

Newsletter

For The United Campaign to Repeal the Anti-Trade Union Laws

Issue 3

September/October 2007

**RECLAIM
OUR
RIGHTS!**

**UNITED
CAMPAIGN**

Tony Woodley on the Journey From The Gate Gourmet Dispute to the Rally for a Trade Union Freedom Bill



"Today we need to keep on building massive backing for the TUC's campaign for a Trade Union Freedom Bill, to help right the wrongs of the last 25 years and level the playing field – and that means working to ensure the biggest possible turn-out at the parliamentary rally at Westminster on October 18."

Bob Crow,
United Campaign
Chair



The Trade Union Freedom Bill has been a big step forward in the campaign to

overturn the Tory anti-union laws. It is a set of modest proposals that would move some way towards giving British workers decent employment rights in line with long established ILO conventions.

It was the disgraceful treatment of decent, hard working T&G members at Gate Gourmet that prompted the passing of the T&G motion at the 2005 Labour

conference calling for reform of industrial action law.

That dispute highlighted the way that a company could plot for a year to provoke a dispute to justify mass sackings. They se-

"The law does not allow for us to deliver justice."

cretly recruited agency labour on lower pay rates. Then they locked our members in a canteen for hours on end. They sacked others by megaphone.

They could get away with it because the anti-union laws shifted the balance of power to the fat cats. And we were told by the Government that this was just the renegade action of one

employer, so there is no need to change the law.

But how many more working people will have to sit back and allow their jobs to be outsourced, their communities devastated, have their terms and conditions cut, or be forced to work longer hours because the law prevents them and their union from taking effective action?

The law does not allow for us to deliver justice. If workers do not have the right to withdraw their own labour then they are serfs not citizens at work.

That is what this Bill is about. That's why I'll be there on 18th October at the United Campaign rally.

Tony Woodley
Unite T&G General Secretary

National Parliamentary Rally

for **Trade Union Freedom**

Thursday 18 October 2007

4.00 pm — Assemble & Demonstrate Outside House of Commons
5.30 pm — Rally in Committee Room 14 House of Commons

www.unitedcampaign.org.uk

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Gordon Brown announces the Employment Simplification Bill

Prime Minister Gordon Brown has announced that the Queen's Speech on 6 November will include an Employment Simplification Bill. The Bill will include provisions for amending the law in order to comply with the European Court of Human Rights decision in ASLEF v UK.

In our last newsletter we said the government's proposed changes are too limited to comply with the judgment and Article 11 of the European Convention. Only repeal of the Tories' laws restricting union rule books in relation to membership and discipline will be enough to satisfy the fundamental right reflected in Article 11.

As the Bill is expected to bring other changes in the law, now is the time to convince people about the justice of our cause and bring about changes to other anti-trade union laws that currently make the UK the subject of attack by the UN and the European Social Rights Committee

Further details of the Bill are expected to be revealed at the time of the State Opening of Parliament in November.

RECLAIM OUR RIGHTS! UNITED CAMPAIGN

THE INSTITUTE OF EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS

TUC
Fringe Meeting

Labour Law Under Brown: 10 September
What's on the Agenda? 2007

www.unitedcampaign.org.uk/events.html

Bob Crow on Righting the Wrongs of the Past 25 Years



Just over a century after parliament ruled that 'An action against a trade union...shall not be entertained in any court,' RMT is backing those calling for the restoration of the trade-union rights envisaged by the framers of the 1906 Trade Disputes Act.

damages from workers in dispute with them.

Nine lots of Tory anti-union laws chipped away the 1906 Act and there are now countless ways that employers can drag unions into court for daring to stand up for workers' rights. Sadly, the government seems more interested in egging the European Court of Justice to rule that there is no such thing as the right to strike.

Today we need to keep on building massive backing for the TUC's campaign for a Trade Union Freedom Bill, to help right the wrongs of the last 25 years and level the playing field – and that means working to ensure the biggest possible turn-out at the parliamentary rally at Westminster on October 18.

Bob Crow, RMT General Secretary and UC Chair

A "British Bill of Rights"

The Trade Union and Labour Party Liaison Organisation has entered into the debate on the "British Bill of Rights" in a submission to the inquiry by the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights.

The submission emphasises the need in any modern Bill of Rights for clear and effective collective rights. David Cameron's Conservative Party has called for a Bill of Rights, but he agrees with those in his party that the UK should withdraw from the Social Chapter altogether. His Bill of Rights would no doubt favour trade and property over collective rights and the strength to help the vulnerable.

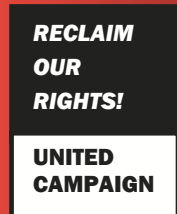
Interesting that a recent Canadian Supreme Court decision recognised that "workers have the right to bargain collectively as part of their freedom to associate [which] reaffirms the values of dignity, personal autonomy, equality and democracy."

More details are available on our website.

National Unions affiliated to the United Campaign



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



Contact the United Campaign:

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Further Information:

For more information on any of the featured news items or events visit www.unitedcampaign.org.uk

Become a campaign supporter

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

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