

Leicester Muckery

Punching up! Your local scurrilous and rebellious working class bulletin - Issue 2 - May 2023 - FREE

Victory to the Health Workers!



On 1st May, the International Workers Day, RCN nurses across the country are set to strike. They have refused to accept the Government's pay offer, seeing it for what it was, a derisory cut in real pay. They have rejected the pleas of their union leaders, who said it was the best deal they could get, and they have ignored the propaganda of the mass media telling them to get back to work. Some doctors' leaders have suggested that that they co-ordinate their own strike action with the nurses. This has never happened before and if it does, the political impact will be enormous.

The government's strategy for dealing with the strike wave is in tatters. They hoped to split the nurses off from other health workers by secretly offering their leaders a preferential deal next year. Other health unions found out and demanded to be included.

Some union leaders in the public sector are busily damping down workers' expectations and urging their

members to accept below inflation wage deals. They say it's the best they can hope for until a Labour Government is elected. This belief is completely mistaken. It's by no means certain that Starmer's Labour Party will win an election, given the way his popularity in the polls is nose-diving. Secondly, power-hungry Starmer has made it clear that, like Blair before him, he has no time for trade unions. His policies in practice would be little different to the Tories.

Only way forward

Strike action is the only way forward for workers in Britain and Northern Ireland to improve living standards and the prospects for our children. We should take a lead from private sector workers, who stay out on strike indefinitely until their employers cave in. We should learn from strikers in France, who are blockading roads, railways, and oil refineries. French energy workers refuse to cut off those who can't meet their energy bills. Instead, they cut off power to the homes of the rich and powerful.

Victory to the nurses of the RCN! Victory to the striking BMA doctors! They are fighting for the survival of our health service and they need our maximum support!

Late News... as we go to press, Government minister, Steve Barclay heads for the courts in an attempt to block action by nurses. He says it's not an attempt on the right to strike. We say, yeah right.

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May Day 2023

May Day is International Workers' Day, a day to celebrate the working class in its ongoing struggles for social and economic justice, equality, freedom and a better world. But do you know where the idea of International Workers' Day originates from? Let's find out.

Eight hour day

We have to go back to 1st May in Chicago, USA, in 1886. Back then, workers in the US were fighting for the 8-hour day/40-hour week – something that many workers don't even have today. The fight was fiercest in Chicago, where vicious police attacks and retaliation from workers left a number of dead and wounded on both sides.

Later, the "forces of law and order" arrested eight anarchist organisers and they were all sentenced to death. Some of those sentences were later commuted to life imprisonment but four of the May Day martyrs were still hanged by the authorities.

Those arrested had clearly been scapegoats, framed by police who were under orders from big industrial bosses and the political authorities. Later, those on life sentences were acquitted and those who were murdered by the State got a posthumous pardon years later.

Since then, all over the world, May 1st has been our day. Be sure to celebrate it every year.



May Day Martyrs' Memorial, Chicago

The most 'hard-working' Royals... er, come again?

This month sees the Coronation of King Charles. We'll take the Bank Holiday but isn't it about time we ditched the royals?

It must be a slow news month. Scanning the pages of *Hello!* in the newsagent recently, we noticed this article that revealed who in the Royal Family was the most industrious. Apparently, it's Princess Anne, closely followed by none other than the new King, Charles III. OK, all good, but what exactly do they mean by 'hard working' and, more to the point, what counts as work in Royal circles? Is it petting horses and nattering to plants?

There's no doubt that some of these aristocrats put a lot of serious effort into their hobbies. Prince Andrew, among other 'pastimes', lavishes attention on his collection of 72 teddy bears, which Palace servants must keep properly arranged on his bed. Prince Edward worked in the theatre for Andrew Lloyd Webber. The Queen looked after some little dogs. Charles makes jam doesn't he, and Camilla occasionally reads stories to little kids?

£86.3 million a year

But WORK? As in spending a few decades trying to make ends meet,



after which you flop down knackered and hope you can survive on a pension (if you have one)? We don't think so. Dividing the Royals into worthy and unworthy members, according to the number of times they cut ribbons or hand out gongs, actually misses the point. The whole institution is rotten. Every person in it is perpetuating one of the world's most expensive fantasies. The 'Sovereign Grant' given to the Royals amounted last year to £86.3m, including cash to renovate Buckingham Palace.

Worst of all, is this crazy notion that we are supposed to treasure them and look up to them. It reinforces assumptions about hierarchy and race, it turns citizens into simpering subjects, and it allows the monarch to exercise undue influence over government. It's a mighty strange situation, when the

people who do the most difficult jobs have zero influence and are treated as disposable, while the richest in society call the shots and accumulate vast mountains of resources they don't need.

Hi-vis vests, anyone?

So, until we see Chas and Co. doing some real labour, minus crowns, and titles, and jewels, and cash, we can't worry too much about which of them is the busiest. If they are that dedicated to public service, they could come up to Leicester, kit themselves out with some hi-vis vests, and get to work filling pot-holes and fixing pavements. Meanwhile, please don't ask us to gawp at the Coronation or buy memorabilia. We're saving up to pay the bills!



Distribute the Leicester Muckery!

Want to spread the word and pass the *Leicester Muckery* on to friends, family, workmates and neighbours? Then drop us a line and request a bundle!

Email us at leicester_muckery@proton.me and we'll send you a few copies to pass on.



Council and Mayoral Elections

Since *Leicester Muckery* issue 1 hit the streets, we've been asked about the "Labour pains" article and why we don't seem to be backing any of the candidates in this month's mayoral and council elections.

Well, while we know, even like and wish some of the candidates with working class politics well, we're not interested in campaigning for them. The struggle for working people is in the streets, the workplaces and neighbourhoods. And if the working class wants to get anywhere in this world, it'll need to shake off all politicians, even the well-meaning ones.

Working class power means acting for ourselves, not with intermediaries.

It's a fair cop, guv!

Here is Rupert Matthews, Leicester Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC). He won this job in 2021 with a 31% turnout of those eligible to vote. Hmm... if this were a trade union ballot, the anti-union laws would say it'd be null and void, but as this is a vote for a Tory sleazebag, then we suppose it's a fair cop, guv.

Before he got elected as PCC, he went on a George Floyd vigil at the Clocktower in what seemed to be a clear attempt to get a few Black Lives Matter votes. Once elected, however, he then point-blank refused to meet with any Black Lives Matter protesters. What? A hypocritical politician? Say it ain't so!

Round about that time, Matthews, staunch supporter of free speech that he is, was unfortunately even more supportive of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill (now the PCS&C Act). This puts even heavier restrictions on people's right to protest. So much for free speech then.

Complete arsehole

The *Muckery* has been informed that about half the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner (OPCC) staff left because of Matthews being a complete arsehole. Consequently, they had to recruit a load of new staff (possibly Tory arsehole-proof).

We also hear that, in the past, the OPCC used to give money towards local community safety partnerships, with the council deciding on how to distribute that money. Now, there's a pot of around £200,000, but instead of handing it over to the council, the OPCC is keeping hold of all the dosh.

But never fear, there's an OPCC panel that now makes the decisions over who gets the money. The fact

Fleeing the poor...

According to a survey by *Which? Magazine*, the biggest price increases have been in the big supermarket 'bargain' home brand products? So once again, the least well-off get to pay through the nose.

that *nobody knows* who is on this panel which makes decisions over which community groups get the money, is apparently neither here nor there. The fact that no group has so far received any money is, ahem, a mere detail. Meanwhile, we hear on the grapevine that no one is likely to get any of this money either!

Matthews also hired senior chief police officer, Mike Veale, in an advisory role. The post was apparently for a six-figure sum – nice work if you can get it. However, Veale then had to step down for alleged misconduct and is currently facing a hearing for breaches of professional standards when he was up in Cleveland. Matthews, blamed it all on "negative media coverage" and said he was disappointed about Veale having to resign.

And before anyone says, "What about integrity? What about ethics? We should bloody well complain!" ... Matthews went and fired his Ethics, Integrity and Complaints committee – well, given all the above, he would do that, wouldn't he! This was allegedly because he didn't like their questions and criticisms of him. But then Matthews ended up having to splash out £56,000 to those same sacked committee members after they claimed unfair dismissal. We're guessing this £56 grand did not come out of his own pockets.

The people of Leicestershire pay Rupert Matthews the sum of £75,000 a year for being as much use as a chocolate teapot. That's not including the £7,500 a year pension he gets for once being an MEP for just two years.

The *Muckery* verdict, m'lud

Rupert Matthews is a typical Tory politician, so what else can you expect?



Would you buy a used car from this man?

Drive Elbit out of Leicester

Elbit UAV Tactical Systems is an Israeli-French drone company based at Unit F, Meridian East, Meridian Business Park, Leicester, LE19 1WZ. The factory designs, tests, and manufactures drones sold to the British army, Israel and international arms markets. Elbit provides 85% of Israel's military drones. These drones, some of which are armed, are used to oppress and terrorise families in the Palestinian city of Gaza, illegally occupied by Israeli forces.

Activists from the direct-action network Palestine Action have issued an Eviction Notice, giving Elbit one month to vacate the drone factory before commencing a 'siege' on May 1st. They call on all people willing and able to stand against Israel's British manufacturing of drones to join them in forcing the weapons factory to close.

Activists previously occupied the site in May 2021. They received strong local support and. Leicester firefighters refused a police request to remove protestors from the factory roof. There were more blockades in 2022. Palestine Action say that this time they will not be leaving until Elbit does.



Challenging Schools

Have you got a child with autism or ADHD? Is your child reluctant to attend school?

If the answer is yes, then probably one of the major challenges as a parent today is navigating the school/parent relationship: or more precisely, getting your child's school to listen to anything you've got to say.

As a teacher and a parent, I know how schools work. They will gleefully issue fines if a child has a family holiday during term time, but are less keen to follow an education, health and care plan (EHCP) or support diagnosing a student with anything that will cost them more money, resource or time.

Schools are short of money: this government has ensured that, but getting schools to fulfil their obligations, which are statutory with regards to EHCPs, can prove almost impossible for even the most clued up parents.

Many schools are now academies and getting them to listen is proving even more difficult than dealing with the council. Academies are the half-way house to the privatisation of schools. They are exam factories competing against each other. They don't want students who are not working at,



at least Grade Four, which is a GCSE grade C in old money.

How can a parent challenge a school? How can they make them listen?

The Muckery says...

Every child matters and every child is an individual. Parents and others need to come together to organise and hold their schools to account. There is strength in numbers. Schools want obedient students and parents who don't make too much of a fuss. We need to challenge this by making our voices heard and providing mutual support to each other.

SPORT

FOOTBALL



FC Kolektivo Victoria (FCKV) is a community football club based in

Leicester which recognises the fundamental equality of all people, irrespective of age, class, culture, disability, gender, race, religion, or sexuality.



We've been welcoming people, regardless of ability, who want to be part of a club which promotes mutual respect,

sport, and having a laugh, since 2010.

Players of all faiths are welcome at the club, but religion is not. The club and its Sunday kickabout are entirely secular. Religious justifications for prejudice won't be accepted. To get involved, visit:

www.facebook.com/FCKV2010/



The Leicester Muckery is a working class bulletin

It stands for:

- **Ideas and actions** based on mutual aid, solidarity, collective responsibility, individual freedom, autonomy and free association.
- **It sees things** in terms of bosses and workers, the powerful and powerless, rich and poor, order-givers and order-takers, oppressors and oppressed. In short, *capitalism*.
- **It fights** against such a system.
- **It supports** actions and ideas that increase working class confidence, autonomy, initiative, participation, solidarity, equality, self-activity and unity of the working class in the face of capitalist exploitation and oppression.
- **It opposes** actions and ideas which divide the working class – such as nationalism, racism, sexism, homophobia and the view that we should aim to rise above our class.

Instead, we should rise *with* our class!



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Or visit our website at www.leicestermuckery.wordpress.com