

WORKERS

www.workers.org.uk

MAY 2010 £1



HEALTH: TAKE RESPONSIBILITY

JOURNAL OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY



Engineering construction Victory at Pembroke

03



Rail safety Laws used to ban strike

06



Book Review Delusion on Wall Street

14

IF YOU WANT TO REBUILD BRITAIN, READ ON

WORKERS

“ The real agenda

THE COMMUNIST Party of Britain Marxist Leninist has recently concluded its 15th Congress (see WORKERS March 2010) with its analysis of Britain's problems and what a working class has to do to rescue itself and the situation.

From the capitalist class we have had a similar exercise in recent weeks, which has concluded in their disastrous collection of failed ideas and policies associated with the General Election.

The Party invites all concerned workers and comrades to examine the questions of leadership in this new period. We are not for going down with the shipwreck of British capitalism, nor are we going to be beached with some “hung” parliament and other worn out ideas of parliamentary democracy. We are for fundamental change and to achieve that

we need to focus white-hot the minds of workers to bring it about.

- Change that will concentrate on power not opposition, democracy not capitalism.
- Change that will move beyond parliamentary democracy.
- Change that will break free from the shackles of the European Union.
- Change that will see our trade unions resurgent for themselves in the 21st century.
- Change that will clearly deal with fascism as it emerges from Parliament.
- Change that will see the working class grow its genuine leadership and embrace its Communist Party and Marxism.

These are the real challenges of the day which the working class has to grasp and resolve.

The promise they'll keep

SO MUCH for Labour's stewardship of the economy. Investment in fixed assets (machinery and buildings) is not enough even to cover wear and tear – it's down 22 per cent from the end of 2007 – by far the largest fall in any postwar slump.

Meanwhile firms' financial surplus is 9.9

per cent of GDP, its highest level since 1987, as firms use our subsidies to boost profits not production, jobs or wages – apart from bosses' pay, of course.

Then the government has the nerve to promise “two parliaments of pain”. That's one promise they won't renege on.



WORKERS is published by the Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist)
78 Seymour Avenue, London N17 9EB
ISSN 0266-8580

www.workers.org.uk
Issue 136, May 2010



Contents – May 2010

News

Jobs won at Pembroke, p3; Make your mark: say no! p4; Charities – the forgotten sector, p5; News Analysis: The Thames – Transport for London, p6; Court prevents national rail strike, p6

03

Features

Health: the price of failing to take responsibility, p9; An extract from our history, p13

09

Book Reviews

The myth of the rational market, p14; How “positive thinking” undermined America, p14

14

**CONSTRUCTION****ECONOMY****EDUCATION****CHARITIES****HEALTH****UNIVERSITIES****EUROBRIEFS****NEWS ANALYSIS****NEWS ANALYSIS****WHAT'S ON**

Jobs won at Pembroke

Trade drops

The right kind of mark

The forgotten sector

Glasgow protest

Emulating the US

The latest from Brussels

Transport on the Thames

Using Thatcher's laws

Coming soon

Jobs won at Pembroke

ECONOMY**Trade drops despite weak £**

JANUARY'S OUTPUT was down 0.4 per cent on December's, the biggest monthly drop since August 2008. City analysts – wrong, as usual – had expected a rise of 0.3 per cent. Manufacturing output fell by 0.9 per cent. In 2009 as a whole, our economy shrank by 4.8 per cent, the worst fall since 1921.

The Office for National Statistics said that January's cold weather may be to blame, but the cold didn't stop Germany's manufacturing output from rising by 0.9 per cent or France's from rising by 0.8 per cent.

January's trade gap with the rest of the world widened "unexpectedly" – it's always unexpected, every single month – up to £3.8 billion from December's £2.6 billion. Exports fell more sharply than at any time in the last three years. The trade gap in physical goods widened to £7.99 billion, well above the £7 billion that the City boys had forecast.

This is despite the 24 per cent fall in the value of the pound since early 2007, which should have boosted sales overseas. But what little remains of our industry has used the weaker pound to increase their profit margins, not their production and sales.

BRITISH JOBS FOR BRITISH WORKERS

THE STRUGGLE to gain employment on the new power station build at Pembroke has registered a significant success with the announcement that the Shaw Group UK has been awarded the contract to build all five boilers. This contractor has a history of employing the appropriate skilled trades and primarily from these shores.

This success has come from a combination of factors: the protests organised outside the site, where French multinational Alstom is the main contractor; the work behind the scenes of the trade union officials involved; and Alstom's experiences both good and bad on its other jobs.

The bulk of the contracts has been handed to the British engineering construction industry

and its workforce, and represent a welcome boost to the industry. A few contracts have gone to foreign companies and they will be watched carefully to ensure adherence to the recently improved NAECI (National Agreement Engineering Construction Industry – Blue Book) and they are not allowed to discriminate against British workers.

Following the success on the Isle of Grain and West Burton, Alstom is also set to look favourably (as per NAECI S2.2) on employing a National Engineering Construction Committee (NECC) senior steward approved by GMB and Unite to head up a network of workplace organisers from each company to ensure adherence to the Blue Book. This is an agreement that needs protecting and improving for the survival of the industry. Only by being on the job and organised can we exert real influence.

For the time being, Pembroke has been suspended as the focal point in terms of demonstrations aimed at ensuring the employment of British workers, in order to allow for work from "the inside" to continue uninterrupted. The struggle has not gone away and will naturally ebb and flow but it should be recognised that this represents a victory for Britain's engineering construction workers and stands us in good stead for the upcoming nuclear builds.

If you have news from your industry, trade or profession we want to hear from you. Call us or fax on 020 8801 9543 or e-mail to rebuilding@workers.org.uk

EUROBRIEFS

The latest from Brussels

Economic ambitions

THE EUROPEAN Council summit in Brussels on 25 March stated that EU leaders "consider that the European Council should become the economic government of the EU and we propose to increase its role in economic surveillance and the definition of the EU's growth strategy."

Now Monetary Affairs Commissioner Olli Rehn has said that the Commission is to present plans next month which would see eurozone governments submit their national budgets to the EU for approval before national parliaments see them.

He said, "We should use the first months of the year, say January to July, to request draft national budgets... so that the commission would analyse and the eurogroup [of euro area finance ministers] would make a peer review and recommendations on national budgets, before they are presented to national parliaments."

German Social Democrat MP Carsten Schneider said if the Bundestag were to give up its budget autonomy, "this would be the end of parliamentary democracy as we have known it so far".

Paying for it

BRITAIN'S contribution to the EU keeps increasing. Last year's budget called for Britain to give £5.6 billion this year, but that has gone up to £6.4 billion, more than twice what we gave last year. This will rise to £7.6 billion in 2010/11.

Propping up Greece

THE EUROZONE countries have announced a deal to loan Greece 30 billion euros, at below market interest rates. The details and timing are unclear, but the deal is clearly a subsidy. The EU is desperately trying to maintain the fiction that this does not breach the EU's own "no-bail-out" clause.

Erik Nielsen, a European economist at Goldman Sachs, warned that the scale of the "adjustment" that the EU is telling Greece to make is unprecedented in any European economy.

They're after our pensions

ALTHOUGH the EU is only supposed to play a limited role in social policy, the European Commission wants to specify a framework for pension systems in EU member states. The EU plans a Green Paper on this in June.



April saw nearly 3,000 march in a Unison-organised protest in Glasgow against cuts in education and services (see article, page 5).

Photo: Workers

Marks that matter

THE MARCH edition of *THE TEACHER*, the National Union of Teachers' magazine, anticipates the general election on its front cover. It shows a large X amid the slogan, "MAKE YOUR MARK Elections 2010. Vote to stop the BNP". By its constitution the NUT cannot support or promote any political party. But it appears campaigning against one is permissible.

And yet whichever of the main parties union members vote for will form a government opposed to NUT policy. Inside the magazine is a Charter For Teachers election supplement, setting out what the NUT regards as the central educational issues needing to be addressed. None of the big three parties is advocating anything close to this NUT wish list. And that's what this document will remain, a wish list, unless the union, and that means an active membership, is prepared to fight for it against governments of whatever stripe.

An underlying agenda is apparent: general dissatisfaction with the political process could lead to the legitimacy of parliamentarianism being brought into question. An electorate that opts for mass abstention would be dangerous for the state. So mainstream parties, unable to address popular concerns such as migration, the EU, the whole creaking edifice of finance capitalism, adopt the negative approach. Cameron holds forth the spectre of another five years of Brown, who responds with warnings of Tory destruction of public services, while the Lib-Dems politely vilify both.

If there is wavering among the electorate then opposing a bogeyman might just entice voters to vote. *THE TEACHER* carries articles in support of its campaign to stop the BNP. In one entitled "Every vote counts", it says, "...what anti-fascists do makes a real difference, that turnout is crucial and that every vote counts." So it subscribes to a campaign to have teachers vote for politicians who'll act against the Charter For Teachers. That's the practical result of electing Labour or Tories (or Lib-Dems). A second article, "If the BNP won Barking..." makes a similar argument.

The threat of fascism comes not from the BNP, but from capitalism in crisis and decline, increasingly desperate to nullify the potential of the working class to act in its own best interests. The working class must set its own agenda and act upon it. Such is true democracy. Even if the BNP were to vanish from the political scene the conditions fostering its creed and support would continue to exist.

The state acts in the best interests of capitalism and the ballot box cannot change that. A slogan better serving NUT members and the entire working class could be, "Elections 2010, don't vote, but stop capitalism. MAKE YOUR MARX".

Charities – forgotten sector

UNITE HAS launched a report on funding the not-for-profit workforce in Britain and Ireland. Entitled **UNSUSTAINABLE**, it looks at the pressures on its 60,000 members working in charities, housing associations, youth services, law and advice centres, and other voluntary organisations. A total of 750,000 people work in some 171,000 registered charities within what the government calls "The Third Sector".

It might as well have been called "The Forgotten Sector". It is certainly at breaking point. A picture emerges of job insecurity, low morale, lack of training, poor management and organisation, undercutting, long hours, stress, bullying, ill-health, and poverty even among professionals, who are excluded from the world of mortgages and pensions, taking out personal loans to guarantee continuity of service rather than let their vulnerable clients down. But identifying the causes and the solutions has given the sector the confidence to begin to climb out of adversity.

Driven by EU rules, the market has started to pervade the small-scale charity workplace, characterised by moves away from reliable grant funding to short-term funding (making strategic planning impossible) and competitive tendering for unrealistic contracts, often in competition with the private sector. This has had the effect of an unbearable pressure to provide more for less, loss of integrity in the bidding process, undercutting the true value of a contract, and charities falsely representing themselves as capable of meeting impossible challenges. It could mean being exploited as a vehicle for privatisation of services, as has happened to services for children and young people, being taken out of local authority control and handed to the voluntary sector.

The question inevitably arises – what is the voluntary sector for? It sits uneasily alongside the public sector, governed by a Sector Compact or voluntary code setting out the relationship between the statutory and voluntary sectors. But Unite sees its members as the "backbone of civil society", contributing hugely to the economy, and with an innovative campaigning and reforming role.

In recent times, as public sector terms and conditions were enhanced, and as training created a sense of professionalism, the not-for-profit sector benefited, assuming statutory functions funded from a range of investments, voluntary and corporate donations. During 2006/7 general charities received £33.2 billion in income. But losses in Icelandic banks, a decline in donations from the public, recession, and the imperative to keep council tax low, are all said to be factors exacerbating the funding crisis.

A lobby of parliament by reps from all over Britain on 9 March explained how the voluntary sector can be turned around. If it was meant to be a deferential request to Labour MPs, it didn't turn out that way – union members themselves were forthright in criticising the government for ignoring the sector. Under Labour, they said, things had got worse.

HEALTH

Glasgow protest

APRIL SAW NEARLY 3,000 march in a Unison-organised protest in Glasgow. The union's Scottish convenor described current cutbacks as "just the start of a sustained period of attacks on the public sector" and detailed reports from around the country that were adversely affecting people "from the cradle to the grave". The action coincided with another Unison rally in London's Trafalgar Square.

Similar actions took place in Edinburgh and Aberdeen and the campaign will be raised at the Scottish Trades Union Congress in Dundee on April 20 when motions against cuts proposed by the EIS, Unison and Musicians' Union will be debated. The next opportunity for public protest will come at the May Day rallies in Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Glasgow – where the traditional march will go ahead despite

withdrawal of funding and practical aid by Glasgow City Council – a cut that at least teaches workers not to become dependent on "political masters" for handouts.

Each month finds a major rally or demonstration organised in Scotland's cities against present and looming cuts in education and services. March saw over 10,000 demand "Why Should Our Children Pay?" as they gathered in Glasgow from all parts of Scotland for a rally organised by the Educational Institute of Scotland with the support of several other trades unions.

EIS President Helen Connor got a standing ovation when she said how significant it was that "so many people – not only teachers and lecturers, but also parents and children, students, fellow public sector workers and trade union colleagues...have come from all parts of the country" and that they "will not accept our children's education being damaged in order to pay for the publicly funded bailout of failed financial institutions".

WHAT'S ON

Coming soon

MAY

Saturday 1 May

May Day March, London

Assemble 12pm, Clerkenwell Green; move off to Trafalgar Square, 1pm.

The capital's annual labour movement May Day demonstration.

Saturday 1 May

CPBML London May Day Rally: Change Britain – Democracy not Parliament

7.30 pm, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, Holborn, London WC1R 4R

A celebration of May Day with speeches, refreshments and plenty of good company.

Sunday 2 May

CPBML Edinburgh May Day Rally: Change Britain – Democracy not Parliament

2 pm, Word-Power Books, 43 West Nicolson Street, Edinburgh EH8 9DB

A celebration of May Day with speakers, music and discussion.

UNIVERSITIES

Imitating the US

A REPORT published by the Universities and Colleges Union (UCU) has sharply criticised the likely results of cross-party agreement on funding British universities.

The government, just like the Tories, wants to imitate the US system of higher education. But we must examine what they want to imitate!

Currently, British universities' fees are capped at £3,145 a year. The USA's Ivy League universities' fees average \$26,273 a year, £17,005.

But high fees don't work: the US system is failing. Harvard University, like the others, relies on endowments invested in equities to compensate for falling state funding. Its endowment was \$37 billion in June 2008: it is now \$25 billion. Last year it announced 275 job cuts.

Since our universities anyway lack such endowments, bringing in US-style fees will completely undermine our current system of higher education. The report is also highly critical of the effects on standards of customer-led development in the universities, another feature of the US system, as well as privatisation.

• **PRIVATISING OUR UNIVERSITIES**, published by the Universities and Colleges Union, February 2010 is available at www.ucu.org.uk/media/pdf/9/6/ucu_privatisingouruniversities_feb10.pdf

PROPOSALS FOR the improvement of London's river-borne transport and its integration into the whole transport system have been around for many years. Now Boris Johnson, Mayor of London, has dusted off and repackaged them as Boris's big idea. He suggests putting in place at a relatively small sum – £30 million – to convert the Thames into a water-borne tube line. Sounds good, but look at the small print.

Ideas that bear the hallmarks of traditional nationalised industry are being applied by Tory think tanks to changing the river usage. For example, modern air traffic control management for passenger transport on the river; integrated tickets with rail, tube and bus transport; centralised control of piers and access; subsidies for fares and transport companies; control concentrated in one authority – Transport for London (The Mayor); scrapping any organisation not politically controlled by the Mayor – i.e. the Port of London Authority – in the name of modernisation; using public money to pump prime the exploitation of the river, whose decline for the past 60 or more years has paralleled that of British capitalism. Is it to utilise a huge natural asset for the benefit of Londoners, or to make vast profits for the companies concerned?



With road traffic in London now slower than in Victorian times, the barren and almost empty Thames is seen as a way of improving travel and generating income. The proposed centralisation, integration and modernising of facilities, which everyone would welcome, aims to boost river passengers from 3 million in 2009 to 12 million by 2026.

A Thames Concordat of all interested parties was established in 2009 to examine ways of greater exploiting the river and passengers. Changes to the National Boatmaster's Licence have allowed skill levels and knowledge of river conditions to be reduced. This has undermined traditional localised employment and allowed worsened terms and conditions to be introduced for staff employed on the proposed passenger services – as happened on cross-Channel ferries when the Channel Tunnel was built.

The Port of London Authority, which oversees environmental and safety matters on the Thames, would be an early victim, as its historic reason for existence, London's docks, have been replaced by the finance hub of Canary Wharf and associated tower blocks. But safety should be paramount as passenger numbers are driven up and congestion grows on a tidal river with a near 30 foot rise to high from low. Crews without local knowledge of the river, minimal safety regulation and large numbers of vessels could easily combine to cause accidents.

An integrated transport service, innovation in using the river, high tech solutions and safety coupled with local expertise have to be supported against what is the real driving force behind these proposals: greed and personal ego. Yes to the river, no to the profiteers.

Railway workers continue their fight for safety...

Network Rail uses Thatcher's laws to prevent national rail strike

RAIL UNION RMT has been prevented from calling thousands of signalling, maintenance and other workers out on the first national rail strike for a decade. Anti-trade union laws from the Thatcher era were used by Network Rail to prevent the action. Sister union TSSA, which was also calling some of its members out, called off its action as a result.

Both unions condemned Network Rail for rushing off to the courts instead of seeking a settlement to a dispute, which is about pay, jobs and safety. They defiantly stated that they would be re-balloting their members, and that Network Rail was therefore only delaying the inevitable.

There are numerous issues behind the disputes, but the one that is most deeply felt is the proposal by Network Rail to axe 1500 maintenance workers. This is in an industry which still nurses the scars of fatal derailments over the last decade at Hatfield, Potters Bar, and more recently, Grayrigg, all of which were down to the failures of Network Rail and contractors to adequately maintain the railway. The unions are in no doubt that safety will be severely compromised by taking out such a huge number of jobs.

Worsening conditions

Network Rail wants to harmonise the pay and conditions of its maintenance staff, which it took in-house six years ago from a myriad of contractors such as Jarvis. Its proposals for bringing all staff conditions and pay into line were thrown out by the unions because it was trying to sneak in massive changes on flexibility and productivity, including much more weekend and night work, worsening conditions dramatically, but wasn't prepared to pay for it. Now, it is seeking to impose its will, wanting performance-related pay and a weakening of the bargaining structure into the bargain!

The company has refused to give guarantees of no compulsory redundancies, nor will it guarantee that agreements will be adhered to regarding staff affected by reorganisations and redundancies.

Operations staff, including signallers, have been offered a derisory pay rise that is much lower than current rates of inflation, effectively a pay cut, and have also been balloted for industrial action. A strike by signallers would stop the railway straight away.

Network Rail has developed a culture of bullying and overbearing management, and more and more of its staff, even its managers, have had enough and are prepared to take action, regardless of the vile anti-worker and anti-union propaganda that the company has disseminated amongst its workforce.

TSSA has balloted the company's managers for action. Not surprisingly, they voted against, but the fact that 35 per cent of those managers voted in favour underlines how high feelings are running.



Photo: Andrew Wiard / www.reportphotos.com

The price of ignoring safety: the Paddington train crash of 1999: 31 people died when a commuter train and an express collided.

Not content with cutting 1500 of its own staff, Network Rail has also colluded with the government and other contractors to bring about the downfall of Jarvis, the contractor much vilified after the Potters Bar accident. Over the last six years, Jarvis has been in a parlous financial position, and shortly before Easter its banks called in the debts. The company went into administration and was closed down almost immediately, with the loss of 1200 rail jobs.

What pushed Jarvis over the edge was the fact that Network Rail, encouraged by a government seeking cuts in public expenditure, has delayed 30 per cent of track renewal work that is vital to maintaining the railway. As a result, the company has been making large numbers of redundancies. However, it could not afford to pay the contractual redundancy payments up front and was paying in instalments.

The closure of Jarvis means that these outstanding instalments will not be paid. For those made redundant as a result of the closure, there will be only statutory redundancy payments instead of the much more generous contractual arrangements. At least part of their pensions will disappear. Many staff who have worked for the company since the time before it was privatised now face a threat to their travel

passes, that were supposedly protected. All these Jarvis workers were sacked having worked for several weeks without payment.

It is noteworthy that the Railways Act 1993, which paved the way for privatisation of the railways, gave most of the new rail companies special protection in the event of financial difficulty. The Act requires the government to give its permission before such a company can be put into administration. This was apparently done to allow the government to ensure that the railway continued to function should any privatised part of it go bust.

Cynical

The government cynically chose not to intervene; it could easily have provided guarantees that would have kept Jarvis afloat. Instead, it allowed the company to go under.

The unions and their members are determined to ensure that the government is not allowed to wash its hands of the situation. The work in connection with Jarvis's contracts still needs to be done.

Sacked Jarvis workers have already organised demonstrations in both York and Doncaster, and another is being planned for London, where they are likely to protest outside Network Rail HQ in Kings Cross.

The mood on the demonstrations was of anger and determination. One leading RMT activist has challenged Doncaster MP Ed Miliband to back the campaign to win back jobs, or face being opposed by him in the General Election. Many Jarvis staff live in Doncaster, and there has been massive support in the town.

Network Rail now says that Scotland-based construction firm Babcocks will pick up some of the Jarvis contracts. In the meantime, Network Rail is employing contractors to carry out work on Jarvis contracts on a casual basis, with staff being drafted in from all over the country, and rumours abound of serious breaches of working hours regulations. These arrangements are clearly costing huge sums of money.

Perhaps the most bitter of all the sacked Jarvis staff are those recently transferred to it when Network Rail awarded contracts to Jarvis having removed them from competitors. They have been transferred into redundancy.

Many suspect that Network Rail has been planning both its own showdown with the unions, and the demise of Jarvis for a very long time. The company has almost certainly calculated that the General Election will produce a

Continued on page 8



MAY DAY MEETINGS

CHANGE BRITAIN: DEMOCRACY NOT PARLIAMENT

Saturday 1 May, 7.30 pm

**Speakers and
refreshments**

Conway Hall, Red Lion

Square,

London WC1R 4RL

(nearest tube: Holborn)

Sunday 2 May, 2 pm

**Speakers, music and
discussion**

Word-Power Books, 43

West Nicolson St

Edinburgh

EH8 9DB

All welcome

Brown's plan is to save capitalism's bacon. He would have us all embrace the bleak future which is the grim reality for so many already. Of course he doesn't talk about capitalism. He talks about great powers, the EU and the USA, and globalisation, as if that were a thing. The EU is presented as an unstoppable force, a power above nations.

The stench of political corruption here is almost overwhelming now: the putrefaction of parliamentary democracy in decay is an assault on the senses. Workers' natural suspicion of politicians has turned to contempt.

Capital will emerge from this period more damaged and certainly more vicious. Look at the preparations here and elsewhere in the world for riot control and suppression of dissent.

We've got a system that doesn't work. Workers know this. We come back time and time again to what does work. Industry, sovereignty, self-reliance, self-protection, it all comes down to control in the workplace and control of our resources. Workers who seek to control their lives recognise that nothing is insurmountable.

For some time now we have recognised that we have everything we need here to prevent Britain going backwards, notably we have skilled, educated workers, who see the euro for what it is, see the EU increasingly for what it is, see the G20 and the like for what they are, see the Labour Party for what it is – but who don't as yet see with sufficient critical mass what a seismic event it would be for British workers to say we will have a future on our terms.

Continued from page 7

government that is even more supportive of their battle with the unions. The timing of the Jarvis closure was probably planned months ago. No sooner had the General Election been called than Jarvis was closed down. This may be to minimise the political impact, with the media being obsessed by other issues, or it may be a deliberate attempt to embarrass Labour.

Union officials and reps often say that Network Rail's attitude to industrial relations is the worst they have experienced, with agreements regularly broken, undertakings reneged upon, and negotiations characterised by a complete lack of trust.

This was most recently demonstrated by the fact that Network Rail deliberately strung out its negotiations while its lawyers prepared for a last minute legal challenge, knowing full well that this would prevent any action being taken before the General Election.

Driving down costs

Babcocks is clearly not enthusiastic about accepting the principle that former Jarvis staff should follow their work to the new employer, and that therefore the TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings) Regulations should apply with staff retaining their pay, conditions and pensions. The suspicion is that Network Rail wants to drive down costs by forcing firms like Jarvis to the wall, and cherry-picking workers to re-employ on worse rates of pay and conditions.

The scene is now set for the railways to become a major industrial battleground immediately after the General Election. If Network Rail staff strike, trains will stop running.

RMT is also engaged in an ongoing campaign of industrial action in Scotland to defend safety after train company First Scotrail broke an agreement that all of its trains would be staffed with a guard.

With London Underground and National Rail train companies looking to reduce station staff, to close booking offices or reduce the hours of opening, other skirmishes look likely.

What is going wrong in this country? There's food for thought in the Francis Report into the litany of neglect at Mid Staffordshire Foundation Trust...

The price of failing to take responsibility



Photo: John Harris/www.reportdigital.co.uk

Memorial to the dead at the HQ of the patients and relatives campaign group "Cure the NHS" in Stafford, where hundreds of patients suffered and died unnecessarily as a result of appalling accident & emergency care at Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust.

MAIDSTONE. TUNBRIDGE Wells. Stoke Mandeville. Mid Staffordshire. Basildon and Thurrock. All NHS hospitals where, in recent times, there was clear evidence of poor care and in some instances a high mortality rate. A superficial reading of these situations would be to say that this is what happens when a service is understaffed.

But while a staff shortage is a feature of these situations, it is not the explanation of what went so wrong. It would also excuse the collective refusal of responsibility by workers to take charge and in so doing, protect the patient. That is not to condemn individual workers who tried their best in those difficult environments, but workers need to

remember the limitation of doing your individual best.

Some situations need a collective and organised response – "organised" in the sense that workers use their collective power to change the situation. At one time it was popular to point to the NHS as a bit of "socialism" in our country. But there is no socialism where groups of workers know there are bad things happening but decide to ignore them and blatantly refuse to take responsibility or to deal with it via the collective power of trade unions or professional groupings, which could have made the difference.

Now we have a very detailed report on the situation at Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust, which should be

compulsory reading for NHS staff, other public service workers and indeed any worker who sits and wonders "What is going wrong in this country?"

Purpose of the inquiry

Concerns about mortality and the standard of care provided at Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust have been in the news for over a year following the publication in March 2009 of an investigation by the Healthcare commission. But the Francis Report, published in February 2010, was asked "to give those most affected an opportunity to tell their stories" and to ensure that lessons were learnt.

Continued on page 10

Continued from page 9

The terms of reference also allowed the inquiry “to gather the views and experience of the staff at the Trust and to seek explanations from management, including the directors, for what happened”.

The terms of reference meant that 966 individual members of the public contacted the inquiry. Most of those expressed concerns about the care received but a substantial minority only had positive comments to make, showing that in the midst of this horror, individual workers were able to continue to provide an adequate service for some.

Robert Francis, a lawyer, was so shocked by the evidence that came forward that he has presented all the written testimony from patients and relatives as Volume 2 of his report. All the testimonies are presented in chronological order from 2005 to 2009, including those which describe positive experiences. However most of the testimony is terrible to read.

The evidence gathered by the Inquiry shows clearly that for many patients the most basic elements of care were neglected. Calls for help to use the bathroom were ignored and patients were left lying in soiled sheeting and sitting on commodes for hours, often feeling

ashamed and afraid.

Patients were left unwashed, at times for up to a month. Food and drinks were left out of the reach of patients and many were forced to rely on family members for help with feeding.

Staff failed to make basic observations, and pain relief was provided late or in some cases not at all. Patients were too often discharged before it was appropriate, only to have to be re-admitted shortly afterwards.

The standards of hygiene were at times awful, with families forced to remove used bandages and dressings from public areas and clean toilets themselves for fear of catching infections.

The executive summary of the report notes that the experience of listening to so many accounts of bad care, denials of dignity and unnecessary suffering was of a “different order” to that of just reading the accounts. But the reading is shocking enough.

As you read those accounts remind yourself that they extend over a four-year period and that during that time the hospital rated itself as “good” in a self evaluation exercise. And it was awarded “Foundation” status by the government. And it was a training hospital for medical and nursing students.

Recommendation 4 is that “The Trust, in conjunction with the Royal Colleges, the

Deanery and the nursing school at Staffordshire University, should review its training programme for all staff to ensure that high-quality professional training and development is provided at all levels.” And maybe at the same time they should ask why their systems of educational review failed to highlight concerns sooner.

Understanding why

The inquiry found that a chronic shortage of staff, particularly nursing staff, was largely responsible for the substandard care. In particular it found that the ratio of registered nurses to health care support workers was inappropriate, with too few registered nurses to safely nurse highly dependent patients and to safely delegate to support workers.

Problems at the Trust were exacerbated at the end of 2006/07 when it was required to save £10 million from its budget. The Board decided it could only achieve this saving through cutting staffing levels, which were already insufficient. The evidence highlighted the Board's focus on financial savings as a factor leading it to reconfigure its wards in an essentially experimental and untested scheme, while continuing to ignore the concerns of staff.

When the Mid Staffordshire story first became national news, a frequently asked question was why did staff not speak out. The inquiry has shown that a number of staff did speak out and concluded:

“It is now clear that some staff did express concern about the standard of care being provided to patients. The tragedy was that they were ignored and worse still others were discouraged from speaking out.”

What emerged from the report was a series of individuals who tried to blow the whistle and, in a way, an illustration of why this individualistic process does not change anything.

But it wasn't only individuals who raised concerns. In one instance a group of nurses from a ward wrote a letter to the manager detailing the “intolerable conditions”. It concluded by saying they no longer felt that they “ran the ward.”

Themes identified in the report

- A corporate focus on process at the expense of outcomes
- A failure to listen to those who have received care through proper consideration of their complaints
- Staff disengagement from the process of management
- Insufficient attention to the maintenance of professional standards
- Lack of support for staff through appraisal, supervision and professional development
- A weak professional voice in management decisions
- A failure to meet the challenge of the care of the elderly through the provision of an adequate professional resource. Some of the treatment of elderly patients could properly be characterized as abuse of vulnerable persons.
- A lack of external and internal transparency
- False reassurance taken from external assessments
- A disregard of the significance of the mortality statistics

This letter was sent anonymously from the “ward nurses”. They had been encouraged to do so by a medical consultant. The hospital managers who received that letter ignored it. So three elements of the workforce, who could have made a difference if they had stood together, formed part of an ineffectual chain.

What about the trade unions?

Peter Carter, General Secretary of the Royal College of Nursing, attended the inquiry to describe a visit he had made to the hospital and the unsatisfactory circumstances he had witnessed on that visit.

But there was no witness to the inquiry on behalf of the local branch and no evidence that the General Secretary’s visit had led to any change. It was left to a Director of Human Resources to tell the inquiry that when she arrived at the Trust the trade unions had not sat down with management to negotiate over polices and jobs, and “there had been no Agenda for Change panels run here for over a year”. So the day-to-day workings of the trade unions at the hospital had been utterly neglected.

What about professionalism?

Phrases like “professional standard” are clearly understood, and instances when individuals fail to meet a professional standard can be identified, but the processes for ensuring professional standards demand a collective commitment and vigilance. Neither featured in this situation.

Instead two frequently used excuses, which will be familiar to workers up and down the land, were much utilised at the hospital. First, the “I will just get my head down and do my job to the best of my ability” and then the “when it gets really bad something will change” approach.

In the case of the medical consultants at the hospital (and remember the outcome of the neglect was unnecessary death) the picture that emerges is one of disengagement and contempt for how the hospital was managed. They thought they could just get down and “do their job” and



ignore what was happening to the hospital organisation.

Consultants failed to attend crucial meetings which looked at the way the hospital was run – indeed the consultant chairing the meeting told the inquiry that he occasionally put “car parking” as an item on the agenda even when there was no issue under that heading, as this meant slightly more people turned up.

The futility of waiting until things get “really bad” is evidenced by virtually every page of the report. The accident and emergency department was referred to by staff as “Beirut”; and staff are described as developing an “immunity” to patients being in pain because poor pain management became endemic. On the Emergency Admissions Unit staff described the working conditions as “intolerable” and openly discussed how working there could threaten their registration.

The managers and the board lost contact with the everyday reality and rarely visited the departments unless to accompany a visitor. They focused on

targets, summarised by the inquiry as “a focus on process at the expense of outcomes” (again remind yourself that those “outcomes” were death).

The inquiry also details extensive bullying of front-line staff for failing to meet those targets and clear evidence from staff of pressure to falsify documentation to make it appear that patients had been less than 4 hours in the accident and emergency department. As the trade union response to that bullying was lacking, the failure of trade unionism and the failure of professionalism combined, contributing to the catastrophic outcome.

Some of the managers and staff who reported to the inquiry continued to maintain a “head down” approach and, as the inquiry chairman said, “rather than reflecting on their role and responsibility” wanted to minimise the significance of the findings.

The future

After all the terrible experiences one might have expected the many relatives and visitors who attended the inquiry to have wanted the hospital to close. Not so: they wanted to see actions and improvement. But the first recommendation of the inquiry is that the trust needs to focus on providing high quality of care and “It should not provide a service in areas where it cannot achieve such a standard”.

The onus is now on the staff to take heed of that advice. The inquiry described an endemic culture of neglect and fearful staff afraid to take action. Changing the culture of an organisation is not something that happens quickly. It needs workers who understand the power of their own professionalism and the power of a trade union to defend its members from any local bullies and from the bullying target culture of central government.

INDEPENDENT INQUIRY INTO CARE PROVIDED BY MID STAFFORDSHIRE FOUNDATION TRUST: JANUARY 2005 – MARCH 2009, chaired by Robert Francis QC available at www.midstaffsinquiry.com.

Reg Birch:

engineer, trade unionist, communist

AVAILABLE NOW, £10 (inc p&p)
308pp, ISBN 0-947967-33-8

Engineer, trade unionist, communist, steeped in the industrial battleground of Park Royal, the largest concentration of engineering workers in the country — for half a century Reg Birch led the struggles of the industrial working class and founded Britain's first genuine Communist Party.

This is a story to provoke reflection about the tactics and strategy of struggle, about working-class morality, about the place of communism in a modern Britain — and about the very future of our nation.

PUBLISHED BY BELLMAN BOOKS
78 Seymour Avenue, London N17 9EB
020 8801 9543

Will Podmore

The CPBML is shortly to publish an account of its history. Here, we present a preview of the ideas that motivated its founding...

An extract from our history

IN 1968 REG BIRCH and comrades from the Engineers' Union, and from other unions, founded the Party. But to understand how this came about, we have to look far further back, into the history of the British working class.

The British working class created our unique trade unions: in Britain the birth of the trade unions was the birth of dignity for our class. Ever since engineering workers founded the Associated Society of Engineers (ASE) in 1851, they led in organisation and in the struggle for wages and conditions. They were the vanguard of the working class for over a century.

In the ASE, ideas and policy flowed from the Districts to the Regions to the 52-strong National Committee. This was democratic centralism in practice. When Lenin was in Britain, in 1902-3, he learnt from our trade unions, especially from the ASE, how to build the Bolshevik Party.

Marx worked with the TUC General Council, comprised of the leaders of the ASE and others, which helped to create the First International. This meant that this International was based on the trade unions. As we said in our CONGRESS '79 statement, "We should remember that the First International was the most proletarian in composition and character, a forum for workers of different countries to learn from and aid each other. It is worthy of study by all workers."

Marx wrote *CAPITAL* and Engels wrote *THE CONDITION OF THE WORKING CLASS IN ENGLAND* out of their experience of the struggles and trials of the British working class. So Marxists across the world know the history of British workers and their trade unions.

In July 1920, the ASE and nine other unions merged to form the Amalgamated Engineering Union (AEU). From the 1930s, the AEU led the whole class, always being the first union to put in its wage claim, and always being the best organised, acting as the spur and inspiration to the rest of the trade union movement. London engineers, with our founding Chairman Reg Birch playing a leading part, led the way by winning shorter hours and paid holidays, raising the right to work,

challenging and sometimes defeating the employer's right to sack.

Birch's 1966 address for election to the post of Executive Councilman for Division No. 7 said, "the high standard of integrity of our members, their militancy and courage has ensured that we the AEU have led the working class in Britain." He continued, "the prosperity and stable economy of this country depends on engineers. British engineers are second to none. If we are not to fall behind, not to become a third rate 'tourist' country, we as a union must ensure that this skill, this labour, is used efficiently, economically and rewardingly. Only thus as a nation will we survive. The new industrial



Reg Birch, who founded the Party with engineering worker comrades.

revolution to bring real prosperity to the working class can only be won by you brothers and sisters."

The ideas developed from Birch's industrial experience were refined in discussion with party comrades from the AEU and others. They applied their collective intelligence and experience to the job of applying Marxism to Britain. The Party programme, *THE BRITISH WORKING CLASS AND ITS PARTY*, adopted by our second Congress in April 1971, brought together all these ideas.

What kind of a party was it to be? We knew the dangers of dividing

organisations into thinkers and doers. All party labour was and is voluntary, so there can be no division between paid full-timers and the "ordinary" members. We rejected Engels's and Lenin's idealist notion of a "labour aristocracy", which was always an attack on skilled workers and a way of dividing the class.

As we wrote in *BURNING QUESTIONS FOR OUR PARTY*, "Any attempt to separate a political arena or phase of development from an economic arena or phase is to invite a division of the Party into two wings – the 'intellectuals' and the 'workers', as has happened in other parties with disastrous results. The results would be equally disastrous whether the alleged 'intellectuals' dominated the professed 'workers' or vice versa. A split, inherited from historic development of a class, which the process of proletarianisation has virtually eliminated from the working class as a whole, would have been artificially created within that section of the class that claims to be the most advanced – the Party. ...

"Those who take this incorrect stand maintain that there is a Middle Class in Britain – not just a handful of shopkeepers but a class strong enough to be a significant political force. They are seen as a sector which has been detached from the working class – 'privileged', 'bribed', either with the crumbs of imperialism or with some other beneficent dispensation from capitalism. They include students, teachers, 'intellectuals' in general, 'better paid workers', trade union officials, 'white collar' and 'professional' workers in general, all women, workers who have been promoted, foremen, 'bosses men', etc. The list being subjective in origin can be extended indefinitely."

For us, the safety of our working class is the supreme law. Workers need state power to save themselves from destruction by capitalism. Workers in power must do what is necessary to retain power; otherwise the capitalists will overthrow them, as they have done in Russia, Eastern Europe and China.

Workers reviews two books this month that explode two American myths: firstly, Wall Street knows what it's doing; and secondly, the so-called positive thinking...

Of course the free market isn't efficient. What about positive thinking?

THE MYTH OF THE RATIONAL MARKET: A HISTORY OF RISK, REWARD, AND DELUSION ON WALL STREET, by Justin Fox, hardback, 382 pages, ISBN 978-1906659691, Harriman House Ltd, 2010, £18.99.

IN THIS fascinating book, Justin Fox, the business and economics columnist for Time magazine, charts the rise and fall of the myth of the efficient market. Fox shows how life has exploded the idea that the market processes information rationally and allocates resources efficiently.

This is in part a history of those looking for a sure-fire way of making money from the stock market. They share the fantasy that they can know where share prices are going and the level of risk, and that they can produce a "scientific forecast of the market". Of course, when markets crash, most investing "stars" crash too. If the market is that efficient, surely speculators could never beat it?

Bang go the theories

But the crash of capitalism has crashed its theories too. As Alan Greenspan admitted, "the whole intellectual edifice collapsed." Adair Turner, chairman of the Financial Services Authority, said that we had experienced "a fairly complete train wreck of a predominant theory of economics and finance".

Prices do not reflect real values. As Clive Granger and Oskar Morgenstern wrote in their 1970 book, *PREDICTABILITY OF STOCK MARKET PRICES*, "It is ... a subterfuge going back at least to Adam Smith and David Ricardo to say that market price will always oscillate around the true (equilibrium) price. But since no methods are developed how to separate the oscillations from the basis, this is not an empirically testable assertion and it can be disregarded."

Eugene Fama, who formulated the efficient market hypothesis in the 1960s, admitted in 1991, "Irrational bubbles in stock prices are indistinguishable from rational time-varying expected returns." There was no way to know if the market



Wall Street, New York: dreams and delusions

was irrationally volatile or not. He now believed that prices could go wrong and stay wrong. In sum, markets' behaviour determines the economic reality that market prices are supposed to reflect. The market is created subjectively; it does not reflect the real world.

The market is not about allocating capital efficiently but about giving speculative parasites the chance to make vast profits with our money. As Larry Summers, Clinton's Treasury Secretary, once concluded, "We might all be better off without a stock market."

BRIGHT-SIDED: HOW THE RELENTLESS PROMOTION OF POSITIVE THINKING HAS UNDERMINED AMERICA, by Barbara Ehrenreich, hardback, 235 pages, ISBN 978-0-8050-8749-9, New York: Metropolitan Books, 2009, £24.83.

BARBARA EHRENREICH shows in this brilliant book how harmful the "positive thinking" movement is, how it means self-blame, victim-blaming and national denial, inviting disaster. It wrecks efforts

for education, skills and reforms.

She cites a guru who said, "the mind is actually shaping the very thing that is being perceived." There is a long tradition in the USA of this kind of mind-over-matter idealism: it includes William James, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Mary Baker Eddy (the founder of Christian Science), Norman Vincent Peale (*THE POWER OF POSITIVE THINKING*), Dale Carnegie (*How to make friends and influence people*), Scott Peck (*THE ROAD LESS TRAVELLED*), Tom Peters (*THE PURSUIT OF WOW*), Deepak Chopra (*QUANTUM HEALING*), Oprah Winfrey, and Rhonda Byrne (*THE SECRET*). Byrne evily said that tsunamis only happen to people who are "on the same frequency as the event" – blaming people's personalities for their deaths.

In the field of health, 'positive thinkers' tell us that being positive will help to cure cancer. But research has found no such link: see for example James Coyne et al, "Psychotherapy and survival in cancer: the conflict between hope and evidence", *PSYCHOLOGICAL BULLETIN*, 2007, 133, 3, 367-94, and "Emotional well-being does not predict survival in head and

an myths: first, that
power of positive

ny would it be?

neck cancer patients”, *CANCER*, 2007, 110, 11, 2568-75. So, even if you believe, with Ann McNerney, that, “Cancer will lead you to God” (*THE GIFT OF CANCER: A CALL TO AWAKENING*), “positive thinking” won’t make you better.

The business world loves positive thinking. The US market for motivational products is worth \$21 billion a year and companies use them against their workers. For instance, AT&T sent staff to a motivational event on the same day it announced 15,000 redundancies. The motivator’s message? “It’s your own fault; don’t blame the system; don’t blame the boss – work harder and pray more.”

Ehrenreich presents us with this striking image: “a candlelit room thick with a haze of incense, 17 blindfolded captains of industry lay on towels, breathed deeply, and delved into the ‘lower world’ to the sound of a lone tribal drum. Leading the group was Richard Whiteley, a Harvard business school-educated best-selling author and management consultant who moonlights as an urban shaman. ‘Envision an entrance into the earth, a well, or a swimming hole’, Whiteley half-whispered above the sea of heaving chests. He then instructed the executives how to retrieve from their inner depths their ‘power animals, who would guide their companies to 21st century success’.”

And so to debt...

A third of British CEOs of FTSE 100 companies used such personal coaches in 2007. The debt crisis was built on runaway positive thinking. As Ehrenreich notes, “the recklessness of the borrowers was far exceeded by that of the lenders, with some finance companies involved in sub-primes undertaking debt-to-asset ratios of 30 to 1.”

The promoter of a master’s programme in “positive psychology” at the University of East London saw “healthy British scepticism” as one of the “challenges” facing her. But we need to be sceptical, to see things as they are, not as we wish them to be. We need not “positive thinking” but *real* thinking.

REBUILD BRITAIN

More from our series on aspects
of Marxist thinking

For decades, our Party has been saying, “Rebuild Britain”. Under a capitalism in absolute decline, the capitalist class has been set on destroying industry as a way to destroy the British working class.

Britain requires a national plan for becoming self-reliant in our most important manufacturing needs. What do we need?

We must retain the skills and production bases that we still have, because modern manufacturing industries need lots of production experience and capital. We need to bypass the banks and invest and lend directly into manufacturing industry, transport and services. We must invest in science, R&D and in educating more people in the most advanced skills, particularly production engineering.

We need to make the goods that people need – cars, planes, trains and ships, earth-moving and building equipment, power-generation plant, pharmaceuticals, household appliances, machine tools, electronics, textiles, steel, and telecommunications systems.

We have to boost the nation’s savings and channel more of them into planned industrial investment. So we need to get our hands on our own money. Pensions are deferred wages, and pension funds alone could rebuild British industry. We could also use the £255 billion that should have been paid in tax, which is hidden in tax havens. We need to bring back controls on the export of capital and ensure that it is invested here.

We could charge those borrowing for vital industrial investment at lower interest rates than for ordinary borrowers. We need to control the money markets, control imports through state trading agreements, and protect our home market, to give our reborn industries time to grow.

We need to take charge of energy, take control away from the companies that are bleeding householders dry, plan – without EU restrictions – for a future without blackouts and rebuild our coal, oil and gas systems. We need to launch a programme of public housing, buy up from developers and buy-to-let speculators at the bottom of the market, offer state mortgages and house the people.

We need to reclaim our waters for fishing and end the misuse of our farm land. We need to plan investment in agriculture to help us to grow what we need, with greater self-sufficiency in food, and to invest in local industries and in rural infrastructure – transport, post offices, local bank branches, schools, medical practices and libraries.

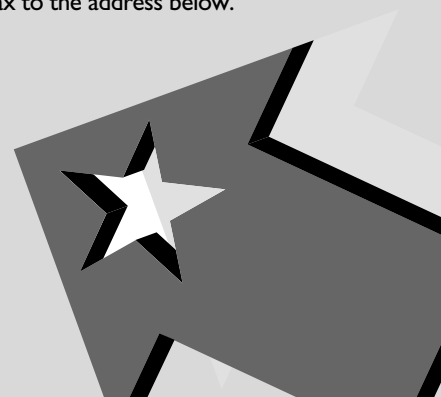
Interested in these ideas?

- Go along to meetings in your part of the country, or join in study to help push forward the thinking of our class. Get in touch to find out how to take part.
- Get a list of our publications by sending an A5 sae to the address below, or by email.
- Subscribe to *WORKERS*, our monthly magazine, by going to www.workers.org.uk or by sending £12 for a year’s issues (cheques payable to *WORKERS*) to the address below.
- You can ask to be put in touch by writing or sending a fax to the address below.

WORKERS

78 Seymour Avenue, London N17 9EB

e-mail info@workers.org.uk
www.workers.org.uk
 phone/fax 020 8801 9543



Back to Front – Call this democracy?

‘We are told that people died so that we could vote, but the suffragettes too would be denouncing this parliament of theft...’

THE MAJORITY of MPs have been found guilty of fiddling their expenses. Likewise, the majority of them have claimed for trips abroad and then – without declaring their interests, in breach of their own rules – asked parliamentary questions about the countries they visited. Four ex-ministers so consumed with greed that they failed to scent DISPATCHES’ “sting” offered their services for money to bend legislation.

When a majority is corrupt, it’s a sign that the system is corrupt. Is it any wonder that we all despise them? But make no mistake: the individual corruption is a result of the corrupt system, not the other way around. The system is rotten, so riddled with patronage and deference to finance capitalism that it can serve no other interest.

There is much talk about a “hung parliament”, so, which of them are we going to hang first? We are told that people died so that we could vote, but the suffragettes too would be denouncing this parliament of theft.

The “left” tell us to vote for anybody but the BNP – this is to say vote for the banks, the EU, the euro, for war on the working class at home and abroad. Each party has a partial truth – the other party is indeed anti-British, anti-working class, anti-progress, pro-banks, pro-EU, pro-war.

The “left” can’t, or won’t, see that the fascist threat comes not from the street but from the state. There are more fascists in Whitehall than in Dagenham.

Eton and Harrow, Oxford and Cambridge, have educated more of them than Barking Abbey School and Dagenham Park Church of England School.

The ruling class shamelessly calls its armed forces a “force for good”, talks of a fairer, more peaceful world, all on the basis of lawless aggression and unbridled exploitation. At home, it talks of equality and a just distribution of wealth, which is all idealism and deception, because these are never possible under capitalism. It talks of democracy and sovereignty while giving us away to the increasingly corporatist, fascist and disintegrating EU. We need to accelerate that disintegration.

The parliamentary parties are conspiring to slash public spending, using finance capital’s crisis to present cuts on the working class as inevitable. MPs don’t represent the majority of us. They don’t want a referendum on the EU Constitution, or an end to the current excessive levels of immigration, or an end to the unwinnable war in Afghanistan, or to rebuild Britain not the banks.

The working class, the vast majority, want a referendum on the EU Constitution, an end to the current excessive levels of immigration, an end to the unwinnable war in Afghanistan, and to rebuild Britain not the banks.

Don’t vote for any parliamentary party. They all represent finance capital, not Britain. Do we want finance capital to win again? We need working class democracy, not the present travesty.

Subscriptions

Take a regular copy of WORKERS. The cost for a year’s issues (no issue in August) delivered direct to you every month, including postage, is £12.

Name

Address

Postcode

Cheques payable to “WORKERS”. Send along with completed subscriptions form (or photocopy) to WORKERS 78 Seymour Avenue, London N17 9EB

Publications

WHERE’S THE PARTY?

“If you have preconceived ideas of what a communist is, forget them and read this booklet. You may find yourself agreeing with our views.” Free of jargon and instructions on how to think, this entertaining and thought-provoking pamphlet is an ideal introduction to communist politics. (Send an A5 sae.)

BRITAIN AND THE EU

Refutes some of the main arguments in favour of Britain’s membership of the EU and proposes an independent future for our country. (50p plus an A5 sae.)

To order...

Copies of these pamphlets and a fuller list of material can be obtained from CPBML PUBLICATIONS, 78 Seymour Avenue, London N17 9EB. Prices include postage. Please make all cheques payable to “WORKERS”.

Workers on the Web

• Highlights from this and other issues of WORKERS can be found on our website, www.workers.org.uk, as well as information about the CPBML, its policies, and how to contact us.