



Rebuild and Transform Britain

theworker.org.uk

May 2018

New life and new thinking in our unions?

New clear thinking is emerging in the trade union movement after the stifling years, led by the TUC, of being duped into believing that the European Union and European Court of Justice will solve every worker's problem.

Utterly rejecting a call at the Communications Workers' Union Conference last week to support the campaign for free movement of Labour, General Secretary Dave Ward reminded delegates of Bob Crow's great opposition to the same issue when he said: "freedom of movement without proper protection for workers is a recipe for undercutting workers everywhere."

Thatcher and the EU

Thatcher and the EU enslaved Britain and the organised working class with the four great neoliberal 'freedoms' of capital, labour, goods and services, to move without constraint.

The basic one was the freedom of movement of capital which unions have stopped talking about so much. Until 1979 it was illegal to export capital without national governmental permission and even personal overseas currency allowances were limited.

From 1979 capital flowed out to speculate on the new casino economy, bringing recession and the voodoo economics of neoliberalism. Now the tide is turning. Workers in Britain are on the move again rejecting the false freedoms of capitalism and asserting the need to rebuild and transform our own country.

Yoke of EU Lifted

On March 29th the yoke of the EU will be lifted and the freedom to move and grow again will be much easier. We are all into the business of rebuilding Britain together and it is to this process that this first newsletter of some new currents of thinking in our Movement is dedicated.

GKN: Britain's Industrial Future versus Short-term Profit

GKN employs 6000 workers in Britain and 53 000 more worldwide making parts for cars and components for Boeing and Airbus.

Asset-strippers Melrose finally got their hands on it for £8.1 billion, much to the delight of shareholders. Jobs such as 12 000 at Airbus in north Wales, and engineering skills at GKN's Redditch headquarters will be lost.

May's promise to support Britain's strategic companies is worthless.

Vauxhall was given to the French car maker Peugeot. Hundreds of jobs at Ellesmere Port are to be lost. Britain's biggest gas storage facility at Rough in Yorkshire shut down last year, potentially risking blackouts.

Rebuild and Invest in Our Industry

For decades British governments have condoned the actions of hedge funds and city spivs who extract fast profits at the expense of the nation's future.

Melrose has a very questionable business record, so can't be trusted with a vital part of Britain's future in aerospace, electric car technology and manufacture.

For Britain's future: no to a bargain basement Brexit, no to hedge funds, yes to investment in engineering, manufacturing and our own workers.



Young workers celebrate May Day by striking for better pay, guaranteed hours and union recognition.

A more detailed article can be found at theworker.org.uk

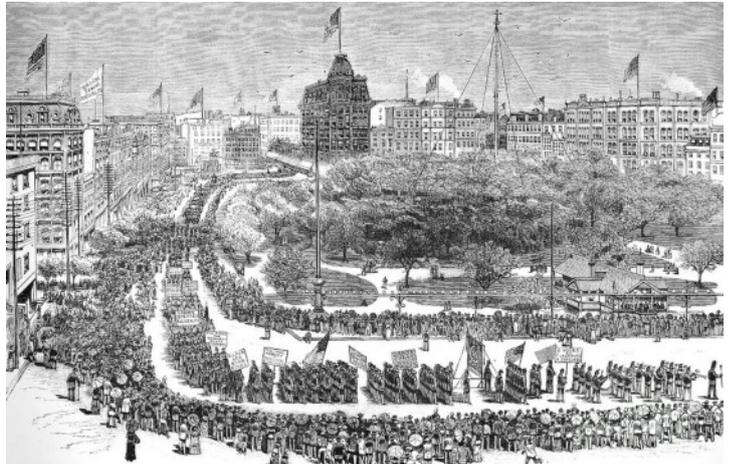
May Day

It is appropriate that we launch a workers' newsletter at a time when workers are celebrating May Day.

May Day came out of the fight for the 8 hour day in the USA. In 1884 the Federation of Organised Trades and Labor Unions proclaimed that eight hours shall 'constitute a legal day's labor from and after 1st May 1886'.

Hundreds of thousands of workers became involved, but a key incident came with the Haymarket massacre in Chicago when police fired into a crowd.

In 1889 the First Congress of the Second International called for international demonstrations on the 1890



First Labor Day Parade Around Union Square, New York, on 5th Sep 1882



The Haymarket, Chicago, 1886

anniversary of Haymarket. In London 300 000 workers turned up in Hyde Park. May Day was formally recognised at the Second Congress in 1891.

May Day and Rebuilding Our Unions

Today workers across the world, still fighting for improvements to wages and conditions, continue to celebrate May Day, despite efforts by the authorities to turn it into just a public holiday.

May Day in the UK should be used as part of the effort to rebuild our unions and recruit workers in the fight against capitalism.

Food Poverty in Britain - Capitalism's Success Story

In a country which is among the wealthiest in the world we should not have people facing food poverty. Workers should not be victims of a chronic economic divide where the gap between the wealthy and the poor is widening annually.



People who are strapped for cash are also victims of wealthy and exploitative supermarket owners.

The cost of 1500 calories of healthy food choices is less affordable than the equivalent unhealthy choices, with highly calorific, processed food making the family purse stretch further but shortening the life

expectancy of the poor and people who rely on state support.

Feeding the people is possible

State support benefits have been too low for decades and woefully inadequate financial support is pushing many towards food banks.

The Trussell Trust reports that the rising annual demand for food banks demonstrates that the State is not taking its responsibilities seriously.

Food Entitlement in Cuba

The Cuban model is very different as all citizens can rely on an equal food entitlement of staple ingredients.

Despite its difficulties in obtaining food Cubans view farming and household



provisioning in terms of the national moral economy. Contrast this with the calculated attacks on our nation's food provision, where workers are told it is a privilege to be able to afford to eat and are blamed for their own food poverty.

Extended versions of these articles can be found on The Worker website at www.theworker.org.uk

Contact: newsletter@theworker.org.uk