Degree from Aberdeen University. The Promoter of the award was Professor Daria Shapovalova, one of the coordinators of the Just Transition Lab at the University. Jake was awarded the Honorary Degree of – Master of the University. In her address at the Ceremony calling on the University to confer an Honorary Degree to Jake, Professor Shapovalova said;

“Jake Molloy is a commissioner of Scotland’s Just Transition Commission and a former Regional Organiser for the National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers, (RMT) for all matters related to offshore energy.

“Since the 1980’s Jake has been providing support and advice to workers across the offshore energy sector. His selfless service and unwavering commitment to representing workers’ interests have made a sizeable contribution to improving safety for those in the North Sea. He started his work in a maintenance support role offshore

and despite precarious conditions of employment at the time, used his role as a representative and campaigner to support workers and their families, advocating for change through a series of accidents and incidents, including the 1988 Piper Alpha disaster, which to this day remains the world’s worst offshore disaster in terms of loss of life.

“After the Piper Alpha Cullen Inquiry and the introduction of new safety legislation, Jake was the first union representative to address a major industry conference debating the subject of Offshore Safety Cases. In 1997, he was elected to the post of General Secretary of the Offshore Industry Liaison Committee, (OILC) and during his time in post Jake was the lead on many different campaigns and debates from Corporate Killing legislation, health and safety legislation, European Directives such as Working Time, Fatal Accident Inquiries and Parliamentary Select Committee hearings.



Jake with Offshore Energy Branch Chair, Nikki Wood

“In 2023, Jake retired from his RMT role after 26 years in service. Today, as part of the Just Transition Commission, Jake helps ensure that workers and community voices are heard as we are transitioning to low-carbon industries. Jake really embodies the approach of building bridges. In the time when debates around energy transition can become polarised, Jake always makes time to engage with the workers, the industry, climate and environmental activists, politicians, and us academics.

“An Honorary degree from the University of Aberdeen would recognise Jake’s immeasurable contribution to the safety of offshore workers, his championing in making quiet voices loud in how we govern and regulate offshore oil and gas, and energy transition.”

The Offshore Energy Branch completely agrees with Professor Shapovalova! Jake has done us proud. Some of us joined him at the ceremony and after receiving the award Jake said;

“This award recognises the work done by offshore workers, OILC and RMT members, the Offshore Energy Branch of RMT. It’s the contributions made by workers that have brought about improvements in safety and conditions. Hopefully their input will help shape a transition from oil and gas to renewables. This award acknowledges their efforts to drive real change and I’m accepting the award on their behalf.”

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