

## TRADE UNIONS

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It is generally accepted that a trade union is a group of employees whose main interest is themselves, their rights and their resisting what they consider to be oppression by employers.

There are many such unions and often they are militant and convene a strike merely to get their own way. In the process of a strike, they condemn fellow workers who do not support the strike and who also may not be in the union and, consequently, make their lives a misery calling them scabs, blacklegs and other hurtful names. Blackleg is a disease among cattle and sheep and can be fatal. In other words, the unions seek to force, or desire all employees, to be in the union and so for anyone to be different and to resist membership is said to be a betrayal of the union and the strikers. But pressure and force to join a union takes away the individual's rights and personal choice.

The trade unions financially support the Labour government and so, if I am an employee and am forced into being in a union, my subscription, or a part of it, goes to the Socialist government/opposition and I may not be a Socialist and, indeed, may object to some of their policies. I have a right to my political views and I cannot be two-faced.

In 2012, the Labour government received donations of £19 million of which 46 % came from trade unions.

There are times when industrial action is taken primarily not to protect the interests of the work force, but to bring down the government. The most obvious case is the infamous and appalling miners' strike whose real objective was to bring down Margaret Thatcher's Conservative government. The miners were led by the evil Arthur Scargill who was still receiving a salary when the strikers were not.

Scargill assaulted the police, blamed Thatcher for mine closures whereas it was the National Coal Board who were to close mines. A taxi driver and two miners that the driver was bringing into work were killed by the striking miners and that was murder. This strike cost the country six million pounds and Scargill and other left wingers would not accept the fact that miners could not be paid wages if the mines had no more coal to yield. The striking miners were bullies and criminal as in the examples quoted. The miners did not win this dispute and their powers were rightly curtailed.

One recalls the Aberfan disaster of October 1966, which was caused by the miners disregard of safety of the high coal tips and, in particular, the one that was heaped up upon water making it unsteady. Those who lost loved ones and their homes were given caravans to live in by the left wing Prime Minister, Harold Wilson, who charged them rent.

The Winter of Discontent of 1978-9 was when there were widespread strikes in the public sector who were demanding large wage rises and objecting to the Labour Prime Minister, James Callaghan, and his reforms of the trade unions and the essential need to control inflation. Not for the first time, or the last, the trade unions were holding the country to ransom and innocent people and the nation suffered.

These unions' ill-advised policies led to Margaret Thatcher winning the General Election of 1979.

The unions' actions were entirely based on both their self interest and self promotion and, to some extent, greed. There were many unemployed people who would willingly have had these jobs and the union members should have been thankful that they had jobs!

I worked in industry for a while but was not in a union. On one night shift, the machinists called a strike and everyone downed tools. The dispute was that one man had tuppence more in his wage

packet than the rest of the work force and that was considered to be unfair. I told the men that if they did not get the urgent jobs done we would lose the contracts, the company would lose money and there could be redundancies and they might no longer have jobs. The militant union leaders argued against this and lead the work force to irrational anger and, as a consequence, jobs were actually lost and it was the union's fault.

On the other hand, there have been individual cases which have been successfully taken up by the appropriate union. A female worker was falsely accused of sexual inference with a schoolboy and her life was made a misery. Her union took up her case and paid for all the costs and she was cleared.

Trade unions make the point that if some employees do not support an industrial action and the strikers win the case and get a wage rise for the work force, then those who did not support the strike will also get the increase in wages and are therefore getting the benefit of the strike action and that is not fair, say the trade union.

However, we have all seen violent scenes of union members damaging the property of those who refuse to take part in a strike. Windows are smashed, there is shouting and verbal insults, the children cannot go out to play or go to school and some kind person who is doing the shopping for the innocent family, who are held prisoners in their own home, is molested, threatened and in fear of their life. Can this be right? The man of the house wanted to work as he had a wife and children to support and he loved them. The union were bullies.

To vary the subject slightly, there was a case of the News of the World publishing pictures of paedophiles and in Portsmouth, said to be one of the most violent cities in the UK, some angry women believed a man in their area was one of these paedophiles and began a hate campaign against him including petrol bombing his house. The protestors were middle aged women with fags hanging from their mouths and using the foulest language imaginable. The police were also attacked and it was proved that the man was not one of the News of the World paedophiles. But the women were not sorry and said that they would do this again.

There is a similarity between the last case and these women who presumably believed the wrong they were doing was right to be done.

Some unions use other methods such as a work to rule and an overtime ban and the consequences are often that the deadlines for the necessary completion of jobs is delayed and therefore contracts are lost and the firm loses its credibility and the order book is reduced.

It is asserted that unions are integral to maintain democracy. The actions of Scargill were undemocratic. They are said to be responsible organisations, keen on welfare, wanting to improve public services and to encourage solidarity. One of the biggest unions, Unison, has 1.3 million members and are now planning industrial action. As we write, since 70% of NHS employees are not to get a pay rise in 2014 which appears to be unfair. Yet the NHS is said to be £541 million in debt which cost rise drastically in the next few years. Whatever once thinks of the unions and the militant bullies, they may have a legitimate case here.

We have had the fire brigade going on strike and the army having to deal with call outs who, presumably, have no great expertise in fire fighting. Such strikes are damaging and could put lives at risk.

It has been said, and with some truth, that it is not the rightly elected party that governs the country but the trade unions who are joined to the Labour Party and therefore the Socialists have greater support both in numbers and also in finance. Since the General Election of 2010, the Labour Party has received donations of £60 million and the Conservatives £45 million.

There is an interesting account in Matthew 20 where a man takes on employees for a penny (a denarius) a day and all employees agree to this. The term day refers to any part of the day whether it is a complete day or just a part of a day. When the wages are give out, those who have worked the longest believe that they should have more than those who have worked less hours, and yet every employee agreed to the owner's terms and conditions. Each employee had a contract of employment although they would probably have been verbal contracts.

H.L. Ellison writes, ' Those who worked less hours were deemed to have preferential treatment. In a day of underemployment they should have been thankful that they had work. Everybody had a denarius a day which was a good rate of pay in those days. Many earned less and many earned nothing and these workers had a contract of employment to which they all agreed.'

A contract of employment does not need to be put in writing. It sets out terms and conditions, hours and rates of pay, but does not always include everything. For example, it does say that you must not steal from the employer or do anything that causes the employer and his company to suffer loss, but these things are surely obvious. The real problem seems to stem from the fact that the company has the capital and all the workers have and can offer is their labour, but that is essential. There are Socialists and other left wingers who object to those with capital and have an animosity to those people and feel diminished and so rebel. The majority of trade unions and Labour politicians are atheists and object to religion as it is a threat to them and their policies and advocates peace, love and respect. By contrast, and to show one example, George Galloway, of the so-called Respect Party, and Ken Livingstone hate the Jews and are racist. They are also bigots since a bigot is one who has hatred and intolerance to others.

When Tony Blair came to power, he introduced the policy of outsourcing medical services to the home and the community. With the controversial Health Secretary Patricia Hewitt, medial help and surgery was to be denied smokers and those who were obese and some essential treatments were not available on the National Health. One man who had suffered for his country faithfully in war torn environments contacted cancer and his treatment was too expensive and refused, and he was told to sell his house to pay for the treatment essential to his life. Hewitt made many other cuts to the NHS which were not in the interests of the patients. She also wanted to put the NHS on a computer making electronic records of everybody. The computer and the work cost a fortune and the project was scrapped. What a waste!

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