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30 years ago when the Equal Pay Act appeared on the statute book female workers throughout the country sighted a collective sigh of relief. At long last we had finally achieved parity with men. Or did we? The way the legislation was drafted it was possible to drive a coach and horses through the new law, which many employers took advantage of. Even today they are still getting away with paying women on the same grade less than men. This is due in part to the types of industry women are concentrated in which are mainly caring and service industries which makes it difficult to organise them and partly because they are unaware of their rights. Which is why your stewards and I welcomed the outcome of a recent successful equal pay claim in the NHS.

Thanks to the GMB women workers at Newcastle City Health trust shared in a record **£1 Million Equal Pay settlement** –the biggest ever in the NHS. That followed hot on the heels of last years win of £300 000 for 200 women cleaners, laundry and catering workers at Hartlepool and East Durham Trust.

The Newcastle workers received a one off payment of around £2000 each amounting to a 10% weekly bonus which was increased to 15% from April 2001 and a 6.1% pay rise.

The Newcastle trust agreed to pay the money to 350 ancillary

workers after the GMB discovered that porters (mainly Men) had received up to 15% a week more than other staff on the same grade (mainly women) since

In effect the trust was found to be in breach of the Equal Pay an after 40 women launched an employment tribunal claim. On average it was discovered that they earn £80 a month less than male workers on the same grade.

The Union Organiser involved stressed that this settlement was not a one off but the beginning of a campaign to deal with unfairness and institutional sexism which is endemic within certain sections of British industry. If you and your colleagues believe that you are treated less favourably than your male colleagues on the same grade, in terms of pay and other conditions of service please contact your union in order that we can carry out an inequality audit of your workplace.

Only by convincing more women of the relevance of trade unions and the favourable impact it can and does have upon their lives will we be able to challenge such practices and then and only then will we ever achieve true equality. *Elizabeth Blackman*

TO ALL BRANCHES AFFILIATED
TO THE LEICESTER AND DISTRICT
TRADE UNION COUNCIL
Please ensure your delegates attend
TUC meetings.

Your executive can remember the days not so long ago when the hall was filled to capacity, at many meetings it was standing room only. In those days we were a formidable force to be reckoned with. We still could be provided all delegates make the effort and attend.
MEETINGS.

EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

The government has claimed the UK is now on the road to full employment after the number of people claiming benefit in February dipped below one million for the first time in over 25 years. The claimant count fell to 996 200 in February the lowest total since December 1975.

Nevertheless at a press conference Tony Blair unveiled plans to crack down on people who refuse to take up a training or job placement. Blair said he wanted to target the "hardcore" unemployed to help even more people into work.

The number of vacancies at job centres has risen to a historically high level of 233,700, whilst the claimant count fell by 10,600 giving a jobless rate of 3.4%.

TUC general secretary John Monks said "This is a significant milepost in the return to full employment and the government deserves much of the credit. ... However major challenges still remain."

In view of their achievement I urge all members and their families to turn out on June the 7th and ensure that we return a Labour Government. Who in their turn will ensure a return to full employment for all our peoples R Whyman

HEALTH AND SAFETY

There is quite a lot of concern about TB at present because it is on the increase. People most at risk are those who have not been vaccinated. Those in close contact with infected persons, children, elderly people, diabetics, people on steroids or other drugs that effect the body's immune system. People who are HIV positive, people who live in overcrowded or poor housing conditions, people who are dependant on drugs or alcohol. Any employees who are potentially at risk should be offered immunisation even when there is only a small risk of infection.

The following diseases require immunisation/ vaccination for staff who may be exposed to them.

TB, German Measles and Rubella. Poliomyelitis, Smallpox and Diphtheria, Tetanus, Typhoid (relevant for workers who come into contact with human waste and soiled laundry) Hepatitis B vaccine. Influenza, diphtheria, rabies, (immunisation to be given if appropriate, if requested. *Elizabeth Blackman*



GMB secures a Landmark for Part Timers

Victory

Following a successful appeal on behalf of a GMB safety rep; to an Employment Appeals Tribunal. Part-time workers in future, when attending union TU. Full time training courses will be entitled to full time pay from their employer. This is a particularly significant decision for part-time workers who wish to play a more active role within their union. It also means that section 169 of The Trade Union Labour Relations Act 1992 will have to be amended to comply with European Law. Lesley Horsley Hollings

Further to the excellent article about WRULDS that appeared in the March issue of this newsletter I would like to add the following remarks

The term WRULDS describes a series of conditions, which include teno, carpal tunnel syndrome, tennis elbow and frozen shoulder. Workers affected suffer persistent pain in muscles, soft tissue, joints and tendons. The term RSI that is used to describe these symptoms is often misleading. Repetitive movement in many instances is not the major risk factor.

Colleague we all accept work involves bodily movements of some sort. What we should not accept is that too many tasks are badly organised and involve repeated use of the arms often in awkward postures.

There is a solution though and this is where Union safety reps; have an important role to play. For I believe prevention is better than cure. Therefore what stewards and safety reps, need to examine. Is how work is organised and to ensure our members receive the relevant training? In safe working practises.

They also have a responsibility to raise awareness. They must ensure our members are able to recognise early symptoms of the disease, which more often than not— takes the form of a slight tingle or ache in their arms. Members too have a responsibility to report any problems they are having to their safety rep. Far too many people suffer in silence because they are afraid of losing their jobs. That is in my opinion— why WRULDS is reaching epidemic proportions in the industrial world. *RICHARD WHITMAN.*

EQUAL RIGHTS REPORT. TUC NEW BULLYING AT WORK STUDY.

A new survey conducted by the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology and supported by the TUC and the CBI suggests the phenomenon contribute to the loss of 18 million working days every year. Nearly half of Britains employees (47%) have witnessed workplace bullying and one in ten report being bullied in the last six months. 5,300 employees from the public, private and voluntary sectors completed the survey, funded by the British Occupational Health Research Foundation, making it the biggest British study of workplace bullying. CONTINUED ON PAGE THREE.

Key Findings

47% witnessed bullying in the last five years.

10.5% had been bullied in the last six months

24.4% had been bullied within the last five years.

An estimated 18 million working days a year are lost through bullying. Over two thirds of those who were bullied 68% said they were not the only victims at work. Bullying is most common in the prison service 16% post and telecommunications 16% teaching 15% and performing arts 14%.

Bullying is linked to negative management styles. Victims of bullying are more likely to experience autocratic and divisive styles of management.

Those who report being bullied in the last six months consistently report the poorest health; the lowest work motivation and satisfaction, the highest absenteeism figures as well as the productivity compared to those who are not bullied.

Professor Cary Cooper and Helen Cooper want employers to: Develop procedures for dealing with complaints. Train managers so they are aware of the negative effects of bullying. Undertake regular risk assessments or stress audits to identify bullying at work.

TUC General Secretary John Monks said "These shocking new figures show bullying is rife at work and that no workplace is immune" The study suggests that bullying be often down to bad management style. That is why it is crucial that unions and employers work together to tackle what is becoming one of Britain's most worrying workplace phenomenon.

The Study Advisory Board members include The H/S/E.TUC, CBI, and The Institute of Personal and Management. The Local Government Employers, The Institute of Management, The Suzy Lamplugh Trust, MSF Union, The Police Federation, The Nat, West, Shell UK, Rover Group, CO-OP, Littlewoods and the Federation of Small Business.

Elizabeth Blackman

How can we revive the Trade Union Movement?

What prompts me to ask this question is that a few weeks ago I was looking through the Trades Union Congress directory.

Among other things, this provides a full list of affiliated organisations together with their membership.

It was interesting to see that the National Union of Mineworkers now affiliates on 5000 members. I am old enough to recall when the membership of this union was about three quarters of a million and was regarded as the very bedrock of the Trade Union Movement.

This is not an isolated case many other areas of former Trade Union strength have suffered similar if not so drastic declines.

Combined with the Anti Union laws these changes have lead to a serious fall in membership, from a peak of some twelve million to some six and a half million in a space of a few years.

There are now some signs of a turn a round but still a long way to go.

It is clear if we wish to rebuild the Trade Unions we can't any longer depend upon our traditional areas. To a great extent they no longer exist.

But the need for organisation is as great as it as ever been. New industries have growing up employing thousands of workers, often low paid and with poor conditions.

In a traditional industry like hosiery, sweatshops have replaced the reputable employer.

All these workers need support. We need to organise to face the threats that come with globalisation.

We ourselves have suffered a loss of morale. We must overcome this.

We have come to accept the loss of rights > Lets fight to recover them.

The closed shop and secondary picketing was beneficial to the working class. We want them back.

To date we've made little impact on the new areas of employment. How can workers with little or no industrial muscle resist reactionary, anti union managements?

How can we overcome such problems? What changes will we need to make in our practices and organisations?

I haven't tried to provide answers. I do not have them. I do know that the answers have got to be found Let's set about doing SO. Allan Stanley

WORKERS MEMORIAL DAY

On Friday the 27 April an Oak Tree was planted in the Town Hall Square Leicester, to commemorate the lives of all workers who had lost their life through the cause of their employment. The cost of the tree and the plaque was financed by the Trade Unions. Thanks are due to the city council's joint trade union committee special thanks to Dave Thomas GMB steward who turned our dreams into reality. Jack Warner



WHY LABOUR?

THE TUC BELIEVES LABOUR HAS DONE ENOUGH FOR WORKING PEOPLE TO EARN A SECOND TERM.

VOTE LABOUR IN THIS ELECTION FOR YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY

WHY? BECAUSE THIS LABOUR GOVERNMENT HAS INTRODUCED THE FIRST EVER MINIMUM WAGE.

EXTENDED MATERNITY LEAVE TO 18 WEEKS. IMPROVED MATERNITY PAY AND INCREASED CHILD BENEFIT

HELPED 1 MILLION UNEMPLOYED MEN AND WOMEN BACK TO WORK

INTRODUCED THE NEW DEAL TO FIND JOBS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

GUARENTEED 4 WEEKS PAID HOLIDAY BY LAW

BROUGHT IN NEW LEGAL RIGHTS FOR EMPLOYEES TO BE REPRESENTED BY THEIR TRADE UNION

SIGNED THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL CHAPTER SO THAT BRITISH WORKERS BEGIN TO GET THE RIGHTS WHICH APPLY ON THE CONTINENT.

WHAT WILL THE NEXT LABOUR GOVERNMENT DO FOR YOU?

REPORTS June 2001

TONY BLAIR HAS COMMITTED THE NEXT LABOUR GOVERNMENT

TO A FRESH SET OF POLICY INITIATIVES AIMED DIRECTLY AT WORKING FAMILIES INCLUDING.

AN ADDITIONAL £12 BILLION INVESTED IN SCHOOLS AND TRAINING.

AN INCREASE IN THE NATIONAL MINIMUM WAGE,

A RISE IN STATUITORY MATERNITY LEAVE FROM 18 WEEKS TO 24 WEEKS, AN INCREASE IN STATUTORY MATERNITY PAY FROM £60 A WEEK TO £100 A WEEK AND A BIG RISE IN THE MATERNITY GRANT TO £500

A CASH INJECTION OF £15 BILLION FOR THE NHS.

THE RIGHT TO 2 WEEKS PAID PATERNITY LEAVE.

NEW HELP WITH CHILD CARE COSTS

PENSION INCREASES NEXT YEAR ABOVE THE RATE OF INFLATION.

THE TORIES ON THE OTHER HAND ARE PLEDGED TO INTRODUCE SAVAGE SPENDING CUTS OF £16 BILLION ACROSS



BRITAINS PUBLIC SERVICES.

THEY WILL SCRAP ALL NEW LAWS WON BY TRADE UNIONISTS OVER THE PAST FOUR YEARS, INCLUDING THE RIGHT TO

BR REPRESENTED BY A TRADE UNION THE RIGHT TO PAID PATERNITY LEAVE AND THE IMPROVED RIGHT TO COMPENSATION FOR WRONGFUL DISMISSAL.

ABOLISH THE NEW DEAL WHICH HAS FOUND JOBS FOR NEARLY 300,000 UNEMPLOYED YOUNG PEOPLE

PRIVATISE THE NHS BY FORCING WORKING PEOPLE TO TAKE OUT HEALTH INSURANCE FOR OPERATIONS SUCH AS HIP AND KNEE REPLACEMENTS, HERNIAS AND CATARACTS.

MAKE PENSIONERS PAY FOR THEIR PENSION INCREASES BY AXING THE WINTER FUEL ALLOWANCE, ABOLISHING FREE TV LICENCE AND ENDING THE CHRISTMAS BONUS.

WHILE MOST PEOPLE REGARD THE PROSPECT OF WILLIAM HAGUE BECOMING PRIME MINISTER AS A BAD JOKE. BUT IF APATHY REIGNS WE COULD WELL WAKE UP ON THE 8TH OF JUNE TO THE AWFUL PROSPECT OF AN EXTREME TORY GOVERNMENT.

If one out of ever five labour voters stays at home the TORIES will win

THE TUC HAS NOT FORGOTTON WHAT THE LAST TORY GOVERNMENT DID TO WORKING PEOPLE. NEITHER SHOULD YOU. VOTE LABOUR FOR A FAIRER AND A JUST SOCIETY FOR ALL OUR PEOPLES. Elizabeth Blackman