



The Notion of Political Protest and the Pursuit of Legal Rights in Media: Surveying the Chartists' Campaigns, 1838-1848

Mohamed Cherif Seddiki¹, Frid Daoudi²

¹ University of Abou Bekr Tlemcen, m.seddiki@lagh-univ.dz,

² University of Abou Bekr Tlemcen, daoudi.frid@univ-tlemcen.dz,

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Abstract:

The realization of individuals' political and social aspirations has gone through a long haul and painful experiences that ranged from strikes and stoppage to mass manifestations and street marches. Chartism, as a political wave of change that pinned new hopes on political campaigns, is no exception. The concern of this paper is to revisit the value of Chartism in realizing the workers' legal and social liberties after being blamed of inefficiency and sabotage. In most of the literature as well as movies on Labour Movement in Britain, Chartism is written off. The Chartists were blamed of political agitation, economic stagnation and other seditious events. Accordingly, this attempt is indented to survey the accounts of those activists, mainly between 1838 and 1848, to reveal the changes or rather the reforms they could bring in and thus contribute to the making of welfare in Britain via political means. It is significant in the sense that it has shown that labour movement readers should be reluctant to view waves of change as ineffective political protests to harm more than to remedy the defects of the day.

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1. Introduction

Political protests, though written off, have proved their value in shaping and making amendments that can remedy certain defects. Yet, these attempts of change are often met with intimidation and legal repression. Contingents, individuals or groups, can receive harsh sentences, penalties if not deportation simply for their ideas and counter schemes. Chartism¹ is one of these radical movements that were utterly overlooked. Though it transformed the destiny of labour societies in the twentieth, Chartism was blamed of political disruption, unrealistic reforms and sometimes conspiracy. This attempt is intended to revisit the Chartists' accounts in an effort to give them a voice. It is in these accounts that one can understand the truth behind the rise of radical

¹ Chartism (1838-1854) was the first attempt to build an independent political party representing the interests of the laboring sections of the nation (Cannon, 2009).

thoughts and the endeavours, both men and women, did valiantly pursue to protect their rights and liberties. It is quite difficult to understand the significance of this movement without taking into account both the circumstances of the day and the intellectual influences that might have affected Chartists' views and schemes.

To understand the value of Chartism, it was needed to explore the course of industrialization, more exactly the transformations that went hand in hand with the shift from agrarian to industrial economy giving birth to a number of social evils. Again, it is inconceivable to view the beginning of the industrial conflict, whether through physical force or political protests, away from the serious disruption brought in by industrialization. It could be therefore said that the complexities of the industrial age played the chief role in bringing the working population face to face with their governors and masters. In the same way, there exist plenty of social and political defects that forced mobs and activists to denounce the failure to address grievances and guarantee rights. Political protest therefore should not be disassociated from the forces of the day.

Back to labour conflicts and struggles, the workers were still liable to intimidation, dismissals and plenty of violations despite their minor achievements in 1830's. In fact, plenty of grievances remained unaddressed. The workers, from different trades and ideological leanings, did set upon new alternatives. The workers held on pressure via mass associations and cooperative labour societies, but their revolutionary initiative was the shift to political protest. The Chartists pinned new hopes on political rallies to lessen both social and political pressure, but again and for certain factors, the workers' political schemes did not fully work out. This doesn't mean that Chartism was to no effect at the very beginning. One should be reluctant to view this wave of change as a failure in the sense that the Chartists' first attempts between 1838 and 1842 could not reap considerable amendments.

Though legally oppressed, the Chartists' legacy is substantial. They set the stage for plenty of amendments and changes. In less than a decade, Chartism could address the need for parliamentary representation, the workers' right to vote and other labour issues undreamt of before 1840s. Chartism could organize and orient labour societies in meeting their interests. It could address the questions of the day such as inflation, social pressure, industrial strain and political participation in controlling the nation's affairs. More importantly, it consolidated unionism and invited more labour communities to join the cause. With amalgamations, trades councils and trades of all trades, the workers could put aside what might cause division and start transforming their unions to political pressure groups in terms of national organization and affiliation. Developments as such, mainly the workers' financial power and structural organization, were rendered to radical ideas and schemes, mainly the onset of political protest.

It is really a hyperbole to view the realization of legal amendments away from political protests, street marches and radical manifestation. In the same way, labour societies would enjoy the terms or articles listed in the Right to Vote and Trade Union Act without the Chartists' political campaigns. The former allowed the workers to access the political arena the fact that did massively transform the destiny of the working class. They could put up their representatives; they could lead lobbies inside parliament in their favour thanks to their outstanding leaders whose talents developed out of the earlier years of both Chartism and Luddism. The second did finally legalize labour unions and associations giving them the right to combine, to bargain and thus protect their labour concerns via political means. In brief, political protests, though violent sometimes, should be seen as a sign of change. Responses to grievances and remedial actions should be handled immediately with seriousness and earnestness.

2. *The Review of Literature:*

Political protest has recently driven a mounting interest among politicians, activists and unexpectedly mobs, and it is somehow recurrent in human history away from the violation of rights and liberties. Down the centuries of the industrial age, in nineteenth century Britain, radicals and reformers were seeking ways to defend their causes and interests alike. This in fact makes the pursuit of rights and liberties, as a topic, much consumed. In this context, the concern of this review is to catalogue more than decade of political protests, disorder and radical campaigns to show that the realization of rights and liberties has been long, frustrating sometimes and mainly violent. Protest as such was often written off in the sense that it resulted from factors like clear-cut injustices and legal oppression. These practices brought groups and individuals together against the evils of the day. Another concern was giving a voice to some radicals and reformers, namely the Chartists, who were blamed of political disorder and failure in plenty of instances. This attempt came to the point that it is in no way to underestimate a political wave of change that brought plenty of changes if not transformed the workers' political future in the ensuing years (Evans, 2006). The Chartists were not mindless insurgents who wanted their six-point charter to be the law of the land, but reformers increasingly concerned with social defects and political deficiency.

In revising the value of Chartism, it was inevitable to explore the early days of this movement, the Chartists' accounts or attempts to generate support for their Charter and of course, their failures to meet the desired endings they aspired to achieve. In fact, it is difficult to retell the story on a movement that was generally written off by contemporaries while some attempts pointed out its value in changing the fate of workers. Broadly speaking, political campaigning, in the bulk of studies on the working class political protest, was more concerned with ways and means to win over legal rights, rallies and marches about individuals' liberties, parliamentary representation and mainly alternatives to lessen repression. Chartism was often portrayed as a complete failure without any precise knowledge on the nature or the organization of the workers' political rally. In this sense, this review tries to revise the value of the first political and radical campaigns without which the working class would not be able to position itself politically. In his article "Chartism Revisited", Eric Evans addresses these gaps and strives to bring some recent research work on the topic of Chartism. There has been an excessive concentration on the fact that the rise of Chartism was due to pure economic and social factors, as inflation, economic depression and public disappointments after the Poor Law Amendments, but interpretations as such are very rare. It is vital to consider Chartism as a political movement and a genuinely national one (Evan, 2006). In the decade after 1838, labour societies began to pin new hopes on political rallies after their industrial sabotage had proved insufficient. It is certainly true that these campaigns developed out of the social and economic challenges the workers were trying to get over, but they equally came out of the need for the voting rights for all adult males, equal electoral districts, secret ballot and other points, which were purely political. In any case, it is unwise to overlook a mass movement whose points had been debated for at least a half a century, and whose radicals and leaders were more than working class agitators.

Another literature was found on the necessity to hail Chartism as a public response against political failures. Malcolm Chase, in his "Chartism: a New History" was reluctant to assign failure to the workers' political agitation. The Chartists were articulate souls and able to speak what concerned their living and working conditions. Some of their leaders spent months touring the country up and down like itinerant preachers in the Chartist Church. They were able to reach more adherents and sympathizers via their newspaper, the Northern Star, which proved to have better sales than the national newspaper of the day, the Times, more than 50.000 copies a week. This in fact reflects how active and earnest the Chartists were in the years between 1838 and 1842. Chartism was a working class culture: petitioning, public speeches were set alongside with Chartist concerts; cooperatives, homes and even schools were decorated with prints from the Northern Star. There had been meetings for reading

articles aloud expressing the feelings and opinions of the radical press. Activities as such did strongly foster a Chartist tradition that assembled poetry, religion and politics (Chase, 2007, p.45). In other words, Chartism was indubitably vital for the recognition of the working class demands in the sense that it brought the working population concerns to very corner of Britain. Certainly, there had been divisions and strategic blunders that the Chartists had fallen victims to, but this doesn't entail that the workers' political agitation was to no effect. In fact, the Chartists embarked upon plenty of protests, some of which violent, to promote their six point Charter, and thus, claim both social and political privileges.

Though it lost coherence after 1848, Chartism left a lasting impact upon the outcomes of the workers' rallies. It did not only agitate labour societies for favourable wages and further trade unionists' privileges but helped promote a distinctive political culture characterized by effective methods of dissent, namely direct actions (Chislett, 2017). The Chartists wanted to take part in the management of their realm. Without the ethics the Chartists had earlier nurtured, labour societies would not hold on their industrial and political protest to claim rights and protect interests. In other words, the Chartists set the stage for effective trade unionism, which in return brought workers from different trades together in 1850s and 1860s. It generated a great degree of enthusiasm, for the workers' enfranchisement, that has never been replicated. Chartism therefore helped increase class consciousness and solidarity, and more importantly, consolidated the workers' position. Additionally, and for public services and better living standards, the circulation of the Chartists' ideas infused the quality of municipal work. In brief, Chartism, though it did not fully work out, superseded other forms of protest: it was a movement for constitutional rights, in a manner no other movement was equal (Chase, 2007).

Political protests and liberation movements have been additionally found in some literary works and documentaries. The latter are more informative and moving in the sense that they vividly project to what extent some groups strove to achieve legal amendments and favourable outcomes. "She's Beautiful When She's Angry", is a stirring documentary that explores the emergence of women's protests after they had despaired changes and developments from the political circles as like as the Chartists who grew determined to change the political scene after the disappointments that followed 1830 amendments. Marry Dore, the director of "She's Beautiful When She's Angry", adapted her ideas from Betty Friedan's book "The Feminine Mystique" and the civil-rights movement. She assembled historical clips with recent interviews with many of the leaders of these agitations. The movie's director pinpointed the substantial changes or rather the contributions of agitations as such. In fact, the movie shows a wide gap between what is practical and what is radical as far as women's issues are concerned (Brody, 2014). Some drama scenes are distracting, but generally speaking, this well-initiated movie refuses to simplify the movement; it presents a couple of interviews and conversations, from different circles and contexts, which consolidate the fact that contingents' responses and actions are visionary and heroic.

Movies on those protesters and rioters who could transform their lives and thus bring about a couple of legal changes or rather political effects are numerous. Yet, "Made in Dagenham" and "Comrades" are the best of their kind in the sense that they advocate the fact that collective actions, whether physical force activities or political campaigns, are so influential that they can realize considerable changes. In fact, "Made in Dagenham", for its director Nigel Cole, is more about bargaining by rioting rather than political rallies. It commemorates the working class painful striving to protect labour rights and privileges. Nevertheless, the movie pays less attention to political protests. Actually, it shows that it was necessary for labour societies to retreat from politics and all that put their unions into divisions. Political protests have always been complementary. Some legal amendments and labour privileges would find its route to recognition without pass by parliament, lobbies and campaigns of political nature (Thompson, 2018). "Comrades" is another movie on the workers' accounts or rather movement to restore labour rights and protect interests. Yet again, this movie stresses the fact that physical force activities are the chief vehicle

behind the restoration of rights and privileges. This in fact depreciates the value of political campaigns and rallies in making dreams come true. In brief, surveying some movies has shown that political protest is often seen secondary despite the fact that most of protesters' demands and aspirations were political (Thompson, 2018).

There is no doubt that research on the value of political protests in Britain is linked to a couple of topics such as radicalism, unionism and political parties the fact that makes it difficult to synthesise. Yet, exploring this literature was really commendable. Again, there can be no denying on the fact that Chartism went through some ups and downs, mainly the unforeseen transformations, which forced the Chartists to resent their situation, but they decided to initiate a new attempt, different in nature, to seek ways to form powerful associations able to defend their causes, protect their interests and take part in the management of all that concerns labour matters. In this regard, Chartism, social campaigning and even violent rioting, mainly of political nature, should not be written off for they were further means to settle industrial disputes at a time both trade unions and governments were less responsive. Political rallies, though lacking solid bases as far as structure and organization, were somehow effective for they helped wrest some crucial amendments. In any case, this attempt was to hail political organization or more exactly the efficiency of political activities that they are not always complacent with business folk.

3. Methods

A descriptive qualitative approach was used in this research with socio-historical analyses to understand the value of political protest on shaping welfare. This encouraged research on all that coincided with rise of Chartism and unionism between 1825 and 1848. It was vital to pinpoint the implications of the Industrial Age or rather the chief incentives that forced the labourers to face their governors and employers since protest of all its forms should not be viewed away from idleness, squalor, ignorance and other social evils. It should not be seen away from what typified craftsmen's living and working conditions. Protest was a response to the failures of the upper classes to address social grievances. In this context, emphases were on the experiences those rioters and protesters, particularly the Chartists, could learn and the endeavours they could pursue. It could be assumed that the road to labour privileges and political rights was long and painful yet worthwhile in the sense that these communities became triumphant in the end despite all that was meant to deter their activities. In other words, they remained resilient and determined to achieve their goals.

Along with a descriptive qualitative method, watching a couple of movies on Labour Movement in Britain and adapting some scenes was additionally used to understand how frequent political protest has been addressed in both movies and documentaries. This in part showcases the number of the endeavours labour societies in all trades made to realize their schemes and in another part to reveal the difference between political campaigns and physical force activities and of course their presence in media. Surveying those scenes might help consolidate the fact that there existed some voices calling for responses or rather actions against labour movement, mainly political protests.

4. Results

The Chartists' responses to the evils of the day were a further attempt to protect labour interests and rights but through political means. They set upon new campaigns following the failure of local authorities and the predation of employers in different trades. In fact, these were the chief practices behind the eruption of physical force deeds among workers. Industrial protest of all its forms was central to the restoration of privileges and the protection of interests. Up to 1825, industrial disputes remained unresolved though pertinently addressed by the labouring men who could no longer bear industrial strain, inflation and many other evils. The loss of rights and particularly the abusive power of legislation in the absence of effective trade unionism and powerful institutions forced the working class, groups and individuals, to lead pressure on governors and employers. These attempts brought in minor triumphs. Yet, the workers' response was neither pointless nor utterly unsuccessful as it helped extract a number of amendments in favour of lower classes, in general, mainly the repeal of the Combination Acts. Thus, the industrial protest changed in both structure and character, particularly after 1833.

Frustrated by the 1830's amendments, the working class realized the need for political rallies, which were seminal to get the workers' voice heard. In several trades, the workers favoured general actions, but many others, radicals mainly, pinned their hopes on political activities. This advocates the fact that political campaigns became another alternative to industrial protests. They set on parliamentary campaigns, petitioning and pressing when necessary. The Chartists sought more than social reforms: they tried to promote the fact that social objectives would be attained only through political reform. Yet, and as usual, following some naive experiences, they could not meet what they had listed in their People's Charter. Despite all their efforts, the Chartists failed to win support for their political schemes. The lack of national organization and disagreements among the Chartists themselves could only hasten the collapse of the workers' political plans. This failure widened the gap between the two wings of Chartism in the sense it impelled a lot of radicals to alienate themselves and, of course, the workers' cause, from politics as a new strategy. Again, this reflects the significance of social protests compared to the political activity. Undoubtedly, legal pressure was an additional factor, which influenced Chartism, but it is worth mentioning that these attempts were only a prelude to the revival of unionism and political activity in the ensuing years. In other words, of all the modest developments and achievements the working class had realized, small labour gatherings could survive and hold on their cause; they could continue to function on both levels, political and industrial, to impel the rivals accept labour terms. It is again in no way to overlook what the Chartists and their fellow radicals could add to the workers' protest against their governors and employers.

5. Discussion:

The following section is intended to survey the value of Chartism in shaping the political history of the workers in the twentieth transforming labour societies, as a community, from a disenfranchised class excluded both socially and politically to a government party in control of the nation's foreign and local interests. It is vital to revise what the Chartists could wrest in terms of legal amendments and privileges in the workers' labour. This of course leads to addressing the degree of militancy at the very beginning, the Chartists' first attempts to generate interests, the challenges they had gone through, mainly legal repression, and their legacy.

5.1. An Overview on Political Activities following the Industrial Conflict

Though progressive and innovative, the workers' industrial protest throughout the first decades of nineteenth century culminated into minor accomplishments. Added to dreadful conditions, Labour societies in different trades were walking into poverty, idleness, ignorance and sometimes immorality. They were still liable to industrial strain and legal intimidation on the part of their employers and governors. Plenty of labour disputes remained unresolved despite the fact that they had set upon various forms of physical force activities, which range from strikes and stoppages to mass manifestations and machine wrecking. These activities could bring few or no changes in favour of labour societies. It is true that 1825 amendments, in relevance to labour combinations, could lift the ban on forming unions, but the workers were unable to conclude disputes according to their terms. They were subject to legal pursuits, dismissals if not deportations. In 1833, Poor Laws² could only disappoint labour societies, unskilled workers mainly, bringing no effects to social relief. In brief, the workers' first attempts to organize labour, particularly their physical force response to industrialization, were basically doomed to failure.

Apart from the repeal of the Combination Acts³, it was still tough for the workers in all trades to come together. The unionists could not resist their employers' hostility and governors' legislation at the same time. Unions were local and less effective when it comes to realizing the workers' demands, namely favourable working hours and reasonable wages. They lacked structural organization, affiliations and the adequate finances to stand tall and strong against their rivals. The workers could not generate the right ways and means to operate in a capitalist atmosphere, and thus, their industrial protest culminated into minor effects. Workers of all trades realized that direct actions could only cause serious defeats and mount pressure on their nascent unions. Accordingly, it was in these days that radical thoughts came to the fore instead of physical force activities. The workers grew conscious enough about the need for another canal to get their voice heard. Parliamentary representation and political campaigns might be complementary to their rallies. They might help consolidate their struggle for nationwide unions able to protect labour interests. By all means, the workers' responses to strain and legal repression had to approach the political circles to find out settlements for their disputes.

The workers' shift from industrial to political protest was a further attempt to organize labour after they had despaired public disturbance and Owenite cooperatives. The labouring population soon pinned new hopes on political campaigns or rather protests to defend their cause, legalize unions and why not position themselves in places of power, namely parliament. This change in ideals and strategies might help manage the industrial conflict. The workers realized the need for a government that would handle their grievances and understand their concerns. They wanted partners to take an active hand against the abuses of both factory and capitalist mechanisms. For these endings, the working class radicals, later known as the Chartists, opted for political means to voice their needs and interests making "the right to vote" the most important concern of the next phase of the industrial protest. The great majority believed that only under this enfranchisement that a labouring man would possibly participate in the management of the industrial conflict. As a member of parliament, a labouring man would be able to voice the aspirations of his fellows; he would be able to lobby and defend all that might be in the favour of

² A body of laws undertaking to provide relief for the poor, developed in 16th-century England and maintained, with various changes, until after World War II. The Elizabethan Poor Laws were administered through parish overseers, who provided relief for the aged, sick, and infant poor, as well as work for the able-bodied in workhouses. Late in the 18th century, this was supplemented by the so-called Speenhamland system of providing allowances to workers who received wages below what was considered a subsistence level ("Poor Laws", Encyclopedia Britannica).

³ British acts of 1799 and 1800 that made trade unionism illegal. The laws, as finally amended, sentenced to three months in jail or to two months' hard labour any workman who combined with another to gain an increase in wages or a decrease in hours or who solicited anyone else to leave work or objected to working with any other workman ("Combination Acts", Encyclopedia Britannica).

his class. Briefly, labour movement, and after a series of disappointments, turned to another agitation, which was sharply different in nature and methods, to address economic, social and political defects altogether.

5.2. Chartists and Scaffolding the Industrial Protest

The radical thoughts the Chartists began to disseminate after 1838 were revolutionary if not determinative. For the first time, they elevated the workers' demands to more than solving industrial disputes between the workers and their employers. Political representation, the voting rights and constituencies were brought to the fore as political questions without which the workers' conditions would change to nothing. The Chartists turned to political campaigns to advocate the workers' liberties and wrest additional privileges, mainly after the modest parliamentary reforms. Of course, the workers' earlier accounts were of a great value in the sense that they crystallized that their industrial protests would not achieve adequate developments away from political campaigns. Accordingly, many reformers, middle-class radicals and even physical force militants decided to join the workers' cause extending demands to political liberties and rights. As far as these rights are concerned, mid-nineteenth century mechanisms allowed industrialists and landowners to hold power leaving the working class politically and socially helpless. In fact, the working people were entirely unrepresented or more exactly excluded from voting. They had no chance to get involved in the governorship of their affairs. Almost everything, political or economic decisions, was vested into the hands of both governors and employers (August, 2007, p. 75). The Chartists, through these attempts of political protests, aspired to support the workers and more importantly to address the questions of the day.

Starting from 1838, activities seeking labour and political reforms were advanced by middle and working-class activists. Petitions, appeals to striking and public meetings were held to support the "People's Charter", which asked for manhood suffrage, annual parliaments, the secret ballot, payment of MPs and equal electoral districts. These demands assert that the Chartists' wave of change was purely political; it revolutionized the working class' demands and that political protest might be the right means to achieve social welfare. Yet, the Chartists first attempt did not work out. Morris (1948) states that the first Petition was rejected by parliament and the Convention dissolved itself after an inclusive attempt to declare a general strike; the order for which was later rescinded. The Chartists had initially acknowledged that such a move required organization. At this time, the Chartists realized the power of strikes and mass manifestations. It could be their next weapon to consolidate their cause. At Newport, there had been plans to release their heroes and leaders, but it seems that these schemes were ill-prepared and uncoordinated (Morris, 1948, p.410). This move did only generate local authorities' intimidation. Actually, these measures on the part of government forced the Chartists to think of organization and ways to win support for the second Petition. The Chartists' Second Petition, in 1842, was somehow different in terms of demands and even language. They pinpointed social evils as the chief factors behind their agitation. They could no longer bear poverty, crime and the fact that thousands of people were dying from actual want. They directed the attention of their governors to drastic conditions at workplaces and unhealthy atmosphere, to long working hours and meagre wages, which were inadequate to sustain their comforts after a physically exhausting labour.

In less than one year, the Chartists grew more concerned with the questions of the day, namely social and political problems. Yet, their Second Petition was similarly rejected by parliament the fact that brought the industrial conflict to its peak. The Chartists did respond with massive strikes throughout the industrial districts and Midlands bringing their six-point charter to the fore again. They appealed to all labour to be ceased until the People's Charter became the law of the land (Morris, 1948, p. 412). Basically, this developed the Chartists' campaign to political cause. In Manchester, the Chartist Executive tried their best to exhort workers to hold on pressure. They even issued a manifesto which local authorities considered as a call to a civil war. The Chartists'

schemes therefore went awry despite the huge number of workmen on their side (Thorne, 1966). A lot of the Chartists' fellows were arrested and sentenced to different punishments in the same way the Luddites and unionists, who had once received severe convictions. In the end, the first political campaigns failed to bring about tangible accomplishments in favour of the workers' political rights, but it is worth noting that neither these false beginnings nor legal repression could wane this new wave of change.

It is true that political agitation can sometimes bring in few or no effects at the very beginning, but it doesn't mean a campaign in decline. The Chartists furthered their rally to advocate the workers' interests. Some Chartists held on mass demonstrations whereas certain others resorted to armed confrontations and physical force activities taking the industrial conflict to an alarming situation. There had been attempts to test bombs and make bullets to defend their cause. The Plug riots of 1842 were a fine example that denotes the degree of pressure the Chartists together with their followers had felt following the denial of their second Petition. Additional activities such as public meetings and pressing, in the Northern Star, continued for a couple of months making the whole nation on the verge of a political disruption. In other words, the Chartists' political agitation set upon plenty of forms, often violent activities, to show no signs of abating. They amassed workers from different trades to portray Chartism as a pure working-class movement fully concerned with political reform. They even tried to cooperate with middle-class radicals to consolidate their contacts, and of course communication, with the outer circles but more importantly to bring in their ideals and thoughts to every corner of Britain. This might help them produce the working class salvation (Hewitt, 1996, p. 200). Actually, and in less than two years, the Chartists did indeed become the voice of the working people to champion their labour concerns. Yet, most of these efforts to heighten a sense of unity among workers, in particular, and lower classes, in general, did not help win parliamentary support for their political campaign. Again, the government attitude was the same. The mid-Victorian state used whatever the means to pull down the movement.

The Chartists' agitation, though ineffective for contemporaries, did transform the workers' political future. Despite their consecutive defeats, the Chartists did not abandon their appeals to engage additional supporters for their cause. Instead, their activities grew notably after 1842. Some leaders toured the country attempting to convey that nothing would offer more social and political liberties more than the "People's Charter" while certain others continued to press emphasizing that social reform would remain incomplete without political actions. They continued to blame their governors and the employers of the nation's social and political defects. Other Chartists pointed out the right to be represented for they believed that the chief cause of their dreadful conditions was the fact of being unrepresented in parliament. It could be said that the Chartist agitation was a further form of protest, political in nature, which aspired to entitle workmen a couple of privileges and rights (Kirk, 1987, p.45). In figures, they could not attain all that they had been rallying for, but they could achieve some minor developments. These were the Mines Act of 1842, the Factory Act of 1844 and the repeal of Corn Laws. Actually, these amendments mounted the government's legal repression. True that Peel's regime provided some concessions in the workers' favour, but again these legal measures were more to weaken Chartism than to serve public needs. Local authorities, often manipulated by factory masters and landowners, showed no reluctance in cracking down the movement (Kirk, 1987, p. 46). In brief, the Chartists' efforts, to win support in parliament, did never go unanswered on the part of governments, but these responses could only strengthen the workers' cause. To some respects, the workers' political agitation could at least bring the workers together and hold on pressure via additional canals.

5.3. Additionally Depreciated in Movies and Documentaries

Chartism, being a form of political protest, was not only overlooked by contemporaries but also recent voices, particularly among liberation movements movie makers. These did in many instances address issues like labour rallies and campaigns to restore rights, physical force incidents and violent actions against all of those who had violated rights and privileges. Some movie directors set upon journeys to advocate particular events or causes in labour movement with little or no interest in the workers' political protest. In *Days of Hope*, Loach (1975) charts the progress of the workers' rallies to transform their living and working conditions. Scenes of mobs, strikes and stoppages are the chief image that Loach wanted to project. In *Days of Hope*, the characters were ready to fight but in the only war that matters (Thompson, 2018). This basically leads to the fact that political rallies are less frequent than campaigns to increase wages and decrease the working hours.

Once more, political protest was seen secondary to class struggle and physical force activities. In another movie, *Peterloo*, there was an attempt to catalogue all that supported the rise of radical thoughts, particularly the circumstances that forced the workers to announce their unhappy situation through street marches. In *St. Peter Field*, in Manchester, the contingents aspired to urge parliamentary reform and labour rights after they had despaired legal changes following the Luddites' riots. Theoretically, this incident is political in nature, but the movie director highlighted class struggle more than the workers' rallies to transform their living and working conditions via political means. In his review on "Peterloo", Kenny (2019) mentions that this movie takes a special interest in two factors; the pre-Industrial-Revolution conditions for workers that enraged the labourers and moved the thinkers of the higher classes, and the organization of protest, which necessarily had a hand in raising the consciousness of the oppressed classes. It is true that this movie pinpointed the rise of radical thoughts among labour societies but with even a hit to political issues, which were in fact intolerable to address. Again, the result was great emphases on industrial and economic disputes rather than political reforms.

Additional rights and equal payments to women were similarly addressed in plenty of instances throughout the workers' campaigns for their well-being. Again, the monumental issue in labour related movies was class struggle and industrial protest but not political reform. "Made in Dagenham" portrays women's endeavours to claim privileges and rights as like as their fellow men in workshops and factories. Women succeeded to come together and go against their unions' leaders, governors and even husbands for they were blamed of doing less work. In fact, they were highly productive. In this sense, "Made in Dagenham" is an attempt to transform the way of thinking about women. As like as men, women protested against low wages and went on strikes to alleviate their working hours. Thus, and away from political reform, women could annoy their unions' leaders and embarrass their governors bringing in the fact that unequal pay is wrong (Ebert, 2010). Once more, though women's responses targeted legal amendments and reforms, the chief scenes of "Made and Dagenham" are purely industrial and economic. Actually, this indicates that political protest has been generally depreciated for unknown factors. It might be for the fact that the current circumstances were not ripe for change as it might equally be for the governors', and all of those in places of decision, fears from the outcomes of political reform.

5.4. The legacy of the Chartists on Labour Unionism and Political Organization

What contemporaries described as another failure the workers' cause had encountered was in fact a turning point in the history of Labour Movement in Britain. The Chartists realized the power of legislation and the challenges they would encounter due to the fact of being unrepresented in parliament. Though revolutionary, the Chartists' wave of change was plagued with local divisions and quarrels. The Chartists were generally disorganized, helpless sometimes and lacking national support (Flinn, 1975, p. 146). Yet, in a significant paradox, these difficulties could only compel these groups to stand strong for common interests. Following 1842, many Chartist activists furthered their campaigns seeking political reform but in a different way. They embraced new tactics to evade repression, and mainly, to carry on their rally for the recognition of labour unions. Apparently, the Chartists were turning to a new phase of radicalism. They managed to forge alliances with middle-class radicals, especially those who had supported some of the reforms involved in the charter; they joined town councils and many middle-class dominated associations in an effort to use their machinery to meet their ends. This reflects the new ways of resistance or rather their strenuous efforts to hold on change. Their compromise to collaborate with middle-class reformers was part of their strategy and thus their belief in gradual change and effective means, namely political canals to voice the workers' grievances. The issue on the Crimean War, for instance, brought a lot of Chartists and middle-class radicals together. Thus, what first seemed a failure turned to a stepping stone for further accomplishments.

Though written off, the Chartists' political protest was of a seminal value in the workers' favour. The Chartists furthered their campaigns for the legal recognition of labour unions, more labour rights, favourable conditions and all that would step up the workers' social and political well-being in plenty of ways. In this regard, their holding on their political rallies brought them in harmony with some socialist reformers. They even joined the remaining cooperative societies considering that they were still on the same wavelength. This in fact was another attempt to generate support for their political change and at the same time to consolidate unionism in the long run. In Manchester, where the origins of cooperative movement ran deep, the Chartists established some stores adopting the Owenite model. These gatherings were not only labour combinations to provide social relief, but also a means to raise fund, empower unions and thus sustain the workers' cause economically. This includes the privilege to obtain the necessary things in life at a low cost. In her *Social and Economic History of Britain*, Gregg (1969) states: "Chartism was markedly more mature than the spasmodic outbreaks at the beginning of the century. It left no direct heir but it has bequeathed a very real inspiration to subsequent generations". It could be said that the contributions of the Chartists after the denial of the charter, though minor in some respects, were an additional action to strengthen unionism, and thus help handle labour interests and social concerns conveniently.

Chartists' responses to the workers' concerns were notably monumental. They did never cease supporting the workers' economic concerns as the improvements of factory conditions, wages and working hours. They did never set themselves away from strikes or public meetings, which were meant to consolidate the workers' cause. Through their newspaper, the *Northern Star*, the Chartists devoted columns to cover unionism issues and call for the amelioration of working conditions. They did openly express their distress and discontent about the economic defects of the day adding their voice to the workers. The truth behind their story will probably never be told due to several factors, but there is no denying that Chartism was a mass movement to advocate political and economic aspirations in the workers' favour. It would be therefore unwise to overlook Chartism in the sense that there existed a couple of legal amendments, an upward trend in wages and some improvements in working conditions in factories (Morris, 1948, p.415). Actually, these developments did indeed alleviate some hardships. Added to these concessions in the workers' favour, the experiences of the Chartists helped develop ways and means very

important for the management of the industrial conflict. The working class became more homogeneous if not powerful the fact that determined the nature of the next phase of the industrial conflict, after 1850.

6. Conclusion

There is no denying on the fact that protest of all its forms is due to a couple of factors and circumstances. Rioters in many instances could not bear social and political defects that deteriorated their living or working conditions. In this context, the effects that followed the Industrial Age in early nineteenth century Britain, particularly unemployment, inflation and other social grievances arising from the Poor Law Amendment of 1834 gave birth to some waves of change. Some opted for public disturbance and rioting while certain others set upon political campaigns to protect labour interests and rights. The Chartists' accounts, for instance, are vital and commendable for they transformed after a while the destiny of the workers in Britain. They brought about significant changes in favour of the workers, both groups and individuals. In other words, and as far as Labour Movement in Britain, nothing can be complete without homage to the contributions of those radicals and reformers who had further schemes rather than wages and working hours.

As a true working-class movement, Chartism departed social grievances and harsh working conditions in workshops, and landed upon new platforms. These were of a political nature. The Chartists set out six political demands, namely universal suffrage, equal electoral districts, vote by secret ballot, annually elected parliaments, payment for MPs and the abolition of property qualifications for MPs. These demands were revolutionary in the sense that they addressed, and for the first time, the political rights of the workers. The Chartists started rallying in various forms, often violent. With particular vigour, they made their feelings and grievances known in the Plug Riots of 1842. Yet, these accounts were often depreciated despite the minor achievements the Chartist could bring to unionism.

Chartism left a great impact on the workers' ideals, organization and ways to denounce their unhappy situation. Its legacy was reflected in popular meetings, such as those held at Peep Green, Hardhead Moor in October 1838, May 1839 and March 1848. They were all organized in way to depict an image about how united, determined and mainly conscious the participants were. The 1839 meeting, for instance, is thought to be the largest ever political gathering in Britain. Contingents from different parts of the country marched for the same interests and schemes. It provided organization, orientation and even new methods to conclude their disputes or address their grievances. The Chartists helped build up a camaraderie which was maintained in gatherings and family camps. It did indeed help workers from different parts to come together for the same interest. Actually, there had been plenty of public meetings, marches and demonstrations that clearly indicate the lingering strength of local radicalism.

It is really unwise to write off a movement that finally brought the workers to the political arena following a painful striving. The Chartists were activists and radicals with schemes and broad objectives to transform the worker's living and working conditions. Despite the ups and downs, the Chartists could organize mass protests, lead marches, and orient meetings. They could change the face of politics in this country. Chartism was part of a strong popular radical movement, and there was no difference between Chartism and the rise of the Independent Labour Movement in the 1890s. In fact, the Chartists helped lay the cornerstones of Labour Party in twentieth. Today, all the Chartist demands have been realized, except for the annual elections.

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