

The Starter Material from the full Right To Unionise

How people have to relate at work to make their living is shockingly unequal. It is weighted grossly unfairly against them, if not unionised, in favour of business people and public sector managers. It is amongst the most wrongful things about the economic and political systems, in how people are handicapped in this vital task and also in the annexation of wealth and in political power.

The Right To Unionise shows just how it is unfair. It uses people's common experience and everyday language to show how business people, public bodies and other employers get their power over the rest and how unionising in response is a right, entitlement, and union conditions expected in all jobs.

Everyone knows this power employers have over workers. But they - the majority of citizens in most countries - need to understand how it is unfair and politically unacceptable and to broadcast across society their right to respond with widespread union organisation. This work aims to help validate union organisation in everyday talk and politics. A key argument against conservative opposition is: you assert business people's right to organise, to act collectively, in companies and corporations. Fellow-citizens, mostly workers, are entitled to organise too, in unions.

It is a big equality issue because even if more recognised inequalities are dealt with, being unequal in the task of earning a living remains. Shared by people of all colours, nationalities, genders, lifestyles

and ages, unless unionised, it is a unifying issue.

But employer's power is taken for granted and just how it is unequal not well known. Here it is – in our industrialised economies, most employers have a lot of staff. So they are stronger than workers not because they can get someone else from the unemployed but because they already have someone else, in fact many more. Because of that, they have not much need for any one particular worker and can drive a hard bargain with them, as they do. So the deal you make with an employer for a job, on your own, is unfair. So unfair, in such an important activity as making your living, it is totally wrong and needs to be unacceptable in politics.

By business people's beliefs about how free market relationships are reasonable, ideal in fact, workers trade with them in the job deal as equals. So employers should not be bosses. That's nonsense, of course.

In the language of their own free market economics, business people use marginal utility on people. Marginal utility is when you have plenty of some article, you have a lesser need for any one. This is how the business and employer minority get power over the majority – workers - in the vital relationship where they make their living and wealth is created.

This, the core of the case for the right to unionise, urgently needs making to fellow workers, to people generally, the media, and politicians. It should include pointing out that businesses are people organized together. So are public services. They act together, as organizations, collectively, all day, every day. Their organisation is recognised in law and,

obviously, in workplaces.

The way to respond to this, and for society to be equitably and fairly set up, is for the worker majority to be organised too, as workers, in unions, and to be entitled to their organisation being recognised at work too. They need to see why they too have the right to organize and act together, collectively. Not as a right for the unions but for themselves, jointly. People do know they would be stronger unionized but need to be able to make the case clearly to each other and able to make the political case for their entitlement to be.

It's the biggest political problem we have because, without the majority of people being organized, it leaves not only earning a living but also politics, the most important public activities, to be dominated by business people, in their own self-confessedly selfish, private interests. The Right To Unionise shows how them having such power over supposedly 'all-in-it-together' fellow-citizens, fellow-nationals, is a big political issue. It shows how business people and governments obstructing citizens from organising (as business people do) is unacceptable, how it should be a civil right, a constitutional right. It's time we caught up with the Industrial Revolution: they are organised, we need to be, and are entitled to be.

This work is not written about workers but to them. It aims to spread widely amongst them the basic understanding of how employers can mistreat them, and how it justifies their own organisation. For union activists and political progressives, it is a resource of observations and arguments to use in conversations and campaigns with workers and to put in political debate at all levels.

***These Free Downloads are on the website-
THE BOOK The Right To Unionise, 228 pages -***

A SHORT PIECE ON Recognition

Employers are organised in and as businesses and public bodies. Their organisation is recognised in workplaces (obviously). We are entitled to our organisation as workers to be recognised at work too.

AS A PAGE OF DIAGRAMS -

The Right To Unionise Chart

AND HOW TO BUY A PRINT COPY FOR GBP 11.00

Reviews

North West Labour History –

***far from an academic handbook on your rights at work;
has the feel of the shop floor.***

***The late Tony Benn, socialist activist and politician -
a great book to explain the essentials.***

Ed McDonnell is a retired lecturer who taught courses for union workplace reps/shop stewards and has been active in the labour movement and class politics for fifty years, in the UK.