

unionlearn

with the TUC



From voluntarism to post-voluntarism

The emerging role of unions in the vocational education and training system

Bert Clough, unionlearn

Research paper 5
June 2007

OXFORD & CARDIFF UNIVERSITIES

SKOPE

E · S · R · C
ECONOMIC
& SOCIAL
RESEARCH
COUNCIL

Bert Clough is unionlearn's Research and Strategy Manager. Unionlearn is the TUC organisation that supports union-led strategies on learning and skills. It helps unions to open up learning opportunities for their members and also to develop trade union education for their representatives and officers.

The paper is being disseminated through the TUC's unionlearn High Road project. The project is part of a community programme called Equal – a European Social Fund initiative that tests and promotes new means of combatting all forms of discrimination and inequality in the labour market. The GB Equal Support is managed by ECOTEC.

Acknowledgement

The paper is a revised version of the chapter "From Spear Holders to Stakeholders: The Emerging Role of Unions in the UK Learning and Skills System" by Bert Clough in the monograph *Trade Unions and Training: Issues and International Perspectives* edit. Richard Cooney and Mark Stuart, published by the National Key Centre in Industrial Relations, Monash University, Australia (2004).

Contents

Foreword	2
Abstract	3
Skills formation and the role of unions	4
The union effect	4
From tripartism to employer hegemony	5
Unions in a cold climate	6
Unions and TECs	6
The Bargaining for Skills projects	8
Other innovatory union learning activity	8
New Labour and the “Third Way”	10
Individual Learning Accounts: the sunken flagship	10
The University for Industry	11
The demise of the TECs	12
The rise of the Learning and Skills Council	12
Regionalisation	13
Sector bodies	13
The “post-voluntarist” age	15
Social dialogue on productivity	15
The Skills Strategy	16
The Leitch Review of skills	17
Enhancing union capacity	18
The Union Learning Fund	18
Union learning representatives	19
Unionlearn	19
Collective bargaining over training	20
Conclusion	22
References	23

Foreword

Over the last 10 years, the role of unions in learning has been greatly enhanced. Gone are the days when governments marginalised unions and tried to impose a free market in training. The Labour Government and union learning agenda now overlap, particularly in the recognition that there has to be state intervention to increase learning opportunities and life chances for those disadvantaged in the labour market. That is why unions and their learning representatives supported by unionlearn are actively supporting the Government's measures to establish employee rights to Skills for Life and level 2 qualifications and improving the supply side.

However, the union agenda is much wider than this. It is about raising demand for higher levels of skills, such as apprenticeships and continuing professional development, and ensuring that all skills are fully utilised at the workplace. It is also about ensuring that enhanced skills lead to rewards, not just in the form of pay and conditions but better job quality and career progression.

Union capacity over learning has never been higher. But to take forward this broad agenda requires a much fairer balance between employer, employee and the union. There have to be two major changes: statutory rights to collective bargaining over training and a greater union voice in the vocational education and training system. This is a strategy that will increase both the supply and demand for skills needed in a modern economy.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Liz Smith". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Liz Smith
Director, unionlearn

Abstract

This paper traces the history of union involvement in training from the neo-corporatism of the 1960/70s, through the voluntarism of the 1980s/90s, to the present “post-voluntary” era, as described by Gordon Brown when Chancellor of the Exchequer. It concludes that, although that there has been significant capacity building in unions under New Labour, the lack of significant collective bargaining over training limits delivering the broad union learning agenda at the workplace. Unions have been encouraged to contribute to the “supply-side” agenda and help their members into learning up to level 2 qualifications to help meet the government targets. However, management prerogative has remained over higher levels of skills formation and their utilisation. If unions are to advance a “demand-side” agenda then this will require more collective bargaining over training and a greater role for unions in policy development, within a new statutory framework.

Skills formation and the role of unions

Training provision involves more than technical questions about how skills are developed. The level of skills and who possesses them can reveal the prevailing balance of power at the workplace. It has been argued that unions should embrace skills formation as the centrepiece of a new co-operative strategy whilst retaining a strong independent power base with a capacity to impose obligations on employers (Streeck, 1994). Yet traditionally in the UK, it is the employer who holds the information about available training opportunities. The power of choice over type of provision and who takes it up has resided primarily with the employer; sometimes leaving employees unaware of the opportunities to learn.

There can thus be tensions between employer and employee. The former may view all decisions about the content of job-related training, who receives it and how the acquired skills are utilised, as a management prerogative, since it involves the organisation of work and related productivity issues. Unions, however, have a legitimate interest in the effect of skills formation on job evaluation and reward systems. Many employers may have little incentive to adopt strategies based on the transferability/accreditation of skills and employee development in general, given the fear of poaching. On the other hand, employees and their unions see that it is in their interest to access broad and high skills to promote job mobility and meet sector needs. Modern unionism may also demand a fairer distribution of training opportunities; with greater increase in provision for low skilled and part-time/temporary workers.

Increasing learning and skills at the workplace is thus not simply a “positive-sum” game even though there is good evidence that increased training leads to returns to the employer through productivity increases and to the employee through a wage premium. An important element is the balance of power at the workplace that in turn can be influenced by the decision-making process in the learning and skills system as well as the employer/employee balance in the industrial relations system. This paper attempts to track the significant changes to these systems over recent years resulting from shifts in political ideology.

The union effect

The literature in relation to the impact that unions might have on training investment decisions is well documented (Heyes, 2000). In the past, human capital theory has implied that the willingness of employers to provide training diminishes where trade unions are able to negotiate real wage increases for trainees. Explanations for the declining volume of apprenticeship training in the UK from the mid-1960s onwards have included unions’ attempts to narrow the earnings gap between young trainees and skilled adult workers in the same occupation. The return employers received on training investment was thus reduced (Gospel, 1995).

Other perspectives indicate that trade unions may have a positive role to play in encouraging training activity within firms. By resolving problems on behalf of their members trade unions can help staff retention and lower turnover. This in turn increases employer return on investment in training and thus their propensity to train. Furthermore, unions may close off routes to competitiveness based on the intensive use of low-wage, low-skill labour and help influence employers to adopt a high skills, high spec, and high wages route.

Empirical evidence has found that employees in workplaces where trade unions are recognised stand a significantly higher chance of receiving training than those in non-unionised workplaces. The “union voice” effect led to unionised workplaces being also more likely to have training plans (Green et al., 1996). An analysis of the 2004 Workplace Employee Relations Survey (WERS) has found that training levels at those workplaces with union recognition and a union representative are almost 13 per cent higher than those with no recognition and no representation (Stuart and Robinson, 2007). It also found that the co-existence of union recognition alongside negotiations with management over training increases the probability of receiving training by over 24 per cent.

The union “voice” has however been limited over the last two decades as a result of the unremitting

decline of union membership in the UK; falling from a peak in 1979 when union density was over half the workforce to the present level of 27 per cent. This fall has been uneven in the labour force, with three in five employees in the public sector being in unions but only one in five private sector workers being union members. Union membership has stabilised rather than increased under the new Labour government; even in a more favourable political climate where unions have been given more recognition rights and employees given more employment rights. Only one in three employees is covered by collective bargaining and such bargaining does not include the statutory right to negotiate on issues such as training and wider learning. The union impact on training and learning at the workplace is thus affected by internal factors such as the effectiveness of organisation and recruitment and by externalities such as employment law.

From tripartism to employer hegemony

In the UK, unlike in many northern European countries, social partnership in education and training has been underdeveloped. This reflects both the nation's relatively unregulated labour market particularly over the last couple of decades and the previous adversarial nature of industrial relations. With the election of a Labour government in 1997, however, there has been increasing recognition of unions as stakeholders in learning and skills policy. Partnership with unions over learning and skills is an important strand of the Government's lifelong learning strategy although formal social partnership is problematic. Devolved decision-making to the social partners is still marginal and relations between social partners still fragile. Nevertheless, positive government support for enhancing union capacity over learning and skills has provided a much more favourable terrain for social partnership ever since the 1970s. There have been three distinct stages in union involvement in the UK learning and skills system since the 1960s (Clough, 2004):

- a) 1960s–1970s: neo-corporatist system underpinned by formal tripartite social partnership structures
- b) 1980s–late 1990s: employer-dominated voluntary system with unions marginalised
- c) late 1990s–present: increasingly centralised government system with informal partnership arrangements

After a period of voluntarism following the Second World War came a more interventionist approach at sector level. It resulted in the establishment of tripartite statutory industry training boards (ITBs) in the 1960s, with powers to introduce training levies. Decision-making on skills formation was thus devolved to employers, trade unions and educational interests. In the 1970s there was a cross-party political consensus that there was a need for national neo-corporate machinery to intervene in the economy and the labour market. As a result, the Conservative Government set up the tripartite National Economic Development Council and the Manpower Services Commission (MSC). The intention of the MSC was to address market failure in training and deliver active labour market measures, modelled on the Swedish Labour Board. However, as unemployment grew from the mid-1970s the MSC became more and more directed towards designing and delivering programmes for unemployed young people and long-term unemployed adults.

Through the MSC Commissioners appointed by the Trades Union Congress and union members of the 54 MSC Area Manpower Boards, unions were very much engaged with the Commission's programmes. Their aim was to limit any job substitution, protect the quality of training and to enhance training allowances. Employers, however, were less engaged in this agenda and were increasingly concerned about the role of the MSC in the running of the ITBs at sector level.

Unions in a cold climate

The election of the Thatcher Government in 1979 ushered in a more ideological approach to training. The training market was to be exclusively determined by the short-term needs of employers. The wider needs of the state and society as a whole were seen as a neo-corporatist irrelevance. State intervention would be superseded by voluntarism. To allow unions a continued say in policy making would undermine deregulation. It has been suggested that there were two stages in the Conservative strategy (Jones, 1999). The first was that “the structures of corporatism were annexed for the purposes of furthering neo-liberalism” with a weakening of trade union and local authority influence on the bodies and strengthening of employer influence. This would inevitably be followed by the second stage; with the dismantlement of tripartite bodies such as NEDC, the MSC and ITBs and the ascendancy of an employer-driven system. The MSC was emasculated into a Training Commission. With the Labour movement riven over whether to try to reform “workfare” government programmes such as Employment Training from the inside or outside of the new Commission the government decided to abolish it in its infancy. Furthermore, all the ITBs, except two in the construction industry, were replaced by employer-led industry training organisations without any levy powers, to the delight of the Confederation of British Industry (CBI).

The most significant institutions occupying this new terrain were the Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs), which were based very loosely around the Private Industry Councils in the USA. They were introduced by the Thatcher administration, with the fulsome support of the CBI. There were 47 locally based TECs in England and Wales run by boards dominated by employers and chaired by an employer. TECs were founded on the myth that the training system would be privatised and they could yoke market forces with the enlightened self-interest of employers to bring about the CBI’s “skills revolution”. There were, however, seemingly irreconcilable objectives. One aim of TECs was to meld training with enterprise, yet at the same time promote a “workfare” policy. TECs were also meant to secure local employer

empowerment of training, yet at the same time act as sub contractors for national government programmes determined by Whitehall. The White Paper that ushered in TECs, *Employment for the 1990s*, demanded that they “must have as a prime objective the mobilisation of employers, collectively and individually”. However, it has been stated that TECs merely became the deliverers of government policies on unemployment and failed to increase substantially employer engagement with education and training (Robinson, 1996).

Unions and TECs

Unions reacted in a variety of ways to these adverse circumstances. Some unions, such as those representing transport, local government and shop workers (TGWU, NALGO and USDAW), refused to engage with TECs. The reasons for this included opposition to the Employment Training scheme for the adult long-term unemployed, which was being operated by the TECs at the behest of the government. TECs were thus seen as “new-style workfare institutions”. There was also general union antipathy to the replacing of the tripartite MSC Area Manpower Boards by the employer-dominated councils. However, some unions, such as the engineering union (AEEU), decided to engage fully with the TECs and initially secured the lion’s share of union seats on TEC boards. Union membership of TEC boards was however on a “grace and favour” basis and those TECs that did appoint union members only provided them with one out of perhaps fifteen places.

The TUC decided pragmatically that the union movement needed to “do business” with the TECs if it was to remain a player – albeit a minor one – in the training arena. As the then TUC Deputy General Secretary counselled:

“In our view, the proposals [in the White Paper] failed to address the reluctance of many British employers to provide adequate training, the shortfall in funding and the need to for action to safeguard quality and standards... in the absence of

a statutory framework TECs will be the predominant decision makers in localities and they will continue in some form or other regardless of which party forms the next government. Union involvement in them recognises these facts.” (Monks, 1992).

The TUC was not against devolving executive power to local level, with TECs assessing local skills needs and devising local training plans. It did, however, call for them to be radically reformed. They needed to be more accountable and open; be better funded (a position shared with the CBI); and collaborate, not compete, with providers such as local education authorities and colleges. A national framework also needed to be established within which TECs could operate and be supported (Monks, op.cit.)

The stance of the union movement during this period had not been blanket opposition to all training initiatives as a whole, particularly those originating from the CBI. For example, it had already made a formal commitment to the national education and training targets established by the CBI and was a champion of Investors in People (IIP) – the new corporate standard that was again based on thinking done by the CBI. The President of the engineering union (then the AEU) was appointed to the National Training Task Force, which advised the Government on a national strategy for TECs. The TUC and a number of unions had also supported the concept of a national framework of competence-based qualifications, the National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) system, as well as Modern Apprenticeships based around the qualifications. It therefore seemed a logical step for unions to engage with TECs since they were funded on the basis of delivering the national targets, IIP, NVQs and Modern Apprenticeships.

Indeed, the TUC wanted to have more formal involvement with the TECs. It wanted all TECs to appoint union representatives on to their boards, for a better spread of union representation on the boards and greater accountability of union board members to the wider union movement. The conundrum was that TECs, having the legal status of private companies,

appointed people as individual directors not as representatives to their boards, whilst union officers had a purely representational role. However, it was solved in the longer term, with every TEC having a union member on its board, most of whom were appointed through the regional TUC.

The vast majority of such representatives were full-time officers and TEC union membership gradually became more representative of the union movement as a whole as all those unions who had boycotted TECs reversed their policy. The TUC nationally made serious efforts to maintain their accountability by establishing a network of union TEC representatives, providing them with policy briefing on TUC policy on training. The briefing sessions often involved contributions from officials from the TEC National Council and chief executives of TECs. It is ironic that the only group of TEC board members supported this way was the trade unionists; the CBI did not provide a similar service for their TEC members, whom they saw as individuals not as representatives (Banham, 1992).

With the election of the Labour Government in 1997, there was greater engagement between DfES officials and union TEC directors under the auspices of the TUC. A representative group of union TEC directors was even established to meet the Minister responsible for TECs with a view to influencing government policy on the future of the councils and training in general.

The establishment of the TEC National Council, which tried to bring the diverse and atomised TECs into a more coherent TEC movement, enabled more formal engagement with the trade union movement. The Council recognised that organised labour could stimulate the demand for training, particularly amongst employees, and help meet the TEC targets, which were important to them since they were outcome funded. The TEC National Council/TUC “national accord” of 1996 was a symbol of such recognition and collaboration and this was followed by a joint guide setting out good practice between TECs and unions (TEC National Council/TUC, 1998). Although the TEC National Council, as an umbrella

organisation, could not direct TECs on policy and operational issues it did exercise considerable influence on the TEC movement as a whole and certainly helped to promote union/TEC partnerships.

The Bargaining for Skills projects

The most significant partnerships on learning and skills between TECs and the union movement were the joint projects with the TUC. They were generically named Bargaining for Skills. This was really a misnomer: they were more about increasing the capacity of unions to enhance employee demand for learning and skills than helping them exercise leverage on employers to train their workforce. The reason why TECs established the projects was that they could help meet some of their targets within the contracts with government. Their activities covered awareness raising events for union officers concerning programmes such as NVQs, Modern Apprenticeships and Investors in People; their contracts often stipulating numbers of employees covered by such activities. In more developed projects, such as in the North West, the TECs contracted Bargaining for Skills to work with specific employers and unions through “demonstrator” projects at workplaces to meet outcomes, such as commitment to IIP. Projects were also instrumental in brokering learning provision between employer, unions and providers such as colleges.

Bargaining for Skills was initially a patchwork of projects that mirrored the fragmented TEC system. In those regions such as the North West where TECs worked together more, they funded regional projects. They pooled their discretionary funding and where appropriate used the European Social Fund to maximise the impact of the projects. Other TECs operated their own projects but with limited effect. In some English regions, such as the South East and the South West, there was no Bargaining for Skills activity until the late 1990s.

The scope of the projects were by their very nature limited to the TEC agenda, with project workers trying

to use the projects to promote the wider trade union agenda of lifelong learning. With the election of a Labour Government with a much more inclusive view of lifelong learning, TECs needed to adopt this new agenda. Bargaining for Skills projects were used by TECs to promote and deliver the new government initiatives (see below).

Other innovatory union learning activity

It would be erroneous to think that all union activity on learning and skills was centered on the partnership with TECs. There were some very imaginative partnership schemes established between unions and employers, albeit within the voluntary system with no statutory entitlements for employees and no collective rights for unions to bargain over training or learning. For example, the unions at the Ford motor company made a collective agreement with the management to establish the Employee Development Assistance Programme (EDAP) in 1987, modelled on the collective agreement in the USA plants. This scheme is co-funded by the company and the employees collectively and jointly run by management and unions. It offers a wide range of non-vocational and recreation courses outside working time and over half of Ford employees have taken up courses ranging from philosophy to the care of koi fish.

Other innovatory programmes included Return to Learn. Initially this was set up by the National Union of Public Employees in the West Midlands and extended nationally by its successor, UNISON, from the mid-1990s. The courses cover basic skills, women’s studies and are very much about confidence-building. The programme is targeted at groups of workers such as women, part-timers, the low paid, black workers and manual workers. The course is delivered by the Workers Education Association and takes approximately nine months to complete, resulting in accreditation. A key component is the peer support that learners have in the form of access to “local education advisers”. Many of them have gone through

the programme and have subsequently been trained by the union to give advice and guidance to new entrants; thus creating a cascade effect. Public sector employers such as local authorities and hospital trusts have seen the direct and indirect benefits of their workers going on the programme and some have reached agreements with UNISON on the provision of paid time off to attend Return to Learn courses.

New Labour and the “Third Way”

Up to the election of the Labour Government in 1997, education and training policies were given a prominent place in New Labour’s thinking. The policy challenge was daunting given the legacy of a serious skills gap, low demand for skills, a marketised education and training system and the uneven distribution of education and training opportunities (Hodgson, 1999). Policy options canvassed by Labour in opposition included a revised training levy system, a compulsory company membership of TECs similar to the German chamber model, a legal entitlement to five training days each year, and individual learning accounts (ILAs). These policies had in fact been proposed by the TUC as integral parts of a statutory package, not as individual options (TUC, 1995).

Although the “Third Way” approach was to put much less reliance on the market, it eschewed any statutory obligations on employers to train that the trade union movement was pressing for. New Labour’s approach has been described as an attempt to create a “modified market” as a half-way point between Conservative marketisation and “Old Labour” regulation and planning (Hodgson, op.cit.). However, this could change in relation to the Government’s “Skills Pledge” (see below). New Labour was to emphasise the responsibilities of individuals to enhance their employability and prevent social exclusion, backed by state support where there was market failure in the case of people with low or no qualifications. This ruled out the first four policy options, which were based around employer obligation, and ruled in Individual Learning Accounts, which were modelled on individual/state obligation.

The “Third Way” did not subscribe to a social partnership approach. The institutions that the Government has established have been employer dominated in terms of representation, with a minority union presence. There is a question however as to whether the UK’s vocational education and training (VET) policy is in reality employer-led. It has been argued that these institutions are “state-licensed entities, receiving their core funding from government and expected to respond (positively)

towards delivering national programmes and targets in whose design and setting they have played no role” (Keep, 2006).

Individual Learning Accounts: the sunken flagship

The commitment to introduce a million ILAs was very much championed by the then Chancellor of the Exchequer, Gordon Brown, and set out in Labour’s Manifesto of 1997. The two key principles behind the account as set out in the Government’s seminal Green Paper *The Learning Age* (DfEE, 1998) were that “individuals are best placed to choose what and how they want to learn and that responsibility for investing in learning is shared”. ILAs were to be the heart of “a learning revolution”, galvanising non-traditional learners into developing their own skills.

On the face of it, it might be assumed that such individual solutions could shake the collectivist roots of the union movement. However, trade unions were not against a shared approach to learning but held the view that any such system should adhere to the principle of “additionality”. The total investment in learning should increase as a result of ILAs, not have a substitution effect of transferring employer responsibilities for training to the individual and the state (Clough, 1998). Nor could the accounts be any substitute for securing employer commitment to training through statutory underpinning such as the reintroduction of levy-type arrangements.

The £150 million scheme initially involved TECs being required to put £150 from their reserves into each of the one million accounts with the employee contributing £25. Employers could also contribute voluntarily. The view of the TUC was that ILAs could do much to improve the supply of and demand for learning but only if they were a part of an infrastructure providing adequate guidance for learners and securing employer commitment.

Trade unions saw their role as helping to target accounts on those employees who had no or few

qualifications. They should get the lion's share of the state subsidy or there would be a "dead-weight" effect. Unions also brokered access to adult guidance services to ensure that members could make informed choices on the type of courses they bought through the accounts. The union movement's ultimate objective was to establish "collective learning funds" co-financed by employers, employees and the state to fund learning opportunities at the workplace but not directly related to their jobs. This concept was revived in the 2006 Further Education White Paper (see below).

TECs were given the role of running 12 ILA pilots in 1998/99. A few of these involved trade unions and Bargaining for Skills projects, primarily targeting unskilled workers. The union value had been in stimulating innovative partnerships in learning rather than in terms of numbers of ILAs opened (DfEE, 2000a). Union learning representatives (see below) helped to help market the accounts to their members; provide them with "front-line advice and guidance" and ensure they were used to meet employees' individual needs and not misused for company-specific training. They also helped to broker learning opportunities with colleges and other providers and maximise employer contributions to the accounts and set up workplace learning centres.

The roll out of a national scheme in autumn 2000 resulted in significant changes. The plan was for a million accounts holders by March 2002 – a target that was actually met as early as May 2001. This, however, hid important policy failures. A major problem was encouraging new learners through both a universal and targeted approach. The universal approach led to an exponential take up of ILAs but with a resulting overshoot on the budget. Yet the targeted approach had little impact, except when intermediaries such as trade unions were used to introduce accounts to employees with few or no qualifications. There was thus significant deadweight.

Another policy problem was that of encouraging new providers into the market – a "let a thousand providers bloom" approach. Although there was a

high satisfaction rate for the quality of the courses undertaken, the lack of regulation resulted in a significant number of unscrupulous providers misselling accounts. Fraud took place in some cases. This ultimately resulted in the Government closing the scheme in November 2001.

There were no scams when unions were involved in brokering provision since this was with recognised providers such as colleges. In its inquiry into ILAs the House of Commons Select Committee on Education and Skills recognised the positive role of unions and recommended that "the successes of trusted intermediaries, such as trade union learning representatives, should be taken fully into account in designing the new scheme". However, the new Skills Strategy with its individual entitlement to free learning at level 2 has made an ILA system redundant, although learning accounts in relation to higher levels are now being piloted.

The University for Industry

Another important symbol of New Labour was that of the University for Industry (Ufi). Like ILAs, it was championed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. As the Open University had used distance learning to widen participation in higher education, so the Ufi was to harness modern communication technologies to help re-skill the nation. Its name, however, was based more on rhetoric than reality; for it was not a university and it was designed just as much to meet individual personal development as the requirements of industry. Indeed its brand name became not Ufi but "learndirect". It was designed to help deliver a demand-led lifelong learning system. Essentially, it was to act as a broker between learners and learning opportunities in a specific setting or via ICT technologies directly into the home or workplace. It was to identify gaps in the market and commission specific learning packages. It also was to provide online advice and guidance on learning opportunities.

Trade unions had a long tradition of providing education for their activists through direct contact with learners using innovative study methods. The

TUC and many unions recognised, however, that using ICT to access online learning could provide opportunities to more learners at a pace and place to suit them. The objective of learndirect is to establish about 1,000 centres to bring more than a million adults into work-related learning, backed by a massive promotional campaign. The TUC and its unions have set up a partnership of providers as an Ufl “hub” for the trade union sector to assist union delivery of learndirect courses. A network of TUC learndirect centres operate in union offices, workplaces and trade union study centres. Union learning representatives are supporting learners in these centres, many of which have been established by Union Learning Fund projects.

The demise of the TECs

Although there was great scepticism about how TECs could deliver Labour’s lifelong learning agenda, they continued to operate until the outcome of their review in 1999 when their fate was sealed. *The Learning Age* (op.cit.), which set out the Government’s strategy for lifelong learning, expressed concern about the lack of quality control of TEC-funded training and even evidence of fraud and the misuse of resources.

There was a common concern shared between the Government, the CBI and the TUC about the variability in TEC performance and excessive bureaucracy which needed to be addressed by a review. There were, however, very different views between the social partners as to its desired outcome. The review took place at a time when some councils were changing into even more employer-dominated bodies through mergers with chambers of commerce. A key principle within the TUC’s submission to the review was that “TECs have the support of business but they must not be seen as exclusively supporting business” and that “TEC/ chamber mergers would result in them being even more accountable to the business at the expense of the wider community and that there could be conflicts of interest” (TUC,1998). This contrasted with

the CBI’s position that “TEC boards retain their clear business majority” and that they should have the freedom to merge with chambers (CBI, 1998).

The rise of the Learning and Skills Council

The surprising outcome of the review was the demise of the TECs and a much more centralised model. The Government’s reasons were set out in its White Paper *Learning to Succeed* (DfEE, 1999). They were that current arrangements provided an insufficient focus on quality, were too provider driven and that there was inconsistency and contradictions in present funding and delivery mechanisms. It also noted that there was widespread support for the creation of a single body to oversee national strategies for post-16 learning. This view was supported by the TUC in a resolution carried at its Congress but it was not shared by the CBI which still cleaved to the TEC local business-driven model.

The ensuing legislation established probably the most potentially powerful agency over education and training in the history of vocational education and training – even surpassing that of the former MSC. The Learning and Skills Council (LSC), established in 2001, assumed responsibility not just for the funding and quality control of TEC training provision but for further education colleges and local authority adult learning, as well as sixth form provision. In fact, the only post-16 provision in England not controlled by the LSC in its vast £8bn empire is higher education and company-funded training. Although the LSC sees itself as a demand-led agency, in reality it is much more supply focussed.

In view of the pivotal role of the “quango”, trade unions pressed the Government for representation on its Council and its 47 sub-regional local councils as well as union involvement in the delivery of post-16 provision. Representation was secured and, unlike under the TECs, it was not on a “grace and favour” basis. It was not, however, a return to the MSC days when unions appointed representatives

to a third of the places on public bodies. Although employers were no longer in the majority, they formed the largest group on the Council and each local LSC. Like TECs, they were chaired by an employer, with only one union representative appointed to them. Furthermore, all appointments to public bodies had to follow the principles set out by the Committee on Standards in Public Life chaired by Lord Nolan. Under the “Nolan Principles”, all places on public bodies have to be advertised, with applicants interviewed as in the case of paid employment. This cut across the principle of accountability in respect to representative organisations such as unions and local authorities, although it was compatible with individual employer membership.

In terms of the incidence of union representation it seemed that little had altered in the change over from TECs, but in reality there were significant changes. The General Secretary of the TUC was appointed Vice Chair of the LSC and chair of its Adult Learners Committee. Furthermore, the TUC, with support from the DfEE, did manage to secure nominations to the local LSCs of trade unionists who were accountable to the TUC and their unions, even though they were appointed through open competition under the Nolan process. There is, however, less autonomy for local LSC boards than TEC boards, which ironically is resulting in union members having less influence at sub-regional level. The LSC, however, is to become more regionalised, with local LSCs being replaced with regional ones.

Regionalisation

The reforms under New Labour which are likely to be the most sustaining will be those related to devolved government. The Scottish Parliament and the Welsh Assembly and their Executives were established with legislative power over education and training in their countries. Regional Development Agencies in England were established in 1999. Like local LSCs, these bodies are quangos chaired, but not dominated by, employers; with unions having only a single member again appointed under the Nolan process. Unlike local LSCs, they have more of a strategic than a

direct funding role. They also have a much wider remit including economic development and regeneration, sustainable development and matching skills to the regional economy. Regional Skills Partnerships have also been established to co-ordinate the agencies such as the RDA and local LSCs involved in learning and skills.

Unlike the LSC, RDAs are responsible to the Department of Trade and Industry, not the DfES. They were very much championed by the Treasury who regards them as potentially powerful instruments in tackling productivity and income disparities between regions. They have been relatively successful in securing increased government funding for their roles. An important role is drawing up Frameworks for Regional Employment and Skills Action. There is increasing collaboration between them and the LSCs and other bodies in their regions over developing the frameworks.

Union members of RDA boards are either senior TUC or union regional officers who exercise considerable influence in their regions. They have been able to promote the increasing recognition of the role of unions, particularly over economic development and learning and skills in RDAs, and have been running effective joint projects in the North East, South East and London RDAs. TUC regions have established fora involving RDAs and other stakeholders to maximise their policy input on regional learning and skills.

Sector bodies

The sectoral impact on skills has been much diminished as the systems architecture has been successively weakened since the 1960s. Under the industry training board established in 1964 with the support of the major employer federations, a levy-grant system was introduced whereby all firms paid a levy to, and claimed a grant towards, the cost of the training they undertook. Once this arrangement was replaced by a remission system that exempted small companies and central government assumed responsibility for their operating costs, the ITBs’

impact on their sectors was considerably weakened. The subsequent abolition of all but two of the ITBs led to the creation of a voluntary network of industry training organisations, which in turn were rationalised into a system of national training organisations. Unlike the ITBs which were tripartite in composition, these bodies were employer-dominated. Where trade unionists sat on their boards they were appointed on a “grace and favour” basis. Evaluations of such bodies have found that, with notable exceptions, they were weakly resourced and relatively ineffectual organisations (Keep, 1999).

The present Labour Government has introduced yet more changes, with the aim of further rationalising the system and having a smaller number of more effective sector bodies. A network of sector skills councils (SSCs) has been established under the direction of a Sector Skills Development Agency, appointed by central government. Their remit includes responsibility for developing occupational standards and approving qualifications which underpin programmes, such as apprenticeships. Unlike the case of the national training organisations, the new bodies, although employer-led, are required to appoint trade unionists to their boards. There seems to be more union engagement with SSCs than the LSCs, possibly because they are not just concerned about the supply of education and training but also with trying to raise employer demand for skills through programmes such as apprenticeships. There has thus been some early union engagement with a number of SSCs in developing and delivering sector skills agreements. However, it is too early to assess whether such councils will have marked impact on employer behaviour at sector level in the continued absence of any significant incentives or penalties to train to occupational standards and without strong collaboration with the LSC and RDAs. The SSCs will be reformed and relicensed and put under the aegis of the proposed Commission for Employment and Skills (see below).

The “post-voluntarist” age

It has been increasingly recognised that skills shortages were hampering the economy and that a large swathe of people were without basic qualifications. A high-powered National Skills Task Group was established in 1999 to advise the Government how these chronic problems could be tackled. Three senior union general secretaries sat on the Task Group and attempted to press the Group to adopt solutions based around a statutory system. Its seminal reports made useful recommendations about introducing entitlements to free tuition for people under 25 studying to level 3 (craft level) and for the adult workforce to level 2 (below craft level). It rejected however the union argument for any legal obligations on employers to train, even when there was clear market failure (DfEE, 2000b).

The Secretary of State in his response to the Task Group’s report however did indicate that intervention was not entirely ruled out. Where social partners agreed that there was a serious skills problem and that this was the best way forward, he would use existing powers to provide statutory backing for appropriate collective skills funding arrangements in the sector (DfEE, 2001). This was reiterated in the Government’s election manifesto for its second term of office and in its Skills Strategy (DfES, 2003). The strategy envisaged SSCs having a more robust role, although any introduction of regulatory measures such as training levies or licences to practice would require the support of the majority of employers within the sector.

The first challenge of how to implement this commitment was when the printing union reached agreement with the major employer federation that some intervention was required. Ministers were involved in such discussions. A major obstacle, however, was that small employers would block any attempts to re-establish any statutory-based ITB. However, the SSC for the film sector has agreed to put their voluntary levy system on a statutory footing, although this is taking time to implement.

One early government intervention was the introduction of legislation to provide 16- and 17-year-

olds at work without a first level 2 qualification with the statutory right to paid time off to reach this level. Although the TUC supported the objective, it felt that very few young people would use an Employment Tribunal to enforce this right against a recalcitrant employer unless they were members of a union, which many young workers are not. The employee right needed to be matched by an obligation on the employer. There is no evidence of any such use of an Employment Tribunal and the effect of the legislation is minimal. The scheme has an estimated take up of merely 3 per cent. This has been followed by proposals to raise the participation age in education and training to 18. Although unions support the objective, they are concerned about the means. The Government is consulting on the possibility of introducing compulsion on the individual young person through attendance orders but no sanctions on employers who do not train them. It is seen by unions as placing a duty on the individual but putting no responsibility on the employer to train.

Social dialogue on productivity

Perhaps the most significant recognition for intervention came from the Treasury when the Chancellor of the Exchequer publicly admitted that the voluntarist system was not delivering the skills that the nation required. He asked both the CBI and the TUC to prepare a report on what actions were necessary to be taken in respect to four major elements of his “Productivity Initiative” – investment, technology and innovation, best practice and skills. A CBI/TUC working group was established, chaired by the TUC General Secretary, to make recommendations on skills policy. Although informal social partnership arrangements had occurred at workplace and sectoral levels, very little had been done between the CBI and the TUC nationally – the CBI being instinctively opposed to social dialogue/partnership based around the European model. The process of getting agreement was a protracted process. Nevertheless, a consensus was reached over identifying some major problems: that about one in five adults needed

training to overcome problems with literacy and numeracy; more of the workforce needed to be qualified to level 2; and small firms needed to adopt corporate standards such as Investors in People (IIP) (CBI/TUC, 2001).

The report was heavily influenced by the CBI – with its major thrust being the need for government to provide carrots for employers to tackle these deficiencies. Any sticks to change employer behaviour were ruled out by the employers. The report’s principal recommendations included the introduction of an employer tax credit to provide incentives to employers who supported their workforce to obtain basic skills and level 2 qualifications. The subsidy would be particularly targeted at small companies. Such enterprises would also be given a tax credit to assist them to get the IIP standard. The recommendation that was most aligned to the trade union agenda was that which reiterated the National Skills Task Force’s recommendation of free tuition for employees to obtain a first level 2 qualification.

The Government reacted quite positively to the recommendations. In the Budget, the Chancellor announced £30 million to support small companies to achieve IIP. Of most significance was the establishment of Employer Training pilots run by local LSCs. They tested free tuition and employer subsidies as incentives for employees to take paid time off for training up to level 2 qualifications including basic skills. There was significant TUC involvement from regional Learning Services and union learning representatives in delivering the pilots, which has been evaluated (TUC, 2003a). They have now been rolled out into the national Train to Gain scheme, which involves “skills brokers” helping employers to identify demand. Although employer involvement is voluntary, the TUC and unions have pressed the Government to universalise such paid leave through a statutory entitlement, which the CBI has historically opposed. However, the Leitch Report has ruled this in if the voluntary approach does not secure sufficient commitment to meet the Government’s level 2 target (see below).

The Skills Strategy

The publication in 2003 of the Government skills strategy *21st Century Skills: Realising Our Potential* (DfES, 2003) marked a shift towards a more interventionist approach and a commitment to social partnership arrangements. The strategy was welcomed by the TUC and its unions (TUC, 2003b).

Entitlements to free tuition for lower skilled workers as recommended by the National Skills Task Force were to be phased in. A more proactive role for sector skills councils involved brokering a sector skills agreement with employers in its sector. Such agreements include an assessment of the scope for collaborative action by employers in the sector to tackle skills shortages and “the extent of agreement amongst employers and unions as to its desirability”.

A significant issue for trade unions in the Skills Strategy was its proposals for social partnership. A new national Skills Alliance was established to bring together the key government departments with employer and union representatives. The Alliance was to represent a new social partnership for skills between Government, the CBI, TUC and the Small Business Council, working with a group of key delivery partners. It was to pursue a shared agenda in raising productivity for the common good. It is led by the Secretaries of State for Education and Skills and Trade and Industry.

The Skills Alliance consists of a high-level Social Partnership Board and is meant to engage employers, trade unions and their representatives in taking forward the Skills Strategy, advise government on enhancing it and monitor progress. However, it has been described as acting more as a “champion” for what would appear to be an already pre-determined skills strategy rather than developing a strategy where decision-making is devolved to the social partners, as is the case in VET bodies in many northern European states (Lloyd and Payne, 2006). It is however being proposed that Alliance be replaced by a stronger Commission (see below). One attempt to increase employer voice was the appointment of

the former CBI Director-General, Sir Digby Jones, as the UK's "skills envoy".

The Leitch Review of skills

In 2004 Chancellor Gordon Brown set up a review of skills by a Labour peer, Lord Leitch, who is chair of BUPA and former chair of Zurich Financial Services (UK). The review was to examine why the nation's skills were "not world class" and what the UK's long-term ambition should be for developing skills in order "to maximise economic prosperity, productivity and to improve social justice".

Drafted by the Treasury, the report set out ambitious targets for qualifying the workforce. Its major prescription was giving individuals entitlements to training but within a VET system that needed to be much more employer-led. Unions supported the first but were concerned about the latter objective. It was seen as "a lost opportunity to develop a social partnership model" (TUC, 2007). Leitch stated that "if voluntary action does not meet the scale needed, the UK should only go further if the training can be delivered in an employer-focused way that delivers demonstrable improvements in productivity – a blunt 'one size fits all' form of compulsion is unlikely to be effective".

The TUC had called on Lord Leitch to introduce a statutory obligation on employers to train their workforce to at least a level 2 qualification. The Review proposed a Skills Pledge to commit employers on a voluntary basis to train all eligible employees up to level 2 in the workplace. Progress would be reviewed in 2010 and if the improvement rate in level 2 and Skills for Life was insufficient, a statutory entitlement to such training would be introduced, in consultation with employers and unions.

Leitch put great emphasis on reformed and strengthened SSCs to increase employer demand. A Commission for Employment and Skills is to replace the Skills Alliance. Its aim is to strengthen the employer voice and it will have responsibility for the

SSC network and vocational qualifications. Its aim is to "depoliticise" the skills agenda by "securing a broad political and stakeholder consensus". In most Nordic states consensus is sought through devolved social partnership institutions. In the UK, however, it is to be achieved through an employer-led commission that has minimum union representation.

The Leitch view of employee demand is an individualistic one, based on entitlements and responsibilities. He did not make any recommendations about strengthening collective bargaining over training. However, the report did acknowledge the need for employer-union initiatives such as learning agreements, workplace learning committees and collective learning accounts, albeit within a voluntary framework.

Enhancing union capacity

A key factor in unions assuming the role of stakeholder in learning and skills under New Labour was not necessarily any increase in union influence on policy-making bodies. The Government has been the most interventionist when wanting to enhance union capacity to help deliver lifelong learning within an agenda broadly shared with the union movement. As noted above, there had been significant capacity building under the Conservative administrations but within the straight jacket of the employer-dominated TEC framework. Under the Labour Government the scope for union involvement dramatically increased. There are a number of landmarks in this process.

The National Advisory Group for Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning chaired by Professor Bob Fryer was established by the Secretary of State for Education and Employment to advise him on the preparation of a White Paper. Its report *Learning for the Twenty-First Century* (1997) was wide in scope. It put great emphasis on an inclusive approach to lifelong learning, giving priority to those without basic level qualifications and stressed the need for extensive partnerships to promote and deliver this lifelong learning culture. Such partnerships would need to include trade unions. The “Fryer Report” was probably the first major policy document to recognise the role of unions in learning over the last two decades.

“The active involvement of trade unions will assist in legitimising the purposes and processes of workplace learning in the eyes of their members facilitating take up of learning and the development of learning partnerships at work” (Fryer, 1997).

The Union Learning Fund

The resulting Green Paper, *The Learning Age*, (op. cit.) stressed the need to encourage demand for learning from the bottom up and confidence was reaffirmed in unions to stimulate such demand by the DfES establishing the Union Learning Fund (ULF). £2 million was initially allocated to support union-led innovative projects in workplace learning.

The DfES fund, which is now in its tenth year, has resulted in over 700 union-led projects involving over 50 unions (unionlearn, 2007). This investment has been increasing rapidly, with the annual budget increasing to £12.5 million in 2007. Amongst its key aims are to ensure that learning and skills are core activities for unions and to develop the key role of union learning representatives (ULRs) in raising demand for learning, especially from those with low or no qualifications. Much of this union activity was supported regionally by Bargaining for Skills, then TUC Learning Services and now unionlearn, which took over responsibility for the ULF from the Learning and Skills Council in 2007 (see below).

ULF outcomes: union capacity, April 2006–March 2007

New learning centres opened	81
Learning centres significantly enhanced	117
Courses customised/developed	163
Formal learning agreements signed with employer	213
Number of employers making facilities agreements to support ULRs	239
Number of employers giving time off for learners not included above	451
Number of participants in dissemination/networking events	86,911

Quantitatively, the projects have resulted in relatively modest outcomes but this reflects the relatively small scale funding compared to other government initiatives. The importance of the projects has been building and sustaining union capacity over learning. It has involved partnership between unions and many other bodies such as LSCs, RDAs, adult guidance services and colleges and, to lesser extent, employers. Some of this activity has been sustained through learning agreements (Wallis and Stuart, 2007). A DfES commissioned evaluation of four years of ULF projects found that:

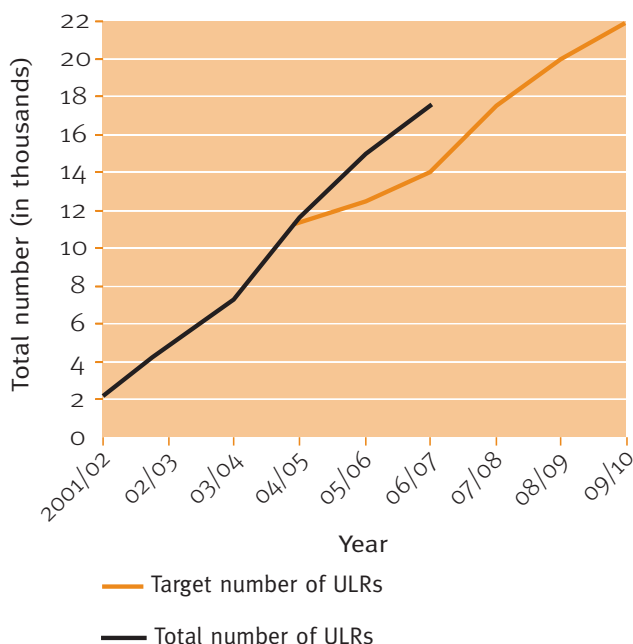
“The Fund has been used to develop important elements of the lifelong learning agenda: union structures and strategies, resources, expertise, facilities and partnerships with employers and providers in particular. This has resulted in increased awareness and demand for learning.”

Source: *Evaluation of the Union Learning Fund (2001-2005)*. York Consulting, 2006.

Union learning representatives

The most sustainable of the capacity building has been the development of a new genre of union officer – the union learning representative (ULR). A comprehensive overview of their development is set out elsewhere (Clough, 2007). Under the Union Learning Fund, over 18,000 trade unionists have been trained and accredited as union learning representatives. Their roles include: analysing learning or training needs; providing information and guidance to their members on learning; arranging provision; and consulting the employer about such activities (TUC, 2002).

Union learning reps recruited



The development of such representatives is at an early stage compared with the long established health and safety representatives who now number as many as 200,000. Nevertheless, by providing statutory recognition for these new representatives under the Employment Act 2002, against CBI opposition, the Government has boosted this development. Like union representatives as a whole, union learning representatives in union-recognised workplaces now have a legal right for paid time off to train and to carry out their duties. Union members also have the right to access their union representative during working hours, but without the right to pay during this time. The target is for 22,000 union learning representatives being trained by the year 2010, helping over a quarter of a million union members into learning.

Unionlearn

The aim of the establishment of unionlearn, the brand name of the TUC’s learning organisation, was to step up union capacity. It was conceived by the union movement in 2004. The idea of a new institution was set out in its response to the Labour Party’s “Big Conversation” consultation. The TUC proposed the establishment of an organisation that would integrate its trade union education and learning services to provide unions with more strategic support. The DfES provided funding for the new organisation, which was established in 2006. Although unionlearn has substantial public funding, it is very much run by the unions for the unions. Its board comprises TUC General Council members and it sits within the TUC structure.

Its objective is to provide a strong, high profile strategic framework and support for unions’ work on learning and skills and the training of union representatives and officers. Its purpose is to promote collective action to increase individual opportunities to learn in the workplace and also to strengthen union organisation through learning. Important work covers developing innovations to help unions and ULRs to support learners. A unique feature is the number of formal partnerships it has forged with major providers

such as the Open University. In 2006, unionlearn had over 145 staff and an income of £11 million (unionlearn, 2007).

Collective bargaining over training

For the most part, the union role has been confined by the state to that of improving the supply of skills, particularly for those with no or low qualifications where there is perceived “market failure”.

Management continues to exercise its prerogative over demand for skills and how they are utilised and distributed. This might have resulted in the lack of synergy between skills formation and related issues such as pay and conditions, job quality and work organisation. This in turn may have led to unions not treating learning as their core business, although this is now changing (Moore and Wood 2007; Thompson et al 2007). A key question is whether unions can advance a “demand-side” agenda and encourage government to move beyond a skills strategy that remains narrowly focused on boosting the supply of qualified labour (Lloyd and Payne, 2006). The TUC has argued that the government needs to do much more to tackle weak employer demand for skills through “support for innovation and through encouraging organisations to raise their game, including a higher national minimum wage to wean management off its low pay crutch” (TUC, 2003c).

Collective bargaining over training is thus much more in the realm of an “integrative” rather than “distributive” bargaining model typified by bargaining over pay and conditions (Walton and Kerslie, 1965). It is about establishing mutuality over training decisions and the process is based more on “co-operative” as opposed to “adversarial” relationships between management and unions. It is not, however, about passive relationships, with unions just being consulted over training and management asserting their prerogative. It is about unions being proactive and in some activities taking the lead.

However, without rights to negotiate over training unions will remain in a relatively weak position in advancing this agenda and challenging employer prerogative. According to WERS, training is negotiated in as few as 9 per cent of union-recognised workplaces, although this almost trebled from 3.3 per cent between 1998 and 2004 (Stuart and Robinson, 2007). As many as 24 per cent of management respondents to the survey stated that they only informed union representatives over training decisions, with 36 per cent not even doing that.

If a union obtains statutory recognition through the Central Arbitration Committee under the Trade Union and Labour Relations Act 1992 then the union does have the right to be consulted, but not to negotiate. But such workplaces are in a small minority, with the vast majority of workplaces getting union recognition through the voluntary process. Trade unions are pressing the Government to include the right to bargain, not just to be consulted, over training under the statutory recognition process. Unions that have a voluntary agreement which does not include issues such as pay and conditions can obtain “top up” recognition which includes them under collective bargaining arrangements. Unions have been pressing for this to be extended to training.

The so-called “Warwick Agreement” between the Labour Party and affiliated trade unions in 2004 set out the following commitment relating to negotiation and consultation on workplace training: “Ahead of the election we will review, consulting with interested parties, the policies needed in a third term for achieving our ambitious objectives: as part of this we will, of course, look at the possible inclusion of skills in the statutory bargaining procedure.”

However, the Government has ruled out that the core topics covered by the statutory scheme for collective bargaining be extended to training, on the grounds of lack of sufficient coverage under the voluntary present arrangements – the “typicality”

test. However, it is consulting over including pensions as a core issue since it has relatively high coverage (DTI, 2006).

Yet the Government has made a commitment to produce guidance to encourage employers and employees to engage in workplace dialogue on training and skills. Both the DfES and DTI are working with the TUC and CBI to identify and disseminate good practice, but within a voluntary framework.

Conclusion

Under New Labour, trade unions have been increasingly recognised as trusted intermediaries that can help stimulate employee demand for learning and skills. They have been used to help deliver a number of lifelong learning initiatives promoted by the Government, which has acted to enhance the capacity of unions to develop these activities. These activities, however, have mainly been aimed at meeting the needs of the individual and restricted to basic skills and employee development in general rather than encompassing company training directly related to productivity.

Direct union impact has so far been more marked in respect to the delivery of the Government's policy initiatives rather than union influence through representation on bodies such as LSCs or SSCs, which employers dominate. There is still a relatively weak framework with little incentives for, and no obligations on, employers to train their workforce. Yet there has been a constructive dialogue between the Government and the TUC and its unions on the need for intervention where there is market failure. We are entering a post-voluntary era that includes policy interventions such as the Skills Pledge. At workplace level there has been little shift in the balance of power. This is due to a reluctance to change employment law and give unions statutory rights to bargain over training. Thus training and occupational skills and allied issues such as job content, utilisation of skills and task discretion are still regarded as a management prerogative in the vast majority of workplaces.

Unions believe that the Government's dual objective of using learning and skills as a way of enhancing productivity and promoting social justice can best be achieved through an employment-led strategy. Such a system would be driven not just by employers but also by employee demand that is best articulated through their unions. Employer and employee demand are not always congruent but they are not necessarily always in conflict. There is thus a powerful case for VET institutions at both sectoral and national levels to reconcile these interests, through social dialogue

around how the costs of raised skill ambitions should be shared between state, employer and individual. It will also require increased collective bargaining over training, secured within a statutory framework. In the meantime the union effect on learning and skills in this new post-voluntary era will continue to be determined by how capacity building continues to be sustained and enhanced.

References

- Banham, J. (1992) "Taking Forward the Skills Revolution", *Policy Studies, Special Issue: Training and Enterprise Councils; the Story So Far*, Spring 1992 Vol.13 No.1.
- CBI (1998) *The CBI's Response to TECs: Meeting the Challenge of the Millennium*.
- CBI/TUC (2001) *The UK Productivity Challenge, CBI/TUC Submission to the Productivity Initiative*.
- Clough, B (1998) "Saving to Learn", *T Magazine* Dec/Jan 1998/99.
- Clough, B (2004) "From Spear Holders to Stakeholders: The Emerging Role of Unions in the UK Learning and Skills System" in *Trade Unions and Training: Issues and International Perspectives* edit. Richard Cooney and Mark Stuart. Monash University, Australia.
- Clough, B (2007) "The Union Learning Representative: Challenges and Opportunities" in *Trade Unions in the Community: Values, Issues, Shared Interests and Alliances* edit. Buttigeig, D. et al. Heidelberg Press, Australia.
- DfEE (1998) *The Learning Age: a Renaissance for a New Britain*.
- DfEE (1999) *Learning to Succeed: a New Framework for Post-16 Learning* Cmd 4392.
- DfEE (2000a) DfEE/TUC *Individual Learning Accounts Project: Final Report from TUC Learning Services*.
- DfEE (2000b) *Skills for All: Proposals for A National Skills Agenda* Final Report of the National Skills Task Force.
- DfEE (2001) *Opportunity for All: Skills for the New Economy*, Statement by the Secretary of State for Education and Employment.
- DfES (2003) *21st Century Skills – Realising our Potential: Individuals, Employers, Nation* Cm 5810.
- DTI (1996) *Competitiveness: Creating the Enterprise Centre of Europe* Cmd 330.
- DTI (2006) *Success at Work: Protecting Vulnerable Workers, Supporting Good Employers*.
- Fryer, R. (1997) *Learning for the Twenty-First Century: First Report of the National Advisory Group for Continuing Education and Lifelong Learning*.
- Gospel, H. (1995) "The Decline of Apprenticeship Training in Britain", *Industrial Relations Journal*, 26, 1, 32-44.
- Green, F., Machin, S. and Wilkinson, D. (1996) *Trade Unions and Training Practices in British Workplaces*, Centre for Economic Performance, Discussion Paper 278.
- Heyes, J. (2000) "Workplace Industrial Relations and Training" in Rainbird, H. (ed) *Training in the Workplace* (Macmillan).
- HM Treasury (2006) *Prosperity for All in the Global Economy – World Class Skills*, final report of the Leitch Review of Skills
- Hodgson, A. and Spours, K (1999) *New Labour's Education Agenda*, Kogan Page.
- House of Commons (2001) *Individual Learning Accounts*, Third Report of Education and Skills Committee HC561.1
- Jones, M. (1999) *New Institutional Spaces: TECs and the Remaking of Economic Governance*, Jessica Kingsley and Regional Studies Association
- Keep, E (1999) *Employers' Attitude to Training, Skills*. National Skills Task Force Research Paper 15.
- Keep, E (2006) "State Control of the English Education and Training System – Playing with the Biggest Train Set in the World", *Journal of Vocational Education and Training*, 58,1,47-64.
- Lloyd, C. and Payne, J. (2006) *British Trade Unions and the Learning and Skills Agenda: an Assessment*. SKOPE Issues Paper 12
- Monks, J. (1992) "The Trade Union View", *Policy Studies: Special Issue: Training and Enterprise Councils; The Story So Far*, Spring 1992 Vol.13 No.1

Moore, S. and Wood, H. (2007) *Union Learning, Union Recruitment and Organising*. Working Lives Research Institute. Research Paper 1. Unionlearn

Robinson, P. (1996) *Rhetoric and Reality: Britain's New Vocational Qualifications*, Centre for Economic Performance, London School of Economics

Shaw, N; Starks, L; Hopwood, V; O'Neil, L.; Wilton, M; Laxton, C. and Seer, A. (2006) *Evaluation of the Union Learning Fund (2001-2005)*. York Consulting. DFES

Streeck, W. (1989) "Skills and the Limits of Neo-Liberalism: the Enterprise of the Future as a Place of Learning", *Work, Employment and Society*, 3,1 (March) 80-104.

Stuart, M. and Robinson, A. (2007) *Trade Union Recognition and Collective Bargaining: Findings from the 2004 Workplace Employment Relations Survey. Research Paper 4*. Centre for Employment Relations, Innovation and Change, Leeds University Business School. Unionlearn.

Thompson, P., Warhurst, C. and Findlay, P. (2007) *Organising to Learn and Learning to Organise: Three Case Studies on the Effects of Union-Led Workplace Learning. Research Paper 2*. Scottish Centre for Employment Research. Unionlearn.

Trades Union Congress (1995) *Funding Lifelong Learning: a Strategy to Deliver the National Education and Training Targets*

Trades Union Congress (1998a) *New TECs: New Partners: TUC Submission on the DfEE Consultation Paper - TECs Meeting the Challenge of the Millennium*.

Trades Union Congress/TEC National Council (1998b) *Working Together for Lifelong Learning*.

Trades Union Congress (2002) *The Quiet Revolution: the Rise of the Union Learning Representative*.

Trades Union Congress (2003a) *A Qualitative Evaluation of the Role of Trade Unions in Phase One of the Employer Training Pilots in England and the Learning Worker Project in Wales*.

Trades Union Congress (2003b) *Skills Strategy White Paper: TUC Briefing*.

Trades Union Congress (2003c) *UK Productivity: Shifting to the High Road: a Response to the Porter Report*.

Trades Union Congress (2007) *Leitch Review of Skills: TUC Briefing*.

Unionlearn (2007) *One Year On: unionlearn Annual Report 2007*.

Wallis, E. and Stuart, M. (2007) *A Collective Learning Culture: a Qualitative Study of Workplace Learning Agreements. Research Paper 3*. Centre for Employment Relations, Innovation and Change, Leeds University Business School. Unionlearn.

Walton, R and Mc Kersie, R (1965) *A Behavioral Theory of Labor Negotiations: An Analysis of a Social Interactive System*. New York and London, McGraw Hill.

TUC



Equal



EUROPEAN UNION
European Social Fund

Published by unionlearn

Congress House
London WC1B 3LS

Tel 020 7079 6920

Fax 020 7079 6921

www.unionlearn.org.uk

June 2007

Designed by Rumba
Printed on recycled paper containing
80% post-consumer waste by
Precision Printing Ltd

Cover photo: Mark Thompson