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Circular: 2024HOC0327BS

Date: 05 August 2024

To: All Members

Dear Brother/Sister,

On the 29th of July 2024, an attack took place in Southport. The attacker stabbed a total of 13 people, murdering three young children.

The Fire Brigades Union sends its thoughts and condolences to all those affected, especially the victims' loved ones. Firefighters attended the incident, and we applaud their dedication, bravery and professionalism.

Since the attacks on the 29th of July, there has been an outbreak of racist violence and intimidation organised by the far-right. Mosques and hotels housing migrants have been targeted, as have migrants and people of colour going about their business. These are shocking developments, and the FBU condemns them unequivocally.

This situation has been decades in the making. Politicians and sections of the media have whipped up hatred while driving down the living standards of most people. Austerity, cutting pay and trashing public services were choices made by right wing politicians in the interests of big business – not by migrants.

Firefighters have been on the front line of responding to the far-right disturbances. We are still assessing the experience of FBU members on the ground, but there is evidence to suggest that firefighters have faced obstruction, and that fire appliances have been deliberately damaged. Resources being deployed to fires resulting from rioting could impact response times to other incidents.

If you have information or experiences that you would like to report, please do so by emailing press@fbu.org.uk or contacting your Brigade Secretary.

The FBU stands in solidarity with those facing racism, violence and intimidation, and we stand for the unity of all workers against a cynical divide and rule agenda.

We have written to Brigade Secretaries today to ask them to make contact with local mosques, migrant groups and civil society organisations to offer support and build links.

The trade union movement has a proud history of mobilising against the far-right, and this role will become increasingly important in the period ahead.

Yours in solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. Selby'.

Ben Selby
Assistant General Secretary

BS/pw