

Class warfare is alive and as deeply distasteful as eve...

Published: January 13, 2026, 2:19 pm

This comes from the Conservative manifesto:

We will protect you from disruptive and undemocratic strike action

Strikes should only ever be the result of a clear, positive decision based on a ballot in which at least half the workforce has voted. This turnout threshold will be an important and fair step to rebalance the interests of employers, employees, the public and the rights of trade unions.

We will, in addition, tackle the disproportionate impact of strikes in essential public services by introducing a tougher threshold in health, education, fire and transport. Industrial action in these essential services would require the support of at least 40 per cent of all those entitled to take part in strike ballots — as well as a majority of those who actually turn out to vote.

We will also repeal nonsensical restrictions banning employers from hiring agency staff to provide essential cover during strikes; and ensure strikes cannot be called on the basis of ballots conducted years before.

We will tackle intimidation of non-striking workers; legislate to ensure trade unions use a transparent opt-in process for union subscriptions; tighten the rules around taxpayer-funded paid 'facility time' for union representatives; and reform the role of the Certification Officer.

Let's be clear, I work with trade unions: I lay my cards face up on the table. I am proud to do so. I do so by choice. That choice is motivated by the fact that I believe that unions are essential for three reasons. The first is to ensure fair pay and conditions. Many of the things that people take for granted now, from sick pay to holiday pay to employment rights inly happened because of trade unions.

Secondly, collective bargaining is essential if working people are to stand up to employers who can otherwise use their relative power to suppress wages on an individual basis. Unions are, therefore, essential for the improvement of the incomes of

wage earners and one reason why we have growing inequality in the UK is the loss of union representation.

Third, unions are economically efficient. They reduce employer negotiating time. They reduce the number of disputes by resolving vast numbers of them by their interventions. And they reduce the inefficiency that results from the uncertainty of individual negotiations and resulting grievances.

I'm not suggesting a panacea: I am saying that the practice of unions works for employees, but also for employers.

This though is not enough for the Conservatives. As Warren Buffett once noted "There is class war, and it is my class waging it", and that is exactly what is happening in this manifesto. A 50% voter rate is higher than that in the vast majority of elections for public office in the UK. Even MPs have been elected by lower proportions of the electorate turning out. And there is a clear threat to ensure unions cannot organise or collect subs in the last paragraph.

This is class warfare and it will harm the UK by reducing wages, increasing inequality, denying representation to people who need it and reducing efficiency in the workplace.

No logic can support this policy. Dogma based on class hatred can.