

REMPLOY WORKERS FORM WORKERS CO-OP

A group of ex Remploy workers from West Yorkshire have set up a workers coop. Called Enabled Works this "Social Enterprise" not for profit business is run as a Disabled Peoples User Led Organisation (DPULO). Each of the workers put in £5000.00 to start up the business along with a donation from the GMB union. Every worker no matter what their job is paid the same, and each year the Chief Executive and Manager are voted for by the whole of the workforce, the idea being that everyone is part

of running the business and everyone gets a chance to learn different skills. These positions can be reviewed if the workforce feels that it is necessary.

The group were promised help from Remploy (factories) but had to fight to get any of the former factory equipment and have received no backing from the agencies set up to help former Remploy employees.

Enabled Works actively encourages workers to join

the GMB as the recognised union. All "profits" will be put back into the firm with the idea of expanding to help more disabled people, improve conditions and increase wages. In the first two years they expect to make a loss but hope to break even/ make a small profit from then on. They have managed to obtain a couple of the contracts that used to be part of Remploy and hope to prove that it is possible to run "a Remploy style business" successfully.

MANAGEMENT BULLIES AT DAVID BROWN LTD

Workers at engineering company David Brown Ltd in Huddersfield are being harassed and victimised by bullying management.

The gear box factory in Lockwood had previously employed over 1000 workers on the shop floor but due to mass redundancies and the outsourcing of labour, it has been reduced to little over 100. In 2012 75 workers were made redundant throughout the plant, and a further 75 face losing their jobs this year, while new managerial posts are being created.

Workers have reported management using bullying tactics to intimidate them. Tea breaks have been cancelled, radios confiscated and staff constantly watched.

Those congregating in groups of two or more are questioned on their conversation. It has also been reported that a worker was dismissed after publicly supporting a victimised colleague.

There has been some direct action: In July 2011 downed tools and took to the picket line in a dispute over pay. The strike was successful, however over the past 12 months the UNITE presence on the shop floor has become non-existent. Many of the 'trouble makers' have been made redundant and there is a general feeling of apathy towards the unions. Long-term employees have said that morale amongst the workforce is at its lowest in over 30 years.

WEST YORKSHIRE
SOLIDARITY
FEDERATION

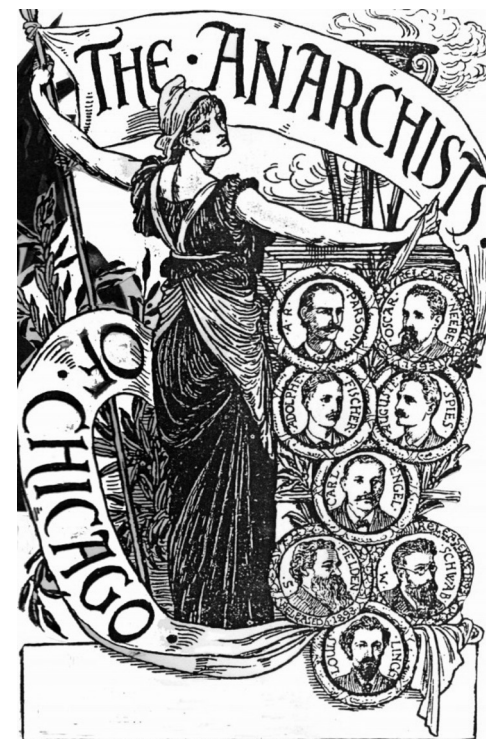
SPANNER
IN THE WORKS

MAY DAY

The roots of the modern May Day bank holiday are in the fight for the eight-hour working day in Chicago in 1886, and the subsequent execution of innocent anarchist workers.

Four Chicago anarchists were executed; August Spies, George Engel, Adolph Fisher, and Albert Parsons, a fifth, Louis Lingg - died in his cell, allegedly by his own hand. Three more were to spend 6 years in prison until pardoned by Governor Altgeld who said the trial that convicted them was characterised by "hysteria, packed juries and a biased judge". The state had, in the words of the prosecution put "Anarchy is on trial" and hoped their deaths would also be the death of the anarchist idea. The anarchists were trade union organisers who were framed on false charges of throwing a bomb at police breaking up a demonstration at The Haymarket in Chicago. This was part of a strike demanding an 8 hour day involving 400,000 workers in Chicago that started May 1st 1886.

In 1889, the first congress of the Second International, meeting in Paris called for international demonstrations on the 1890 anniversary of the Chicago protests. May Day was formally recognized as an annual event at the International's second congress in 1891. The congress made it "mandatory upon the proletarian organizations of all countries to stop work on May 1, wherever it is possible without injury to the workers." In many countries, the working classes sought to make May Day an official holiday, and their efforts largely succeeded.



However the State has manipulated the masses into accepting a May Day Bank Holiday on the first Monday in May which takes the emphasis away from International Workers Day on the 1st May.

**Remember the Haymarket Martyrs -
Remember International Workers Day.**

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The Solidarity Federation, or 'SolFed' is an anarcho-syndicalist union initiative of people seeking to stand up for our interests as workers (employed and unemployed) and students through the use of direct action; doing things ourselves without using leaders or representatives to act on our behalf.

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ARE YOU BEING VICTIMISED BY YOUR BOSS?

TRY OUR JUST-FOR-FUN QUIZ TO FIND OUT!

- 1 **It's Monday morning. Does your boss:**
 - a) Greet you with a wave and a smile?
 - b) Physically exclude you from conversation by turning their back on you, while chatting with your colleagues?
 - c) Spend the morning on the phone to HR seeing if they can discipline you for some "offence" they have come up with, even though it is not actually mentioned in the company disciplinary policy?
- 2 **Taking full advantage of the recession, your company forces through (without consultation) changes to your job which both make it harder to do and increase your workload. You point out the need for training and support - does your boss:**
 - a) Take your points on board, and act on them?
 - b) Nod sagely, but stipulate that the changes must happen first, before training and support is provided?
 - c) Spend the afternoon on the phone to HR seeing if they can discipline you for insubordination, or refusing a managerial request?
- 3 **Your boss unlawfully deducts a day's annual leave from you (there is nothing in your contract which allows for this, they do not have statutory authority to do so, and you did not consent to it). You have never heard of this happening to anyone at your workplace before. On raising it with HR:**
 - a) You receive a swift acknowledgement, an apology, and your day's annual leave is returned. Your boss is reprimanded by HR for flouting employment law.
 - b) The Teflon Head of HR repeatedly refers your complaint about the company behaving illegally to his subordinates to be dealt with (read: "swept under the carpet").
 - c) HR places a note in your file for remonstrating with them. This can be used to help build a case against you at a later date. The day's annual leave is not returned.
- 4 **Having disciplined you for the heinous offence of "stepping on the cracks in the pavement", you ask your boss for some training on avoidance of cracks in the pavement. Does your boss:**
 - a) Observe the statutory guidance in the ACAS Code of Practice on Disciplinary Procedures, explaining how you are expected to avoid the cracks in future, and giving required training?
 - b) Return you to exactly the same situation for which you were disciplined, refusing to provide training or support, and with no guidance on crack avoidance?
 - c) As for b) - but then also discipline you again within a few weeks, again for stepping on the cracks in the pavement?
- 5 **Faced with an Employment Tribunal claim, does your employer:**
 - a) Demonstrate a commitment to good employment practice by addressing your grievances thoroughly in-house, so that a Tribunal becomes unnecessary?
 - b) Make clear that it will contest the ET vigorously, as HR is absolutely confident that the company has behaved properly in its dealings with you at all times?
 - c) Buy its way out of a Tribunal claim (and your silence), getting shot of you at the same time, by offering a so-called "compromise agreement"/pay-off?

ANSWERS

Mostly a):
You are probably related to your boss
Mostly b):
Mainly bullying behaviour
Mostly c):
Mainly victimising behaviour

(NB This is not legal advice)

On Friday 1st February, Freedom Bookshop on Whitechapel Highstreet in London was firebombed. Freedom is well known, not just as a radical book shop, but also as a publisher and

cultural hub for anarchist and radical activity; no one has claimed responsibility for the attack, though there are any number of organisations and ideologies that have previous form burning books.

HELP FOR FREEDOM

Since news first broke, solidarity actions have been widespread, not least volunteers spending the weekend after the attack cleaning, fixing, sorting and salvaging fire-damaged stock. Due to this show of support, the shop was open by Monday morning (if not for business as usual).

Events are springing up countrywide to help raise funds to get Freedom firmly back on it's feet. Members of West Yorkshire Solidarity Federation are involved in organising a benefit gig at the 1in12 Club in Bradford on Saturday 20th April from 4pm.

The gig is shaping up to use all three floors of the 1in12; Punk, Crust and Hardcore bands on the gig floor, book and info stalls on the bar floor and acoustic/spoken word acts at the top in the Cafe/Library.

Live acts confirmed so far are:

(gig floor)
Deviated Instinct
Endless Grinning Skulls
Bring To Ruin
Dry Heaves
Woes
Uncoffined

(cafe/library)
James 'Bar' Bowen
Three Sheets T'Wind
Luke Hoggarth
Powered By Tofu

(running order to be decided)

There'll be book and info stalls from West Yorkshire Solidarity Federation, Huddersfield Anarchist League, Leeds Anarchist Federation and Bradford IWW.

All the bands and acts are playing for free after expenses so that more money can be raised for Freedom while keeping the door price reasonable. Come along on 20th April and help support one of the longest running and important anarchist resources in the country.

www.facebook.com/events/246864592116221/?notif_t=plan_edited

www.freedompress.org.uk/news/events-2/freedom-firebomb-events/

