

# The Industrial Revolution



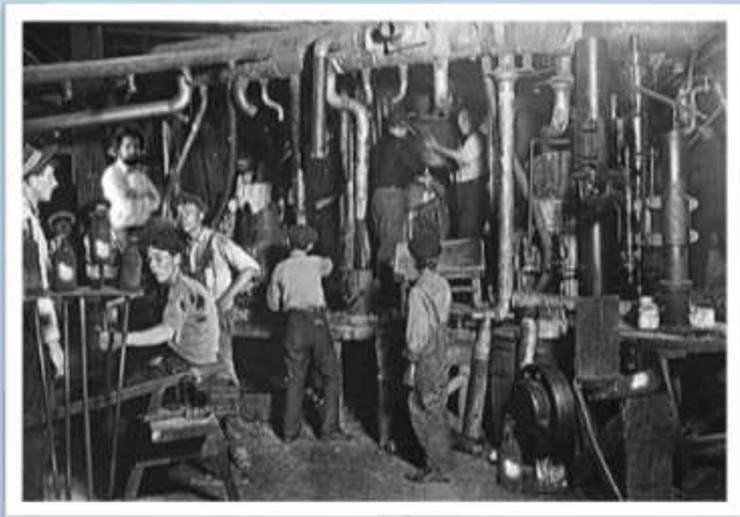
# Introduction

The first industrial revolution began in Britain in the late 18th century, with the mechanisation of the textile industry. Hundreds of weavers' cottages were brought together in a single cotton mill, and the factory was born.



# Working Conditions

Adults and also children were often employed to move between these dangerous machines as they were small enough to fit between tightly packed machinery. Added to the dangers of the workplace the impact of the hours worked had very negative consequences.



# The Bourgeoisie and the Proletariat

There were two main social classes: the Bourgeoisie and the proletariat where class membership depended upon ownership or non-ownership of the means of production. The relationship between these social classes was based upon exploitation and class conflict.



# Urbanization

One of the defining and most lasting features of the Industrial Revolution was the rise of cities.

This process of urbanization stimulated the booming new industries by concentrating workers and factories together.

And the new industrial cities became sources of wealth for the nation.



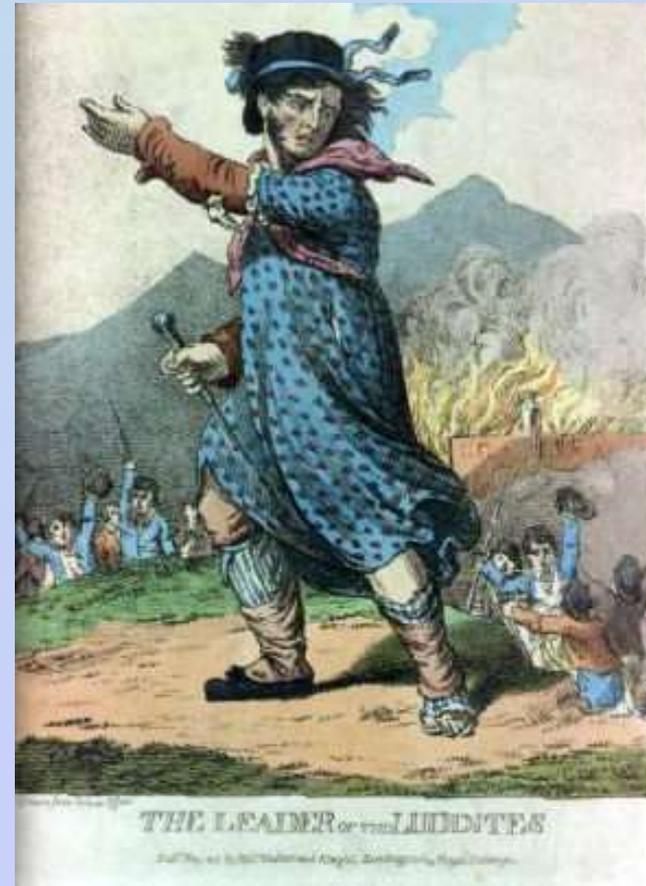
# The Combination Acts

In 1799 the British Parliament passed the Combination Acts, which made it illegal for workers to unionize as a group to ask for better working conditions.

# The Luddism

In 1779 a worker, Ned Ludd, broke a power loom, starting a phenomenon known as "Luddism".

The other workers, the "Luddites", responded by organizing to attack and smash the new machines.



# The Luddism

Parliament reacted by declaring the destruction of machinery a crime on the same level as murder, which could be punished by hanging.



# The trade unions

In 1824 the minister Robert Peel acknowledged that workers had the right to form free organizations, the “trade unions”.

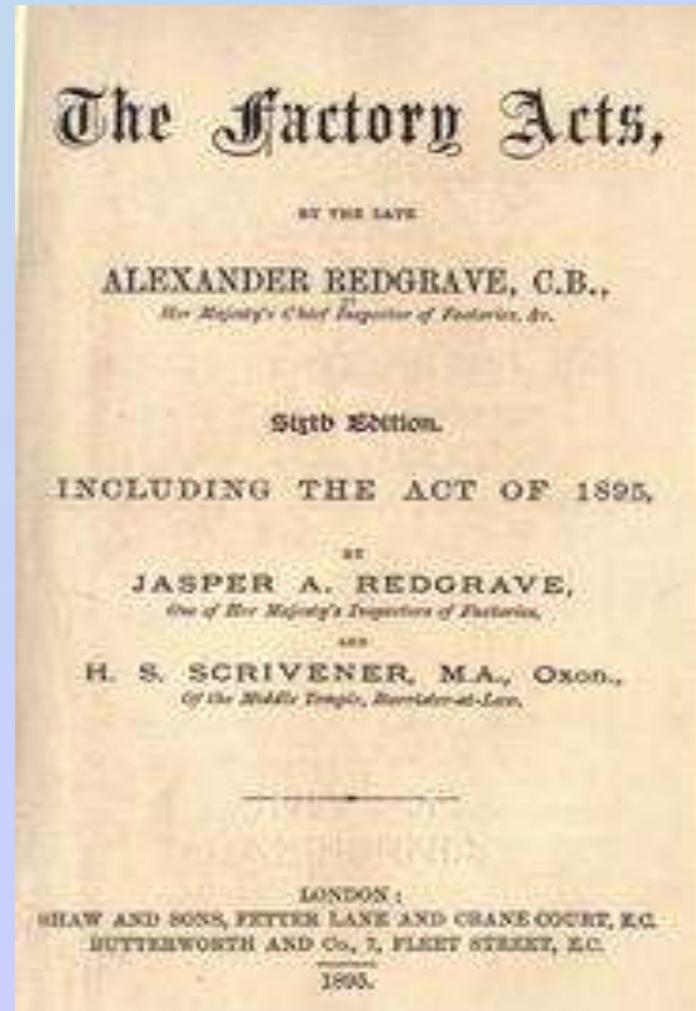


# The Factory Act

In 1833 the government passed the Factory Act to regulate excessive child labour.

The key provisions of the Factory Act were:

- Children 8 and younger could not work in factories.
- Employers had to have an age certificate for their child workers.
- Children between 9-13 years could work no more than 9 hours a day.
- Children between 13-18 years could work no more than 12 hours a day.
- Children could not work at night.
- Four factory inspectors were appointed to investigate thousands of factories throughout England and enforce the law.



# The socialism

In the 19th century, the socialists argued for an economic system based on human dignity and equality that would provide benefits for all citizens. A socialist government would own the property and wealth of a nation and put them to use for the common good.

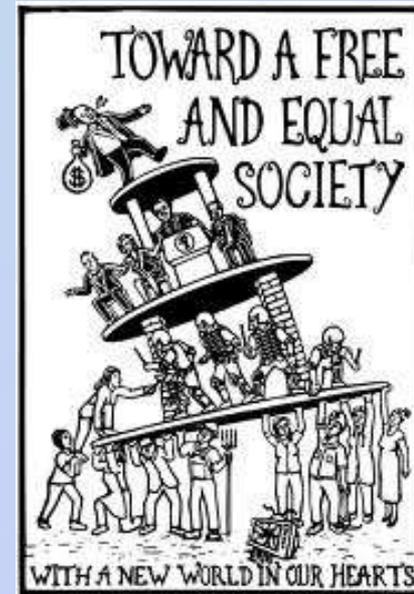


# The utopian socialism

In socialist thought we can identify two trends: the utopian and the scientific socialism.

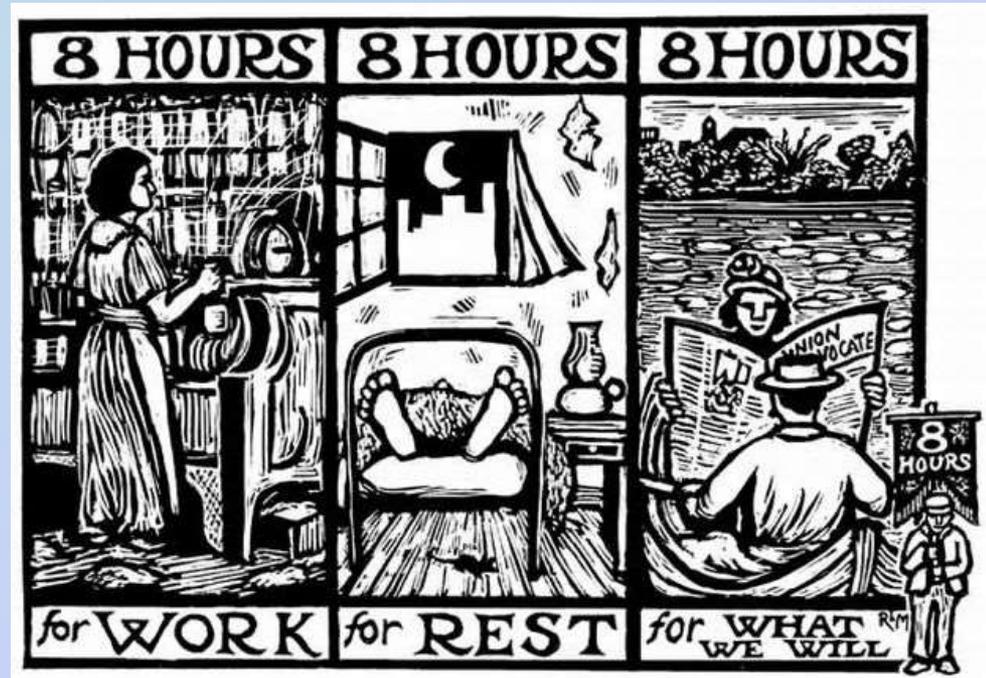


The most well-known utopian socialist was a factory owner named Robert Owen.



# Robert Owen: utopian socialism

Owen dreamed of a cooperative industrial town. He ensured that workers had education, houses of their own and access to doctors and focused especially on education and children. Children under ten years of age could not work in his factories and had to attend school.



*In this new world, all  
will know that far more  
happiness can be obtained  
by union, than by disunion.*

*Robert Owen*

*Exchange their poverty  
for wealth, their ignorance  
for knowledge, their anger  
for kindness, their divisions  
for union.*

*Robert Owen*

# The scientific socialism

The most important socialist thinker was an economist and philosopher named Karl Marx.

He thought that capitalism did not provide fundamental public needs, such as education and healthcare for all, national defense, workplace safety, clean water and a clean environment.

"Sell a man a fish, he eats for a day, teach a man how to fish, you ruin a wonderful business opportunity."



# Children labour



Children worked up to 19 hours a day, with a one-hour total break, often in horrible conditions. Large, heavy, and dangerous equipment was very common for children to be using or working near.

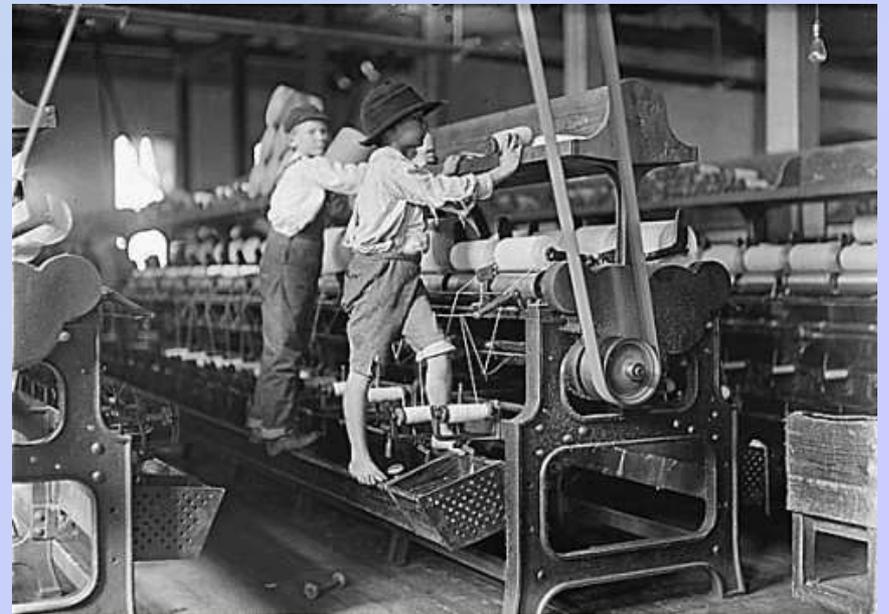
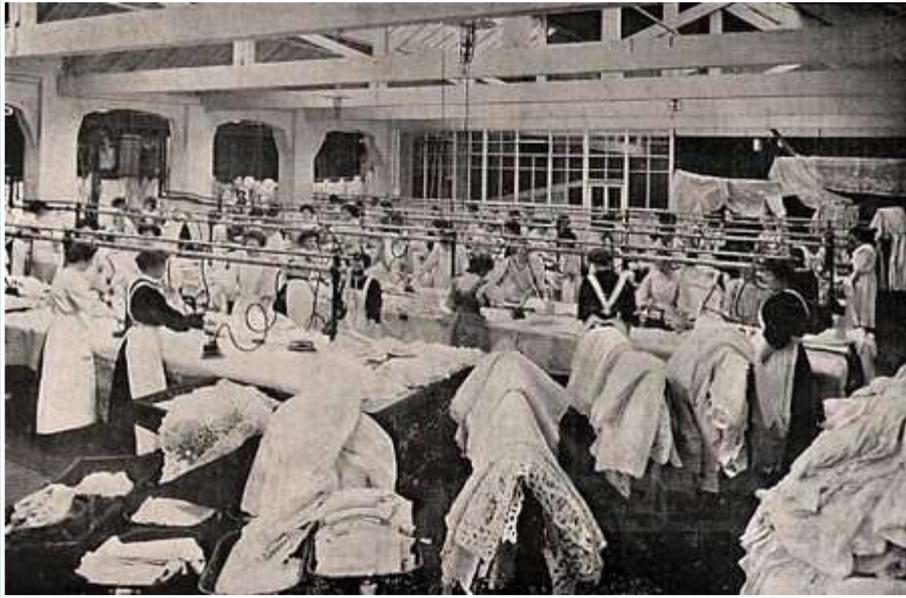
# Why did children work?

- One of the major causes of child labour was poverty and also adults often earned so little;
- Schools in many countries were far away or expensive.
- Employers saw that they could make bigger profits when they employed children.

# The most dangerous jobs

- working with dangerous chemicals in factories
- working in mines





Italian workers' rights  
VS  
Sweatshops' deficiencies

(you can find sweatshops in  
developing countries such as  
Asian, South American and  
African countries)

# ...the first sweatshop



# What is a Sweatshop?

A sweatshop is defined by the U.S. Department of Labor as a factory that violates two or more labour laws.



## Italy

Working time regulations, including 5.6 weeks' paid annual leave



## Developing countries

Workers are asked to stand for 12-hour shifts with just two 30-minute breaks, six days a week. They are sometimes trapped in the factory and forced to work overnight or across multiple shifts.

## Italy

- Trade union membership rights.
- Health and safety provisions.

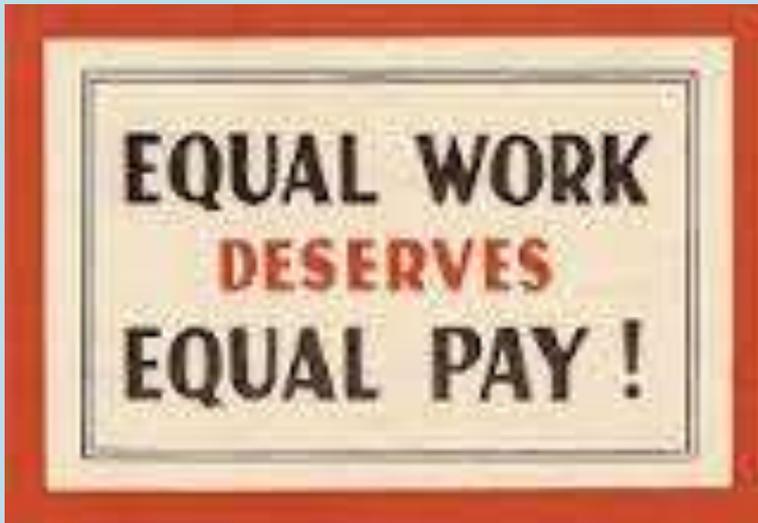
## Developing countries

- Trade unions are not allowed: if any employee tries to protest, he/she gets fired.
- There are often poor working conditions, with no safety equipment.



# Italy

Equal and fair payment.



# Developing countries

Even though there is no equal payment, the people who are forced to work must spend the majority of their paycheck on food for their families to survive.

(sometimes employees in sweatshops are paid 2\$ a day or with a cup of rice)



# Factory Wages: Airing the Dirty Laundry

Women make up the majority of workers in clothing factories around the world. Here's a sampling of hourly rates.

 Regulated Factory

 SWEATSHOP (UN-Regulated Factory)



Regulated factory figures are based on a salary average at a variety of factories in violation of labor laws. Sweatshop figures are an approximation based on an eight-hour workday and a six-day week at specific factories in each country.

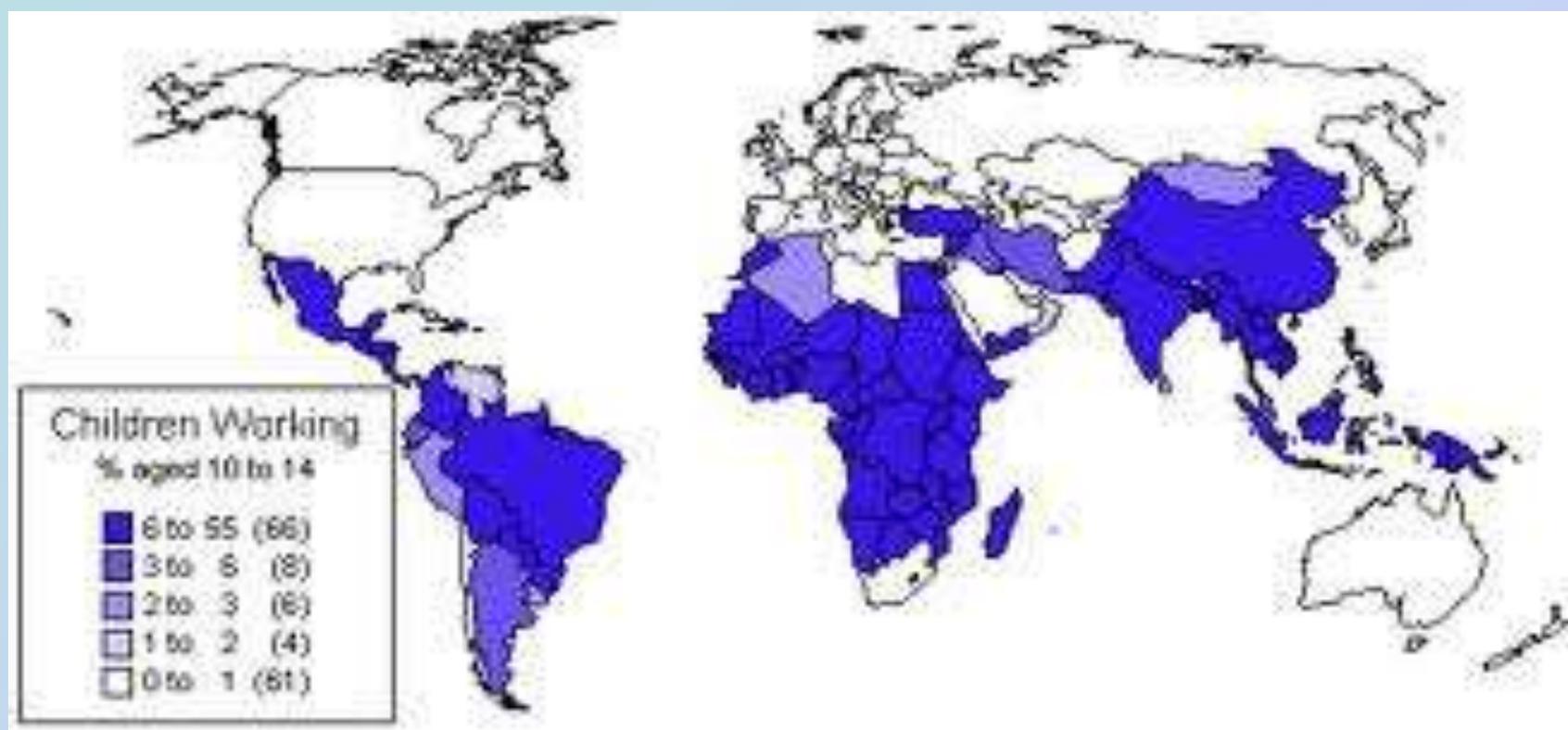
Sources: UNITE (union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees) and Werner International

## Italy

- At least one day off per week.
- Statutory maternity pay
- Children under 18 are not allowed to work

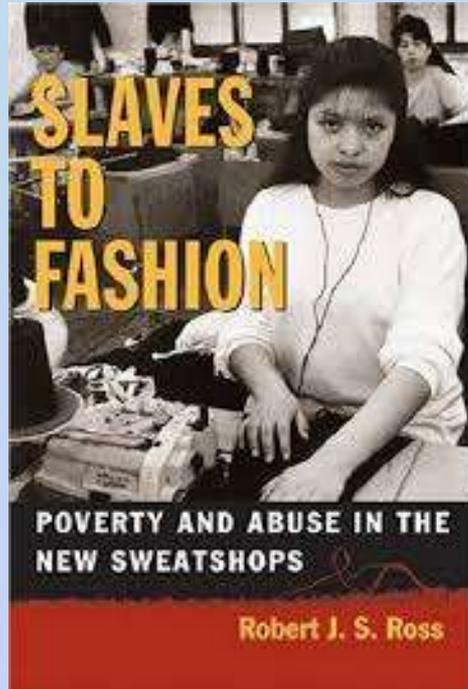
## Developing countries

- 1 day off, usually used to work in another place.
- Employers force women to take birth control and routine pregnancy tests to avoid supporting maternity leave.
- 250 million children aged between 5 and 14 are forced to work.



# Italy

- State contributions (paid). Example: pensions
- Protection to unfair dismissal



# Developing countries

- There is no benefits for workers: they will never have a pension.
- There is no protection: workers are subjected to verbal, physical, and sexual abuse in factories from their supervisor; they can not do anything.

# American companies which exploit sweatshops

Liz Claiborne



Nike



# The tragedy in Prato

The blaze at the Chinese-owned factory in the town of Prato is thought to have trapped 11 workers who were staying in temporary cardboard sleeping compartments above a warehouse.



## **INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION Working Conditions**

What were the working conditions like during the Industrial Revolution?

Well, for starters, the working class, who made up 80% of society, had little or no bargaining power with their new employers.

For the first generation of workers, from the 1790s to the 1840s, working conditions were very tough, and sometimes tragic. Most labourers worked 10 to 14 hours a day, six days a week, with no paid vacation or holidays; under such dangerous conditions, accidents on the job occurred regularly.

The government should not intervene in the free market to improve working conditions. Workers are not forced to work. They choose to take jobs in the factories and mills, and it is their responsibility to watch out for their own safety. They are free to decide what jobs are best for them.

The workers considered the machines the cause of their unemployment and low wages, since their introduction in the factories had reduced the manpower. The first revolt against the machines began in 1779, when a worker, Ned Ludd, broke a power loom, starting a phenomenon known as "Luddism".

The workers had no protection, so they started to rebel against exploitation. In 1824 the minister Robert Peel recognized to workers the right to form free organizations, which then became Trade Unions.

Child labour was employed in the first factories, mines, and mills in England.

Why were they used?

- Factory owners used cheap, unskilled labour, to decrease the cost of production and child labour was the cheapest one;
- Child were employed also because they could perform the simple, repetitive tasks;
- they did not try to join workers unions or go on strike;
- they were paid 1/10 of what men were paid.

In the Industrial Revolution women could parent and also play a role in producing food or goods needed for the household Work and play time were flexible and interwoven. With the industrialization women took care of the home and saw their economic role decline. While many factory workers were initially women, most of them were young women who would quit working when they married.

In 1832 the British Parliament set up a commission to investigate child labour in factories. As a result, the government passed The Factory Act of 1833 to regulate excessive child labour. The act set limits on how many hours per day children could work. The key provisions of the act are:

- Children 8 and younger could not work in factories.
- Employers had to have an age certificate for their child workers.
- Children between 9-13 years could work no more than 9 hours a day.
- Children between 13-18 years could work no more than 12 hours a day.
- Children could not work at night.
- Four factory inspectors were appointed to investigate thousands of factories throughout England and enforce the law

In the 19th century, some people in England and the rest of Europe, known as socialists, argued for an economic system based on human dignity and equality that would provide healthcare, housing, jobs, education, and pensions for all citizens. To realize these expensive public benefits, a socialist government would own the property and wealth of a nation and put them to use for the common good.

The most important socialist thinker was an economist and philosopher named Karl Marx. He believed that a complete overthrow of capitalism was necessary and inevitable. He thought that capitalism did not effectively provide fundamental public needs, such as education and healthcare for all, national defense, workplace safety, clean water and a clean environment.

#### HOW ABOUT TODAY?

In the modern age, there should be a very long list of workers' rights and the trading nations should be held to strict labor standards. That, unlikely, doesn't happen. In developed countries such as USA, Australia, European countries workers should have some workers' rights that in developing countries, such as China, Brasil, India and so on are nonexistent. The most common form of business there is trough sweatshops.

| Workers' rights  | Sweatshops' deficiencies   |
|--|--|
| Working time regulations, including 5.6 weeks' paid annual leave | Workers are asked to stand for 12-hour shifts with just two 30-minute breaks, six days a week. They are sometimes trapped in the factory and forced to work overnight or across multiple shifts. |
| Trade union membership rights                                    | Trade unions are not allowed.  |
| Equal payment  | Even though there is no equal payment, the people who are forced to work must spend the majority of their paycheck on food for their families to survive.  |
| Fair payment   | The people who are forced to work must spend the majority of their paycheck on food for their families to survive.   |
| Health and safety provisions                                     | There are often poor working conditions, with no equipment.  |
| Time off for family emergencies                                  | You don't have time off; if you need it, you lose the job.   |
| At least one day off   | 1 day off, usually used to another job.  |
| Statutory maternity pay  | Employers force women to take birth control and routine pregnancy tests to avoid supporting maternity leave or providing appropriate health benefits.  |
| State contributions (paid)                                       | There is not a lack of benefits for workers.   |
| Protection to unfair dismissal                                   | There is no protection: workers are subjected to verbal, physical, and sexual abuse in factories from their supervisor; if they are not cool on that, they can't do anything.                    |
| Children under 18 are not allowed to work                        | 250 million children ages 5 to 14 are forced to work.  |

Although in the developed countries there is the Workers' Statute, there are some recent examples about how factories, to cut costs, don't follow the workers' rights.