

# United Campaign

to Repeal the Anti Trade Union Laws

Conference  
2008

**NUJ**  
NATIONAL UNION  
OF  
JOURNALISTS

## The Importance of UNION RIGHTS

### What Does the United Campaign do?

The United Campaign works together with all of our affiliated unions to campaign for a framework of positive trade union rights. The Campaign calls for the repeal of the repressive and illegal anti-trade union laws introduced by the Conservatives between 1979 and 1995.

In recent years the United Campaign has worked with the NUJ and other affiliates on a Charter of Workers' Rights and has helped to draft the Trade Union Rights and Freedoms Bill.

If enacted the Bill would significantly strengthen trade union rights, including: better protection for striking workers, simpler and fairer industrial action balloting and notice procedures, reform of the use of injunctions by employers, allowing solidarity action in certain circumstances, prevention of the use of replacement labour during strikes, and trade-union rights for prison officers.

The United Campaign also holds various rallies and campaign meetings to raise support from the grassroots of the movement. Over this next year the United Campaign has already planned campaign rallies along with fringe meetings at most union conferences. Visit [www.unitedcampaign.org.uk](http://www.unitedcampaign.org.uk) for more information.



### The United Campaign and NUJ — Campaigning to Extend Rights at Work

#### By Michelle Stanistreet - NUJ President

As an active workplace rep I've seen first hand the impact of the anti-union laws on our union and its members – ballots subject to constant legal challenge, employers given a green light to wield the redundancy axe with barely a passing nod to our rights to be consulted, recognition campaigns undermined by intimidation at the hands of anti-union employers and solidarity action, even between chapels at different publications owned by the same employer, outlawed.

That's why the Employment Bill currently going through the UK Parliament represents a real wasted opportunity. It fails to address injustice in the workplace, provides little in the way of extended rights at work and leaves journalists in the UK at the mercy of bad employers.

The result across large parts of our industry is staff shortages, long hours, job insecurity, a growth in vulnerable employment and increased stress, bullying and harassment.

But our union isn't letting things rest there. We are part of a growing movement to win support for amendments to the Bill, to extend rights at work and to actively campaign for the repeal of unjust laws that shackle unions whilst allowing companies the flexibility to act with increasing impunity.

I was immensely proud to stand alongside the strikers at the Milton Keynes Citizen as NUJ President offering them my full and active support. They were defending journalism, defending quality and fighting for improved terms and conditions. Yet the support the union could legally offer them was severely restricted, under threat of injunctions and sequestration.

I don't want any other NUJ Chapel to face that disgraceful situation. That's why I am pledging my support to the United Campaign's bid to reclaim our rights. It needs us to lobby, to organise, to protest, to campaign, to challenge and debate. All of us. Please join the campaign and act for fairness at work.

## An Update on the Latest Developments

### ETUC Response to ECJ judgments in Viking and Laval

In the light of the recent European Court of Justice decisions in the Viking and Laval cases, the European TUC passed the following resolution: "One thing is very clear: for the ETUC and its members the outcome of these two cases represents a major challenge. How to establish and defend labour standards in an era of globalisation? And in these cases the ECJ does not sufficiently recognise and allow trade unions to defend their members and workers in general against social dumping, to fight for equal treatment of migrant and local workers, and to take action to improve living and working conditions of workers across Europe."

"Put simply, the action of employers using free movement as a pretext for social dump-

ing practices is resulting in unions having to justify, ultimately to the courts, the actions they take against those employers' tactics."

It concludes: "It has now become urgent for the ETUC to develop a joint and coordinated strategy with its members to prevent conflicting collective agreements in cross border situations and the potential scope for abuses and manipulation arising from this...The ETUC calls on the European authorities to recognise that these cases...have European wide implications. We call for early action to reassure unions that fundamental rights are not diminished by the free movement provisions of Europe."

We await developments with interest. Further information and links to the resolution are available on our website [www.unitedcampaign.org.uk](http://www.unitedcampaign.org.uk).

### The Employment Bill - the Debate Continues

The latest session of the Grand Committee of the House of Lords took place on 13 March. But their Lordships didn't finish the business so the debate on the need to change the law following the decision of the European Court in ASLEF v UK will be concluded on another day.

The case concerned the decision by ASLEF to expel a member who was also a member of the BNP. Grounds for expulsion focused on the incompatibility of his political party membership and the objectives of ASLEF. The European Court of Human Rights judged the right of ASLEF to choose its members outweighed BNP members' right to freedom of expression.

The debate in the House of Lords should consider the extent of the freedom for

trade unions to decide their own affairs, in accordance with the fundamental human right of association and the decision in the ASLEF case.

The problem for trade unionists is that their Lordships don't see it that way. As drafted Clause 17 in the Bill is limited to changing the right of unions to expel a member in relation to membership of a political party – this is far too narrow. The Liberal Lord Lester wants an amendment to say that unions can expel members on grounds of membership of a political party, only if they guarantee there will be no financial consequence to the member. That would mean a BNP member, sacked after a union had informed an employer they were expelling the member, might not have a good case against the employer for unfair dismissal but the fascist could claim all loss of wages from the union!

## How Can You Help?

**RECLAIM  
OUR  
RIGHTS!  
UNITED  
CAMPAIGN**

- Encourage your union chapel to join the United Campaign
- Visit our website for a sample motion and to download materials
- Follow the Campaign - with a letter to MPs to support a Bill and to sign an EDM later in the year
- Support and attend our rallies and events
- Sign up to receive email alerts and join the United Campaign's Facebook Group to show solidarity.

All links and downloads can be found on our website at [www.unitedcampaign.org.uk/resources.html](http://www.unitedcampaign.org.uk/resources.html)

## Become a campaign supporter 2008-9

Code - AFF-0809-NUJ

The United Campaign is financed solely by supporters fees from trade union bodies and individuals. By becoming a supporter you or your chapel show your agreement with the recall to repeal the anti trade union laws, and aid the Campaign's fight.

|  | Price |
|--|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Regional Unions                                     | £60   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Union Chapels - 500 or more                         | £60   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Union Chapels - 500 or less                         | £30   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individuals (cost to be placed on the mailing list) | £12   |

Please make cheques payable to United Campaign, and send to the United Campaign Secretary, 39 Chalton Street, London, NW1 1JD. Donations are gratefully received.

Region/Chapel

Name (of Secretary)

Address

Phone

Email

Tick to receive United Campaign updates via email



**There are also over two hundred individuals, branches and organisations affiliated to the Campaign**