

# fack families against corporate killers

## **FACK Election Demands 2010**

### **1. Publish the real figures and facts about the harm caused by work**

Report all deaths caused by work in incidents ( including road, air and sea deaths, suicides and members of the public killed by work activities), and deaths caused by all work-related illnesses. [http://www.shponline.co.uk/article.asp?article\\_id=8265&viewcomment=1](http://www.shponline.co.uk/article.asp?article_id=8265&viewcomment=1)

### **2. Publicise the facts that business externalises the cost of poor H&S onto all of us**

Employers pay less than 25% of the over £30 billion cost of the harm work causes. <http://www.hazards.org/deadlybusiness/whopays.htm>

### **3. Directors Duties to make them accountable**

Directors must have a positive legal duty for the health and safety in their organisations and be accountable if they fail. <http://www.hazardscampaign.org.uk/fack/news/nwaerosols.htm>; <http://www.hazardscampaign.org.uk/docs/personalaccountability.htm>

### **4. Increase Enforcement of H&S to save lives**

Inspections, enforcement notices, prosecutions have all declined massively in recent years. Good laws are worthless if not enforced. The HSE and Local Authority inspectors must be better funded and tasked with carrying out preventative inspections and taking action before workers are killed or harmed. <http://www.hazards.org/deadlybusiness/thestate.htm>

### **5. Stop deregulation of H&S - it led to the disaster of curent recession**

Deregulation, light touch regulation, self-regulation, auditing and trusting business to behave, has brought us worldwide recession. Don't make the same mistake with H&S: no self-regulation, no self-auditing, no banning inspectors from workplaces, no reduction in laws and enforcement that saves lives and money. <http://www.hazards.org/deadlybusiness/escapingscrutiny.htm>

### **6. Investigate all workplace deaths and major injuries**

All deaths and major injures at work must be properly investigated, not just the 1 in 13 at present. The 'Joint Protocol on Work- Related Death' must be made to work effectively across the country, and enforcement and prosecution policies correctly implemented without delay. <http://www.hazards.org/deadlybusiness/escapingscrutiny.htm>

### **7. Support for workers in ensuring employers comply with H&S law**

The HSE and local authorities must respond more proactively to workers afraid for their safety and must enforce employers compliance.

### **8. Free legal representation for families of those killed at work**

All families of those killed at work must be provided with free legal representation from the start of the investigation procedure and for the Inquest, as the rights of families are frequently violated.

### **9. Help for victims families as victims of crime**

Specific exclusion of those harmed by breaches of HASAW Act in The Code of Practice for Victims is unfair and must end. HASAWA is criminal law, and those harmed by employers breaking it are victims of crime and should be supported by Victims Support, the new Victims Help line and support services. Special counselling and long term support at school must be provided for the children of those killed at work to prevent long term detriment.

### **10. Support for TU safety reps—they save lives**

Union organised workplace with safety reps and full consultation rights are twice as safe as workplaces without this. <http://www.hazards.org/unioneffect/index.htm>

## **Remember the dead and Fight for the Living**

There is an epidemic of lawlessness and unaccountability at work aided and abetted by a crisis of enforcement which is costing workers and families their lives, killing more than knife crime, costing society £billions, yet is none of this has been mentioned in this election!

This is what President Obama said two weeks after the mine disaster in West Virginia that killed 29 workers on 5th April 2010: *'The people of West Virginia are in our prayers. But we owe them more than prayers. We owe them action. We owe them accountability. We owe them an assurance that when they go to work every day, when they enter that dark mine, they are not alone. They ought to know that behind them there is a company that's doing what it takes to protect them, and a government that is looking out for their safety.'* Fine words and we await the action to make them real, but we rarely hear about action and accountability from British prime ministers, or leaders of political parties about a UK workplace disaster, such as the Stockline and Buncefield explosions, or the serial killing of companies such as Corus, Biffa and many others, or the health and safety of workers generally. Why not? Do we not count? That is what we feel as the families of workers killed by negligent employers: that our burden is ignored and they even refuse to treat us as victims of crime!

We are families who know what poor health and safety costs—it costs lives and it ruined ours the day an employer's negligence killed someone we love who just went to work, see our stories on [www.fack.org.uk/about us](http://www.fack.org.uk/about-us). Deaths caused by work are much more common than the government publicises, so workers are at more risk than they realise: estimated 1,500 –1,600 killed in work-related incidents and up to 50,000 dying due to work-related illness each year, not the '180 killed by work' that is only the small fraction of worker fatalities that must be reported to the HSE.

We know that almost all deaths at work are totally preventable but they aren't because there is weak law enforcement, and the penalties for killing workers are too low to be a credible deterrent. Killing workers is a crime and should be treated as one, but you are more likely to go to prison for harming the factory cat than killing an employee. Health and safety isn't 'mere red tape', it isn't a 'burden on business', it isn't 'over regulated' and it hasn't 'gorn mad'. In fact good health and safety is vanishingly rare. In many of our workplaces it's barely enforced at all. Only 1 in 13 major and fatal injuries is even investigated! Fewer still are prosecuted, and penalties for most deaths are paltry fines which are not a sufficient deterrent as some companies are serial offenders. After killing workers the directors can liquidate the company, set up another, and avoid any charges they can kill and maim on a serial basis yet face no accountability in court as the individuals who made the decisions. We bear the burden of poor health and safety for the rest of our lives, yet the employers who create 100% of the risk, pay less than 25% of the financial costs, and none of the heart break.

At the election we urge everyone to vote for your lives by rejecting any deregulation of health and safety, any cut backs in already inadequate enforcement; and to demand more preventative action before workers are killed, the imposition of positive legal duties on directors to make their workplace safe or face imprisonment if they fail. We want more help and support for our children and for families like ours, to help us get some justice, and to prevent other deaths. Ask your parliamentary candidates, and leaders of their parties, what they will do for your health and safety and law breaking by employers. Society can't afford the financial cost, and we sure as hell can't afford any more heart ache!

**On 6th May 2010 Vote for your lives!**

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