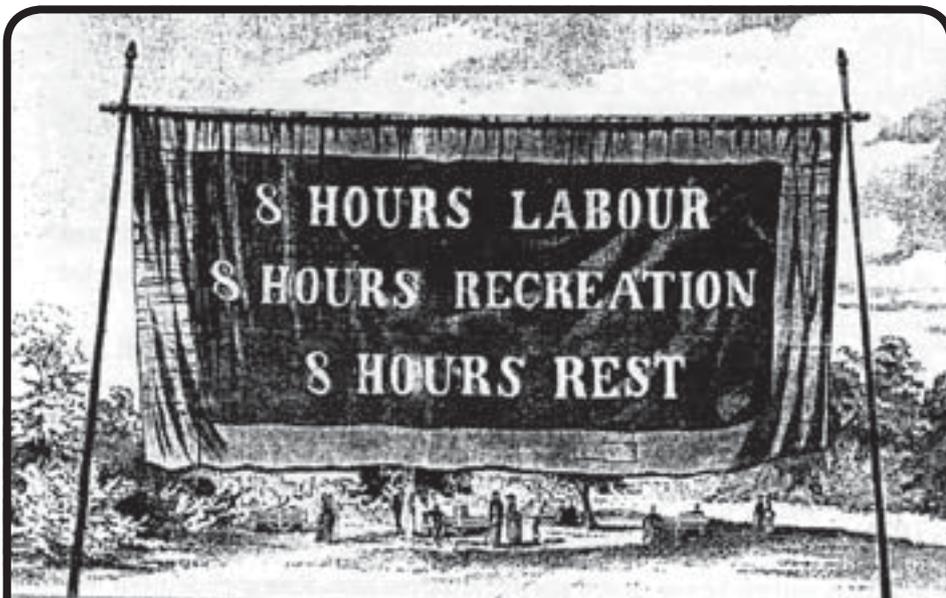


Hereford Heckler



The bulletin of Hereford Solidarity League
Anti-fascist • Anti-racist
#2 • April/May 2008
Free/Donation



MAYDAY, MAYDAY! WORK OVERLOAD! International Workers Day on 1st May commemorates the general strike that began in the United States on 1st May 1886. Police massacred many strikers fighting for the eight-hour workday. The workers eventually won through, and strikes in other countries around the world soon brought similar gains.

UNEMPLOYED TO BE EVICTED?

In her first speech as housing minister, Caroline Flint MP told the Fabian Society in February that the long-term unemployed should either look for work or be kicked out of social housing.

Ms Flint's 'kick 'em while they're down' approach would see families and communities torn apart; children forced onto the streets because their parents can't find work. So much for Labour being the party of the working class.

As the *Hereford Heckler* goes to press it has yet to be announced whether other long-term work-shy layabouts such as the Royal family will fall under these plans. If anyone is guilty of living a life scrounging off the public, living rent-free in public housing whilst 'actively avoiding' work then it's the Windsors and all their sort; they should be the first to be evicted. Now, where's our collective boot...



Work-shy

FILM BANNED IN HEREFORD

A film highlighting police violence and harassment of an anti-war campaign has been effectively banned in Hereford after 'orders from above'.

On *The Verge* was due to be held at the Barrels pub for its Hereford leg of a national tour on 26th March. But Barrels landlord, Peter Amor, was determined to go ahead with the screening. He had been visited from the police early that week, on instruction from 'someone from above' which had still not deterred him.

Despite not agreeing with the campaign's politics, he said: "I believe in freedom of speech – Voltaire and all that." At 2pm that afternoon Peter Amor received a hand delivered letter from the council licensing officer threatened a hefty fine and possible imprisonment if the screening proceeded and he reluctantly cancelled the event.

The Smash EDO campaign are a resourceful bunch though and once again quickly relocated to another venue, showing the film to a packed room; Hereford finally got to see what all the fuss was about.

The Smash EDO campaign is currently touring the UK showing a film about their story of four years of peacefully protesting outside their local arms manufacturer in Brighton, East

Sussex. Their film *On The Verge* is a low budget documentary made from material sourced from police video footage (obtained under the Freedom of Information Act), activist's video records and from CCTV cameras.

CANCELLED

In the first week of the tour it quickly transpired that 'someone' did not want the public to see this film. Police and local authorities went to unprecedented lengths to try to stop screenings across the country. The premiere in Brighton was to be held at the Duke of York cinema on March 17th. Two hours before the screening, despite being advertised for six weeks, the East Sussex Police contacted the local authority licensing who in turn contacted the cinema and said they would lose their licence if they showed the film as it was not certified. On *The Verge* cost £500 to produce; obtaining certification would cost £800. Strictly speaking cinemas should ensure that films have certification from the British Board of Film Classification. In practice independent cinemas often show community or foreign films without this and it's not an area of the law that

usually enforced. On this occasion the screening was relocated to a local pub and viewed by around 140 people, over two screenings.

Chichester New Park Centre cancelled their scheduled screening for the following Wednesday being intimidated by the event in Brighton. Southampton's Art House were similarly visited by police and licensing separately and told to cancel the screening, an alternative venue was later found and screening proceeded. Oxford went ahead with the venue standing firm in the face of intimidation and the Bath screening had to be relocated to the Quaker's Friends Meeting House.

DANGEROUS COPS

The film shows how the Smash EDO campaign have stood outside EDO bomb factory banging pots and pans each and every week, with the aim of highlighting their disgust at a company who make weapons components which have been used to kill thousands of innocent Iraqi and Palestine civilians (at the time of writing Iraqi civilian death toll is



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HELEN HECKLER

■ A big well done to the 3,000 people that **marched against the school closures** back in February. Hereford Solidarity League were there too. It was a very British affair; I was itching for a ruck, and you could see the little school kids were chomping at the bit too. Anyway ... Herefordshire Council have promised not to close any schools in the life of the present administration (until 2012). A partial victory to us (woop woop), although I think it's more a case of winning the battle but not the war. Stand firm, comrades.

■ Did anyone see the Panorama programme on bottled water? They uncovered that Herefordshire Council's annual **bill for bottled water** came to a staggering **£75,000!** Roger Phillips is obviously a very thirsty man. Now we all know that most councillors aren't the brightest of people so we'll spell it out. Find a glass, find a tap (usually goes with a sink – hard to miss), turn tap on and put glass underneath. Hey presto. Now we've pointed this out we expect to see our tax money going towards something useful like, hmm, saving schools from closure?

■ And you'll all be pleased to hear I've got a new friend too. Yep, you guessed it: Paul Weller. Recently* speaking about the Tories and Thatcher, he said: "I think they were absolute scum—**especially Thatcher, who I think should be shot as a traitor to the people.** I still think that, and nothing will ever change my opinion. We're still feeling the effects of what they did to the country now, and probably always will: the whole breakdown of communities, trade unions, the working class—the dismantling of lots of things." Right, that's sorted then Paul. I'll hold her down, you get the gun.

Lots of love
Helen x

* The Guardian, 17 March 2008

YOU SCRATCH MY BACK, I'LL SCRATCH YOURS

In September of last year Amey bought Jarvis' 80% share in Herefordshire Jarvis Services. The deal sees Amey deliver a wide range of services across the county: traffic services, civic and school catering, grounds maintenance, street and building cleaning, recycling facilities, building management and maintenance as well as other support services across the county.

Herefordshire Council owns and retains the remaining 20 per cent share in the business. Which sounds like a good deal as the council will profit from the work that Amey carries out. In fact there seems to be an incentive for the cost of Amey's work to be high, as the return will also be rewarding. The only catch to this is that this is our taxed money they are spending.

Councils are duty bound to spend the tax payers money wisely; does the Amey

maintenance contract represent value for money for Hereford? Would better value not be given from sourcing services locally? Wouldn't this be more sustainable? Unfortunately Roger Phillips' council's idea of sustainability is being able to maintain the same level of poor service for its residents.

Last year we heard of the council's IT department lavish champagne parties squandering the tax payers money to the tune of £1.7million.

Or was it more? The council's new management team is to have 13 executives and directors to the tune of £100,000 each.

The council's going to have to make sure Amey makes lots and lots of money to cover all that, put our taxes up, or just cut down on the champagne parties and go back to flogging a few schools.



HEREFORD'S FIRST 'LGBT' FESTIVAL A GREAT SUCCESS

February's 'Out in the Sticks' festival has been hailed as a great success. This was Herefordshire's first lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) festival and included various events from music and film to



discussions and theatre. One of the biggest successes was the one day conference entitled Not the Only Gay in the Village. This conference dealt with issues faced by young LGBT people in rural areas. Let's hope this is the first of many events to deal with LGBT issues in Herefordshire. A big Heckler pat on the back to Herefordshire Rainbow Forum, SHYPP (Sheltered Housing for Young People Project) and all the other local organisations that made the festival a success.

FILM BANNED IN HEREFORD

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estimated to be 90,000). It shows how the East Sussex Police have badly handled demonstrations, on occasion causing them to get dangerously out of hand. It shows intimidating tactics by EDO's security firm and a worrying lack of clarity over East Sussex priorities of keeping the peace or protecting corporations. It shows all this mostly through the police's own footage with sound bites obtained from EDO security firm. After his pre-screening viewing to check the content, Peter Amor said, "the film should be used

for police training purposes: how not to handle protestors"

Attempts to stop these screenings across the country, including Hereford, are a disturbing attack of freedom of speech and civil liberties. The reason why 'someone' does not want the public to see this film is that it's successfully highlighted an immoral industry that wants to profit from human suffering. These ordinary people have stood up to big business and persistently campaigned for its end. They would rather that people didn't meet up, watch the film and discuss how they could make a difference to their surroundings and to others around the world.

'THEY COME OVER HERE, TAKE OUR JOBS AND OUR HOUSES...'

Yes, you've guessed it, we're talking about immigrants: the scapegoats of the new millennium.

In 2004 ten new nations joined the European Union with the United Kingdom granting rights to work to citizens of those countries. Since then an estimated 1,000,000 Poles alone have moved to the UK looking for work that pays better than the pittance they get back home. Politicians and newspapers of all shades have consequently raged about immigrants taking our jobs, putting a strain on local services, eating our swans, destroying the football, starting the plague... If there's a social problem, you can bet it's the immigrants fault.

And of course! Because up until 2004 Britain was in full employment; the word unemployment was invented by *The Sun* around the same time, when it was rumoured the first foreign person had just signed their new work contract. And we'd never seen young couples with a baby living with their parents before, waiting for months to get a council flat. Homelessness was a science-fiction creation of author Charles Dickens. How visionary he was.

Fact is, the working class have always had these problems. We've always suffered poverty or been a couple of pay-cheques away from debt or even eviction. These problems aren't created by immigration, they're created by capitalism and blaming each other only makes us weaker in fighting back. And that's why politicians love scapegoating minority groups—in this case, immigrants—it divides us.

So lets face up to it. The services and opportunities the working class gets are, to put it poetically, akin to that of a steaming pile of horse excrement. So long as we live under a system that puts money making before human need then it'll always stay that way.

Now, the vast majority of immigrants (like the vast majority of British citizens) are in employment. Which means there's a very high chance they'll be paying tax and national insurance contributions. So if the population of this country has supposedly rocketed in the last four years, consequently so has government and local authority tax income. So what are they doing with this money? We know they're not short of a bob or two: if MPs can get a brand new £10,000 kitchen installed no questions asked then they certainly have enough for new schools, more affordable housing, more hospitals and dentists. If they can afford to lend private banks billions of pounds then they can afford to give us better public transport, fund wage increases, subsidise food, gas and electricity. If they can continue two wars at once then they can afford better pensions for everyone.



Fancy a free new kitchen?
Become an MP

But this wealth is nothing new. And they've never just rolled over and shared it before, so why will anything change now. Waiting for a Labour government to give us handouts is hopeless. We have to change things ourselves, do away with capitalism and replace it with something better.

Blaming immigrants divides us. Fighting alongside our new neighbours make us strong.

'DON'T BE AN IDIOT, DON'T JOIN UP'

It's five years now since our government ordered the army to illegally invade Iraq. With world opinion turning against this, and the ongoing Afghan conflict, it seems the army are now having serious recruitment problems. Is it any surprise that people are not daft enough to go and fight in Iraq and Afghanistan?

These are illegal wars being fought in order to control natural



resources. Most people who join the army do so because they are told they will protect their country. After joining, they find that killing Iraqi and Afghan men, women and children does quite the opposite.

Now that there are record numbers of troops going AWOL maybe it's time to send the government out there to do their own dirty work.

Listen to your uncle—don't join up.

FASHWATCH

■ First to Moscow, Russia where a 16-year-old has been **murdered by neo-nazis**. Aleksey Krylov was on his way to a rock concert when he was set upon by the mob of fascists and killed. The attack was unprovoked.

The news came just a month after Valentines Day, when an anti-fascist was beaten and heavily stabbed by neo-nazis whilst attending a gay pride event in Moscow. He was admitted to hospital where doctors said he could expect to spend several months recovering.

■ Back to home—The parents of heroin victim Rachel Whitear have hit out at the BNP for using an image of her body on a leaflet. The leaflet, blaming muslims for the heroin trade, have been called "insulting and offensive" by parents Pauline and Mick Holcroft. The BNP have refused to apologise.

■ Meanwhile, our thoughts are with Nick Griffin, leader of the British National Party, would-be fascist dictator and all-round loser. With the splits in his party he's probably feeling lonely: 01938 820560 or 07980 906501.

■ And finally, several Leeds venues well known for hosting BNP meetings were recently targeted by anti-fascists in Yorkshire. The clubs had locks glued and windows smashed before being treated to an interior paint job ... free of charge, of course. Anti-fascists said they would do all they could to prevent the BNP spreading their racist poison in West Yorkshire.

Hereford Solidarity League would like to hear from anyone with information on the local fascist BNP. Are they active in your area? Do they meet in your pub? Get in touch: kay.bulstreet@hotmail.co.uk

GET THE...

Hereford Heckler



... by email!

Not only do we deliver straight to your door, we now deliver straight to your inbox too.

Email kay.bulstreet@hotmail.co.uk with 'subscribe' in the subject line.

Sport

DON'T MESS WITH THE FANS OR WE'LL MESS WITH YOU!

Most football fans will remember the scenes from a few years ago, when the evening news was filled with images of angry Manchester United fans protesting against the takeover of their club by American tycoon Malcolm Glazer. Most people saw the takeover as a move against the true supporters of the club and the further commercialisation of football, Glazer being the only person to benefit from the move.

The opposition from the fans was huge, with protests, boycotts, chants during games and even the formation of a new club for 'true Manchester fans', FC United of Manchester, (a club set up, owned and run by the fans). After some home matches the United supporters really did have control of the streets around Old Trafford, extra police being drafted in to escort the Glazer family out, something which isn't a regular sight in English football.

Even further north, and a little bit more recently, Celtic supporters were involved in a campaign to stop the Right Honourable John Reid MP from becoming chairman of their club. Again they saw this as a move that would greatly benefit him, fattening his already fat pockets, but also a move that was against the history and traditions of the club. Banners and leaflets reading 'John Reid: War Criminal' were a common sight outside Celtic Park for Celtic's clash against AC Milan in October 2007, with a noisy and colourful protest of over 300 supporters, including one of Celtic's leading supporters groups TAL and also the 'Green Brigade' present. The protests didn't

change the Celtic PLC decision to appoint the 'war criminal' into the post of chairman, but they certainly let them know that they wouldn't go unopposed.

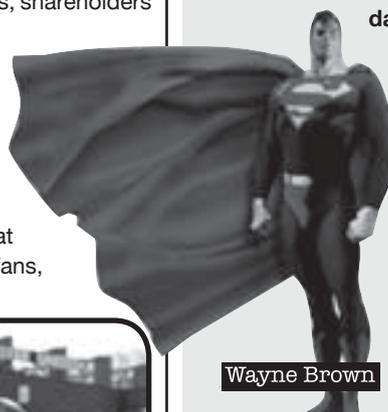
Clubs around the country are being destroyed by wealthy owners who often take more than they give. Executives, shareholders and owners also seem to be coming more confident about making decisions that greatly effect clubs without listening to the voice of the true supporters, without whom, the club wouldn't exist. A message to the board at Hereford: don't mess with the fans, or we'll mess with you!



IS HE CLARK KENT IN DISGUISE?

Rumours are currently circulating the city that Hereford United goalkeeper Wayne Brown has been spotted taking his clothes off in phone boxes. It is alleged that Mr Brown has also been seen wearing his pants on the outside of his

trousers! Perhaps most damaging of all is the accusation that he's allergic to kryptonite. Anyone with proof or these rumours is urged to contact the Heckler Sports Desk on wearegoingup@herefordtillidie.com



Wayne Brown

MORE 'LOW INTELLIGENCE' IN SPORT

It's been very unfortunate that recent events have shown that racism in sport is still not being dealt with harshly enough.

In Spain we've had the vile behaviour of F1 fans towards Lewis Hamilton, in Australia, Indian international cricket team member Harbhajan Singh calling Aussie batsman Andrew Symonds a monkey and the continuing racial abuse directed towards black players in football stadiums across Europe. The reaction of sports governing bodies toward these incidents has been an utter disgrace. In most cases no action is taken at all and when it is, the action is completely inadequate to deal with the problem. Formula 1 has done nothing, the ICC overturned a decision to punish Singh just so the games could be completed and FIFA have a history of complacency when it comes to this issue. It's time that real sports fans began to deal with these problems themselves by confronting these racist half wits and showing them how unwelcome they are. No Pasaran!

THIS MONTH'S TOP 5 THINGS YOU WON'T HEAR PEOPLE SAY

1. "From now on the council will assess the future impact of all its decisions before spending vast amounts of tax payers' money." —Roger Phillips, leader of Herefordshire Council
2. "We at the Daily Mail apologise for all the racist bigoted lies that we've fed our readers each day. We will now stop publishing this sorry excuse for a newspaper and our editor will throw himself off Canary Wharf." —Daily Mail
3. "My lover, Jeremy Clarkson, and I are to enter a civil partnership." —Richard Littlejohn, homophobic nazi who claims to be a journalist.
4. "I'm giving my vast fortune to help the poor in Africa." —Bob Geldof, a man who made millions out of pretending to help people.
5. "We're giving up exploiting our workers; it's free strawberries for all." —S&A Produce, Marden

Hereford Solidarity League is an anti-fascist community action group committed to opposing the rise of the far-right in Hereford. We believe that fascist organisations like the British National Party must be stopped and we are active in opposing their efforts to organise. Get in touch with us at kay.bulstreet@hotmail.co.uk

