

## ***The Thirty Minute Read***

### ***The Essential Debate***

Let's start with the huge gap in wealth and power between the few and the many. *Debate about the wealth gap* should not centre, as it does, solely on redistribution through taxation. It's too easy for the wealthy to claim 'their' money is being taken from them. We need to look at and control how they *get* excessive wealth (and power). Most of it is gained through business activity. *Business* is buying materials or services, adding value to them, and selling them. *People add that value, by working* on the goods and services. The work is done by the owners or their managers, and by staff, the workforce. The bigger the business, the more the staff's work outweighs that of owners.

*The value added* is set by how much the owners sell the products and services for. *The owners pay the workforce* less than that, less than the value they add. They keep the rest for themselves. This is Profit - the difference between what they get from selling the goods and services and what they pay the workforce for doing it.

Business people have difficulty with this view. They think the money they take in sales income is simply theirs. But if they didn't make money out of the work of the people they employ, why do they employ them? Out of philanthropy?

*The owners deserve more* of the value added than the workforce because of their initiative, enterprise and commitment. And they have to pay back whatever capital they invested. And they bear the risk of not being able to pay it back. But the amount they get for this is not determined by any known, agreed, fair evaluation.

It could easily be but it's not. It's worked out like this ... *They use one trading relationship*, with *customers*, to get the added value. And *a different one* with *staff*, to pay them less than the value they add.

*This is the employment or job relationship.* A crucial relationship in society, it works like this: These are industrial societies we live in. That means large-scale work activity – call centres as well as factories. It means that in most jobs people work for an owner or a government body that has many staff. The more they have, the less they need each one. The more they have, the less they can pay any new or existing one *because they've got a lot of others doing it already*. They don't need any *one* worker enough to put them under pressure to pay them their fair share of the added value. They don't lose much by rejecting someone applying for a job or by sacking an existing one. They can manage with the staff they've got and say "take it or leave it." The worker, on the other hand, is usually in great need of this job. It's usually their only way of making their living.

*People, each subject at work to this unfair trading, need to band together, to unionise. Then say to the owner or employer "You can't now say to any one of us 'Take it or leave it because I've got A Lot Of You'. If you don't bargain fairly with us, we'll all stop work and you won't have any. We will suffer, but so will you, until we come to a fair agreement."*

*Business people, when you discuss this view of added value and the*

unfairness of *They've Got A Lot Of You* with them, can be quite intense in arguing against it and arguing for their right to hire and fire workers on their terms. (That's a conscious understatement.) They'll argue that workers who don't like what they offer them will just have to go and get a job somewhere else. This is business people blissfully ignoring the Industrial Revolution of the last 300 years, which means that most work is highly collective. So workers are at this same disadvantage in almost any other job they can go for.

*One key argument they make* is that these rights are justified because of them having risked capital, millions of pounds and dollars, if their business fails. In counter-argument, the bankruptcy laws allow them to evade similar amounts that they owe to suppliers.

*Only ever arguing from their side, they think their enterprise and risk-taking gives them an absolute right to dominate the rest of us. Their enterprise and risk-taking is all well and good and, to a degree, fair enough. But wealth and power can't be worked out just on their side of it. It has to be also about the rights and wrongs of the relationship between themselves and workers.*

*They always argue* their case as if the business system is made up entirely of small businesses started by involved, genuinely enterprising individuals. But much - maybe most - business activity and sequestration of value added by staff is done by large companies and corporations. Most of the sequestered added value goes to shareholders, many of whom do nothing to add value. And these people don't risk much of their capital. They spread it across funds where one business failing isn't much of a risk and the general success of others in their portfolio means they successfully get much of the value added by workers for doing nothing, at little or no risk.

*And the capital risked* is often from banks, not usually from someone's life savings or secured against their house. (Occasionally it is. This writer has as close friends people running at least three separate business. And one has, indeed, risked his house by borrowing against it to invest in his business. This writer is, as he writes, trying to work out how he can help him escape from this unusual and unwelcome trap.)

*But they can't be allowed* to base their case on the plucky small business model. Even from the smallest business upwards, and increasingly so as they get bigger, employers exploit the *They've Got A Lot Of* mechanism. And most of the real world is *big* business.

*As for their claim to the extra wealth* they get (which, in total, is stupendous) work is a generally a collective, co-operative activity. In actual cooperatives, pay is determined by democratic decisions about what each person contributes or how much their skills, maybe specialist skills, including management skills, is needed. But the wealth and power business owners get, and the power the government gets as an employer, is not set by any such fair assessment of the greater value of what they do. It is set by the crude, unequal power of having many staff and being able to do without any one of them at a time – having *A Lot Of* - and paying them as little as they can get away with through this unacceptable mechanism.

The *A Lot Of* mechanism governs a key society-wide relationship, in which fellow-citizens make their living, and that's not right. *Workers are the majority of the population. They are fellow-citizens in societies where there is a lot of talk about 'we' and 'us' and 'ours' and 'the country'. The work and wealth relationship has to be fairer, with more equality of power, by workers being organised enough to be equal to business owners, and the state as an employer.*

### ***People and The System***

*But at least business people* are interested in these debates, and their enterprise does provide the jobs that the rest of us depend on to make our living. *People in general* won't look at all this, about how we relate to each other and business people in politics, business, and work. They won't examine 'The System'. They complain about *what's done*, on each of the wide range of issues – the wealth gap, jobs, health, education, climate change and all the others. But they tamely accept the *relationships* that enable it.

*Why is that?* Are they too intimidated by the system to question it? Too self-centric to devote their attention to examining it? Too lazy to? Yet they have ravenous appetites for gathering – or googling – information all sorts of other things, and for eagerly exchanging it. They have fervid interests in consuming goods and services, in sport, music, celebrities, history, and various hobbies.

*Seems like people* will take an interest in anything *but* how we relate to each other in politics, business and work, the key relationships, the central issue in society. Before tackling *what's done* in politics, business and work, people need to examine and understand these relationships, to examine and understand the arrangements we live by, *the system*.

*The key problem is that business people have more power than we should allow them. They have power in politics* because they are 'the economy'. What people think of as politics is subsidiary to this practical, everyday power. They get this by being *organised*, in their businesses, companies, corporations and banks. They also dominate political *debate*, because they are organised enough for some of them to own most of the media.

*Everybody else* can only respond to business people's everyday political power at elections held only every four or five years. And it's with just one simple vote, atomized, divided, unorganised; grouped together shallowly, by only geographical proximity, not by real everyday relationships.

*Business people* have more power over the rest than is right *at work* too. It's worth repeating that in industrial societies most businesses have many staff. As a worker, each individual is of only marginal use to them. They can turn down any one person for a job; or in work, not treat them right, not give them the right pay and conditions; or sack them, with little loss of output. *This is the advantage employers have over the rest - They've Got A Lot Of You.* It is an unfair, unacceptable advantage. Public sector employers also have it over public sector workers. *The response to this unfair power is for people to organise together at work too*, to make employers deal with them fairly or risk losing all their staff when they treat people wrong, not just one.

*The unfairness of the **A Lot Of** mechanism to people as individuals makes the personalised case for people to organise in Trade Unions. They need to do it universally, to make business people and public sector employers deal with them together, fairly.*

*This is also the proper response to business people's excess power in politics. With everybody else also organised, mostly as workers, they would not only match up to business people as everyday equals at work. They would also develop their political awareness, attitudes and organisation, to respond to business people's excessive political power. So the solution in both politics and work is for people to organise together to match organised business people.*

### ***So What Is The System?***

*The common, official view of society sees the core of the system as everyone altogether as fellow-nationals and governments running the country, in everybody's best interests. Instead, we need to see everyday business and work relationships as the core of society.*

These relationships grant business people a huge excess of power and wealth over the rest through unfair, unequal relationships in business and work, and also in politics. All political discussion must centre on a clear understanding of this. Currently, it doesn't.

*What are these business and work relationships, the system?* Everyone knows them but they are so accepted in everyday life and political debate they are almost invisible. Those who champion the system call it free markets, and free, or private, enterprise. Critics generally call it capitalism. Those terms are too remote for normal discussion. Let's talk of it with a familiar everyday term - ***the Business System*** or ***the Free-market Business System***.

*Business people convince the rest that it is the only way to run society, as if it's the natural order. It's not. Throughout all of human history up to only a few hundred years ago the system was different. (Though not necessarily better).*

*The essentials are said to be that anyone - any *individual* - can set up in business and any other *individual* is free to do the same, in competition with them. And any *individual* is free to buy products and services from any *individual* seller. Every *individual* is free to decide the price they will sell at and the price they will buy at.*

*Free markets favour business owners over everybody else, the majority, most of whom are workers. Business people want, and get, a lot of freedom to do as they please. They use it to dominate and abuse fellow-citizen workers. They claim they deserve their position because of their enterprise but they are over-entitled. They benefit far more than their enterprise merits. And what they take, and the way they treat people, challenges the notion of a national identity shared with them.*

*This is the basic system. Politics is built upon it, not the other way round. Politics is the arena for struggle between those who want to retain it – it's what conservatives seek to conserve – and those who want to make it meet the needs of the many rather than the few.*

*Business people established the business system before industrialisation and before the rest got the vote (in most countries). And since then this occasional, simple, atomised vote does not give the mass of people the power to challenge and regulate it – regulate *them* - in everybody's interests.*

*Many people do argue this, that business people are allowed too much freedom. These people want, at least, basic public services to be provided by society as a whole, not by business people for the wrong reasons. They also want business people's activity in general to be regulated in some ways by society as a whole, for the benefit of society as a whole. For example, consumer protection regulations restrict business people's unfair power over people as consumers. And environmental protection seeks to restrict their crazy activities.*

*Business people fiercely oppose such regulation. They argue it is state intrusion into individual freedom, which they claim free markets provide. But regulation can be seen simply as democratic decisions, made by and for all citizens. *They are under-regulated* and allowed great freedom because they are 'the economy' and won't perform unless indulged. And they often get themselves into government, as their conservative parties, and deregulate themselves.*

*Most of business people's arguments do not make sense and do not match reality. They speak of free markets as consisting of 'individuals being free to achieve on their own'. Yet they actually operate as organised groups - as **companies** and **corporations**. In them they have intense *collective* relationships with many staff. They expect staff to be 'team players', don't they? That's modern industrial work and business.*

*And they relate to their many staff through 'the labour market'. **The usual debates about markets don't matter much compared to the need for debate about this one.** It governs how citizens are bought and sold in making their living. And the work relationship between them and business people is key to production, profit, wealth and capital. Yet in politics and everyday political talk, this market in people – for most people, the market in *themselves* when making their living - is not analysed, debated and disputed like the others are.*

*The labour market is the main everyday flaw in the system. It has the majority of the population, most citizens, near to helpless in earning their living. It also leaves them weak in politics. *They are weak in earning their living because the employer can either not employ, or mistreat, or sack, any one of them on their own, because they have the others. This, again, is the 'They've Got A Lot Of Others' relationship. This flaw in the system needs challenging before any of the others can be.* The response to A Lot Of is for those who are workers – most people - to organise together too.*

*When they are not, and people sell themselves as *true* individuals, as is common, they sell to business owners and state employers who not only have many of them but *who are not themselves individuals*. They are *organisations*. Yet for workers to also organise and act together is condemned, obstructed, and heavily regulated.*

*In our highly inter-active, collective, industrialised economies, justifying the free-market business system as individual freedom is plain absurd. And*

it is run against the interests of the majority. Yet, as voters, many are bewitched by this myth of individual freedom. So too are progressive commentators and politicians, who don't challenge it due to their own, and the electorate's, bewitchment. We need to expose it as a myth, an absurd view of modern mass society, and challenge it.

*Business people* are the main advocates of free enterprise, the business system. But they are a small minority. The majority are workers, deeply disadvantaged by the system. So business people, to get into government, build political alliances and parties by showcasing the apparent freedom it offers to others. Firstly, to small business people. Then, small traders. (They do often benefit from free markets. But they also often don't.) Then, workers also are persuaded that it's the only game in town and they should only aspire to advance as managers or as well-educated, skilled workers.

*Across this range of making your living* conservative politicians cast a holy mantle - 'the freedom to achieve through your own efforts'. It's 'The American Dream.' It is the key myth that sustains conservative politics.

*(Although this business - or capitalist - system grants business people* grossly unfair power over the majority of their fellow-citizens, it does have merits. It encourages enterprise, encourages people to provide the goods, services and jobs we need. We do rely upon business people for this. Through competition, it encourages consumer choice and greater efficiency. It enables the accumulation of capital that can be invested in ever-greater efficiencies in production and better goods and services.)

*But on top of the unfairness at work, it leaves the obviously collective world of work and business – the economy – to be run by people with fiercely individual aims, who believe in looking after just themselves, and everybody else can sink or swim. (Though they do organise themselves, politically, as conservatives, to protect the business system that enable this.)*

*And, under-managed, their business system is unstable* and prone to crisis. And it allows them to so relentlessly pursue 'a return on capital' that they produce senseless growth that is destroying humanity's ability to live on this planet.

*A classic argument made for the free-market business system* is that, despite its inequality, anybody can 'make it'. They don't have to be subservient workers. Anybody can start a business and, if any good, become successful. This is true. But it's an irrelevant argument. We live in industrial societies. Many people working together, with costly equipment, is generally more efficient. Larger-scale production outperforms smaller-scale and takes most of the trade. We can't all be small traders. The majority of people *have* to work for employers who have many of them.

*So it doesn't matter if anyone can 'make it'.* It just means that, with industrial production of goods and services, we all have a chance to be the one of the few mistreating the majority. We need to challenge and regulate that. Each of us having the chance be one of those doing it is no solution.

*The argument* that 'anyone can make it' can seem to be justified by there being many small businesses. By acting as a buffer zone between the worker majority and big businesses, they provide cover for, they legitimise, the big and corporate business class, that lets them portray their excess power as justified reward for self-made-man, little-person-made-good enterprise. It masks them, obstructs us from identifying them as a ruling class, challenging and regulating them. But they are the ruling class.

*Us, Politics and The System* argues for people to organise as workers, within the business system. There is a more ambitious approach. It is to transform the key relationships into Socialism. But when most people don't even see the case against the free-market business system's relationships as it is now, nor the case for being free to correct its unfairness, there's little prospect of them making that greater leap. Nor of us developing the mature approach to civilised living with each other that Socialism would require.

*Instead, we need to start where we are* and spread a sound understanding of what's wrong with relationships in the present system. And organise to be equal in it to business people, at work and in politics.

*Germany is of interest.* This writer hasn't especially studied how they do things there and it's not a perfect society. But the evidence is fairly clear and undisputed that business owners and organised workers in Germany relate in a far more equal and productive way than most other countries.

*That leads to the criticism the business system's advocates made of 'unions'* in the UK in the 1970's, and still make. We were more organised and combative than we'd ever been (and so society was fairer, more equal than it has ever been.) However there was a short-sightedness - we usually fought just for our conditions without taking the whole business into account. That's partly because owners had always treated us as outsiders to the business, and we did well enough just to organise to defend our conditions in it.

*Having acknowledged that*, trade unionists did attempt to participate positively, with alternative business plans. But employers were even less interested than us in working collaboratively. In 1980, the biggest UK car company, British Leyland, famously fired the senior union convenor for publishing a union business plan for the company.

*Referring back to the start* – we live in countries that assume we are all together as citizens, and that government's primary purpose is to secure the common good. Check the preamble to the US Constitution. But it's not done, because business people prefer this system in which they dominate and the rest sink or swim. The way to change that is not to hope, from atomised weakness, for progressive governments or Presidents. It is to organise, practically, daily, to be equal to employers at work; and from that base, to build political alliances that give progressive governments the support they need to regulate business owners on behalf of the majority. Then we can enjoy civilised, stable societies.

### **Next – The Right To Unionise - The Three-page Read**

*The next three pages have an independent, internally coherent (hopefully!) existence as a stand-alone, short version of 'The Right To Unionise' but covers some points also made elsewhere, in other contexts.*

## ***The Right To Unionise - The Three-page Read***

### ***Unionising Means Becoming Mature Citizens***

Organising is firstly about bargaining at work. That's on the next page. But we do poorly in politics at getting governments that will work for the majority and that's because the worker majority operate weakly in politics compared to business people with their conservative parties. Being organised as workers can be the base for matching up to them in politics as well as at work. It can mean becoming 'players' in the economy and politics, like they and the state are, becoming mature, involved citizens.

Business people's economic *and* political power from being organised overwhelms what the rest get simply through voting. Business people, organised in running businesses, corporations and banks, are effective players in the economy and politics, every day, not just at election times. Their activity *is* 'the economy'. From this everyday, practical organisation, and from their assertion of business rights through their conservative parties, they dominate political life. Through their media, they impress on workers self-defeating views of how the world works and mass acceptance of business class rights and politics.

We are encouraged to see the vote and parliament as the height of social and political organisation. But while the vote is important, it's not enough, unorganised against *their* organisation, to get governments that will run society for the majority. As a form of collective organisation and action, the voting process is too flimsy to enable the rest to challenge the business class. To match business people's workplace *and* political power, the great majority of citizens - workers - need better organisation than being atomised voters in occasional elections. With so many people not organised in their meaningful economic role, they can't develop their own collective politics. Organisation at work is the obvious base, extending to political influence. Just as business people's political base is *their* organisation at work, *as businesses*.

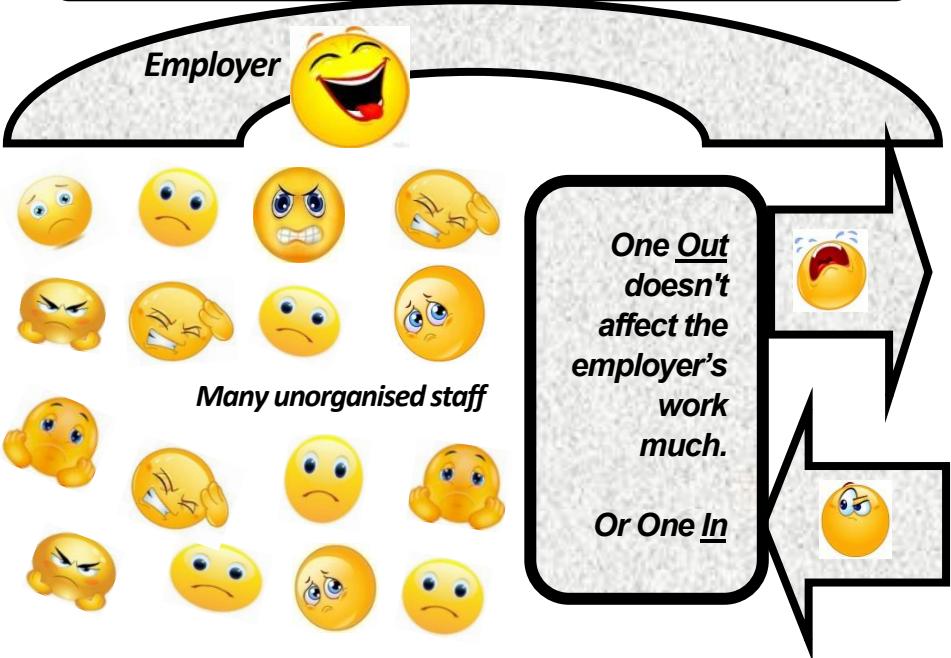
***They are organized. All workers should be.***

***And confidently so. Don't you think?***

***Note*** - The entitlement to unionise comes from the individual need for social backing and the consequent shared need to associate with each other. It isn't based on the rights of 'the unions'.

*The Right To Unionise and Us, Politics and The System*  
argue all this fully.

**Weak as a worker because Employers Have Many Others –  
The personal case for the Right To Unionise**

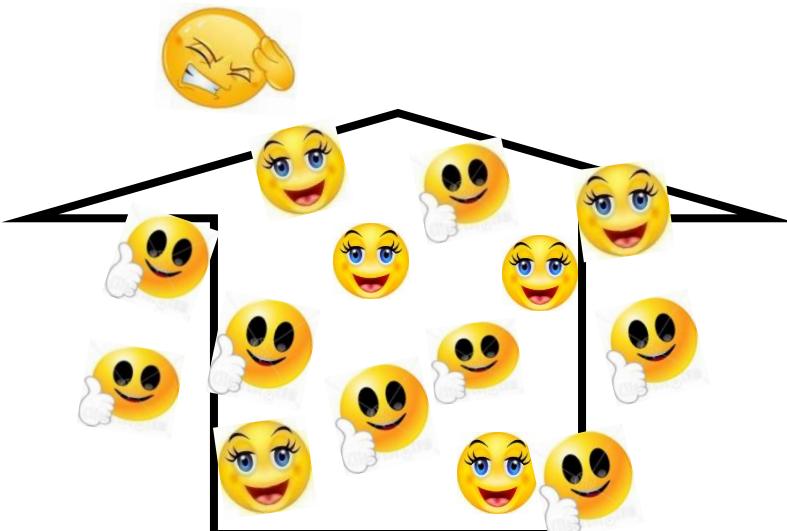


**Work relationships as shown explain why people are not equal to employers. It's because 'They've Got Lots Of Others' gives us the personal and the political Right To Organise.**

Most employers have other staff as well as you. With many others working they can easily carry on their operation without any particular one. That's what gives them power over you and every other worker when starting, managing and sacking you.. (It's not because they can replace you from the unemployed.)

*This unequal bargaining in earning your living is unfair; and has never been approved by anyone.* It's just an unplanned feature of industrial society. That is, most work is collective and to earn a living most people *have* to work for an employer who has many other staff. You can't avoid it. Industrialism works better than small trading. Only a minority can be business owners. Most will be workers, inevitably. The chance to be an owner only changes *who* are the owners. There will always be *some*. And without staff being organised they will have unfair power over them. And for the same reason, so will the state as an employer.

***It's not right for people - the majority – to have to make their living on such unequal, unfair terms. It is the biggest issue in politics.***  
***To relate fairly to business people and public sector employers fellow-citizens have to organise together at work – and be entitled to.***



### ***People Organised at Work – Negotiating and Acting Together***

*For society to be fair and civilised*, the majority, workers, have the absolute right to correct the unfairness in work relationships by organising together, in unions. It should be expected, normal, recognised in everyday life, respectable, uncontroversial.

*The heart of it is union recognition* – getting employers to accept and agree that staff negotiate their terms and conditions with them as an organised body, with recognised workplace representatives.

*It has to include* denying fellow-workers the 'freedom' to work on less than union conditions. It is just obviously essential - it stops employers from forcing us into bargaining each other downwards. You see it happening. It's for every worker's good.

*It has to include* requiring fellow-workers to join the rest of the staff in a union. When taking a job you accept coming under the owner's and manager's authority. You should accept some from your fellow-workers. It's not against anyone's authentic freedom. It means everyone *gains* freedom from the employer. And gains the freedom to act – to have workmates who might drag your conditions downwards under yours and the others democratic authority.

*It has to include* helping and persuading workers in other companies to also work only on union conditions for the trade. Because in free markets for, as consumers we generally buy the lowest cost alternative. So the worst employers get the trade, or force yours to worsen your conditions in order to compete. You see it happening, most obviously with globalisation, but also within countries. For that reason workers need to win union organisation and union conditions internationally and domestically.

### **A Key Argument About How We Relate - Who Gets How Much Power and Wealth?**

*Business people and their parties make* a standard set of justifications for them having their power and wealth. The main ones are that they are enterprising and risk losing money they put into the business.

*That at least recognises the centrality of business activity.* Because often obscuring it is the belief that property and property rights are the central issue in wealth creation and retention. They aren't. The central issue is making money in running a business, employing people, and taking a portion of the value of the work they do. Property rights are significant, but not as much.

*Property was the central issue* when owning land was the main way of making money (often from rent rather than personal farming activity) and land was the key, fixed resource. But in industrialism, the productive property, like premises and machinery, can be and are repeatedly assembled, used and discarded. ***The key mechanism now is the use of people's labour to make money.*** (And the money for the premises, machinery and materials usually comes from earlier rounds of the use of labour.)

*There is weight in the argument* that business people are entitled to more power and wealth because of their enterprise and investment. They do deserve more than the rest of us for the effort they put into running businesses. But *how much* more power and wealth is the issue. What they make from using everybody else in their business activity is not determined by a fair measure of their enterprise and risk-taking. It probably could be. But it isn't. It's determined by the unfair ***They've Got A Lot Of You*** relationship that operates in the majority of jobs. ***And that is the key issue in the whole of politics and work.***

*The justification because of risk-taking is over-stated.* It does happen, and is most acceptable where small business people genuinely put their own personal money into the business. But – researched figures would be interesting – most invested money is borrowed from the banks or comes from profits made from a previous cycle of paying workers less than the value of what they've done. And so, if it is lost, it wasn't rightly theirs in the first place. And they limit their liability by use of the bankruptcy procedure. The people who really carry the risk are suppliers who don't get paid when the business goes bankrupt.

*Some rich people get there from their own efforts.* These include film actors, successful musicians, and top footballers. Good luck to them, they don't do it by exploiting others. Leaving them aside, most wealth is made by exploiting the many, using the *A Lot Of Others* mechanism. This explanation, and the way it justifies strong, universal union organisation, is at the heart of the challenge to the free-market business system.

*Not far behind A Lot Of in importance* is the question of whether it is sensible to leave the running of what is in fact a highly collective

economy in their hands, when their declared main objective is to look after only themselves (presented, approvingly, as the individual freedom to achieve.)

### ***They Show 'The Nation' To Be Nonsense***

*In response to our attempts, in the interest of balance and fairness in society, to regulate them and the wealth they take from everybody else's work, they refuse to perform. They argue that to invest and be enterprising they need the incentive of fabulous wealth.*

*To make their conservative parties electable, they mask all this with expressions of concern for everybody. And by presenting the policies that benefit mainly them – such as free markets - as being for everybody's good. They take care to say a lot about doing things for everybody; but what they actually do in government is look after themselves and their class.*

*Yet, through their conservative parties, they vigorously promote the notion of everybody feeling intense unity with them as fellow-nationals. 'The nation', 'the national interest'. With their great selfishness and their callous and sometimes brutal behaviour to fellow-nationals, this is absurd. Particularly at work, where they often treat adult fellow-citizens almost like children.*

*Although fervent belief in national identities shared with them is absurd, it is highly successful. That's because, against all the talk of individualism, people need to feel they belong to large, successful social organisations\*. 'The Nation' is the most significant. Business people use it to obscure their oppressive role and to direct attention at outsiders for the cause of problems.*

*(\* Like fervent support of football teams, whose fans have no real, participatory collective identity. And belief in flimsy local identities - 'where you're from' - as big self-defining things – when again there's no real collective identity. 'Where you're at' is what really matters.)*

*Organising sufficiently to really challenge them is not about to happen very soon. But in political debate we can challenge them on the absurdity of sharing national identity with them. And we can argue that to each other, as fellow-workers, and that class identity, organised, mature class identity, is the proper alternative.*

*And it has an immediate use in tackling divisive racism. Anti-racist argument normally focuses on the unfairness of discriminating against 'outsider' groups. Much more useful is to demolish the belief in the *insider* group that those discriminating feel they belong to, and are vigorously encouraged to by conservatives. That is, to show how seeing themselves as British, American, French, German, Russian, Brasilian and so on, fervently as one with self-centred and oppressive business people and conservatives, is self-demeaning and self-defeating.*

### ***But What About People?***

*All that is all very well but what about all those many millions, who have their own, different ideas? Many of them are dismally short-sighted and lacking in analysis.*

*In the UK the Labour party gets the blame for not getting themselves into government. That's not fair. It can't be just their responsibility. It's everyone's. The solution for Labour and other progressives isn't to give up on what you believe you should do in order to get elected. It is to campaign to influence and change the electorate's views and voting practices, like as follows.*

*Although it's argued here that the voting system is highly inadequate, people don't use it at all wisely. Flimsy as it is, people could in fact easily use it to stop conservative parties, the anti-majority parties, getting into government. But many people get taken in by self-defeating arguments and take self-defeating positions.*

*Many get taken in by the view that voting is a choice between parties or leaders simply on their competence to 'lead the country' or manage the economy. Being competent is of course a good idea. But most of the people who get to be party leaders are much the same competence wise. Before considering their competence there's something about them of greater importance – in government, what do they aim to do? Conservative parties aim to look after and represent the rich, business people. Social democratic parties aim to look after everybody. You'd be best advised to vote for parties that aim to look after you rather than those that aim to do you in, before considering competence.*

*And many people give up on, say, the Labour Party (in the UK) because of what they do or don't do on just one issue. There's no sense in that if it means letting in parties that do even more things you don't like or are not in your interests. The point is, with just one vote, you have to put up with a lot of things a party does, vote for the least bad alternative party, and look to develop better control of them and influence over them issue by issue.*

*One of the biggest examples is diverted voting. That's people deciding their vote on an issue that, whatever the ins and outs of the issue, is a relatively minor issue. Anti-outsider voting is the biggest example. Compared to the role of business people in the economy, the health service and other issues, immigrants or asylum seekers are not issues worth swaying your vote over. They just aren't. But the business-owned media pound away at these issues every day and convince people that they are. People are swayed to vote anti-outsider because, either from lack of understanding of how central business people are to the system, or through being unable to see how to challenge them, they turn on the people presented as being less deserving than even themselves.*

*In broader, futile protest, people vote for parties other than the one they usually support or that best represents them for one with no chance of winning the seat or getting into government. So what these people are doing, for the sake of making a futile gesture, is letting the Tories in.*

*It might make sense if it's part of a long-term plan to establish this other party – say the Greens or one of the 'real labour' groups who put up candidates. But in the short-term, in any one election, it's plain daft. And if it is long-term, then rather than just make the futile protest vote, they need to put some effort into building that party in between elections, particularly in constituencies where it might get a chance of winning the seat.*

*Then .... dohh!! there's not voting at all. Thirty or more per cent of voters in the UK don't. Since conservatives aren't daft enough to pass up this simple*

chance to help get governments that will work for them, it's reasonable to suppose that most non-voters are people who Labour tries to look after and who should vote for them. The usual reason given for not voting is 'They (the parties) are all the same.' That is simply refusing to think. Really, it's quite easy to see differences and also to see which party is best for them. While the parties do all present themselves as aiming to do the same thing - run the country well - there is that key fact that conservative parties actually exist to look after the rich and business people, and Labour genuinely wants to look after all (although hampered by their deference to business people.)

*Some progressives even argue that not voting will somehow make politicians be more progressive. I'm sure conservatives love these people.*

*Another problem is that people don't talk openly enough to each other about voting. They allow all the debate to take place in the media. The social media may be changing that, and maybe that is its key new role in politics. Underpinning the lack of proper discussion between people at election time, there's the old saying and practice 'Don't talk about politics or religion' in pubs and at social occasions. That is so self-defeating. We (WE) have got to be able to do that if we are going to achieve civilised society.*

*All in all, what people should do is vote, and vote for the least-bad party that can win their constituency or win a national majority. Doing anything else simply lets in the worst. (Currently, and usually, the Tories). There's more to after that, of course. But do that.*

*The business issue is one where it really is Labour to blame and not so much everybody else. Being clear about the relationship between business people and the rest is an absolute requirement in politics, and it's not, it's fudged. Basically, we and Labour should say about business people, and to them, 'Ok, you play a key role. But you need regulating, in the cause of fairness and the greater good. If you really believe in the national identity as you claim to, you'll accept regulation with good grace. If you don't, shut up about the 'we' of national identity. And we'll regulate you anyway, as far as we can manage to without you taking your ball home.'*

*The practices just analysed show up Labour's major traditional flaw - they have not been a campaigning party. They only, mainly, approach people through the media-dominated debates and mainly only at election time. They only have weak and indeed hostile connections to the mass of the electorate. So at elections they find them all over the place politically, with a range of anti-Labour attitudes. (This is changing in 2018, the party is campaigning regularly.)*

*So Labour has floundered around trying to present themselves as competent and pro-business. And anti-immigration and not soft on people on benefits. At the same time, they try to present themselves to those who want an actual Labour party, but who give up on them as they become alternative Tories.*

*In August 2015, during the Labour leadership election, there is a revealing debate about whether to choose a leader who is*

'electable' or one who truly represents what Labour is supposed to be about – representing the majority of non-business people, workers. *The 'electable' arguments says* 'There's no point in being purist if the electorate won't vote you in'. That's true enough. But there's also, as we have seen, not such a great point being elected if you do it only as Tories-lite.

***The answer – work to change the political thinking of many of the electorate.*** Campaign, argue. It's no use just presenting progressive policies to 'the electorate' as they are.

*The connections are weak but they can be built.* As argued earlier, that is a key point about workers being organised - not just for decent working conditions but also to be 'players' in the economy and in politics. Organised workers have many opportunities to talk to each politically, and they have families, friends and neighbours and people in the bars pubs and clubs. *It might seem difficult to campaign to change people* but if you don't even attempt it, you never will. Business people manage it, with their use their media to divert and disillusion people. So much so that, in 2015 in the UK, they managed to get themselves into government, and govern viciously, against the interests of most of the electorate, with the votes of only about 25% of them.

*The start point and end point* of campaigning to change people's politics is the argument that business people dominate; that they do it by being organised; and that to deal with them on an equal basis, at work and in politics, everybody else also needs to be organised.

***This writer regularly argues this with people and EVERYBODY goes 'Ah hah! Yes – that's right'.***

### **What Will It Be Like If People Do As These Writings Urge?**

*It will be common knowledge that business people have the central role in society and that it is because they are – by owning and organising the production of most goods, services and jobs - 'the economy'; that that makes them the most powerful group in society; that this is because they are organised (as businesses), and are granted the right to organise; that they are a class, the Business class; that they are 'the wealthy'.*

*It will be the common view that most of the rest, a large majority, are workers (however well-educated and paid they are); that most of the wealth the rich have is made by the work workers do for them; that workers are entitled to balance business people's power with their own.*

*It would be the norm, widely accepted, that they too need to be organised and are entitled to be; that almost all of them would be organised; and that as organised workers, this majority will stand up to business people and public sector employers at work, negotiating together for good conditions and pay, locally and across industrial sectors, and internationally.*

*It will be widely recognised that since being organised at work makes the business class most of the economy, that also gives them political power that can limit governments; that they also have conservative parties and conservative press and broadcast media promoting politics and laws that govern business and work relationships that favour them.*

*It will be recognised that like them, workers can use their organised relationships with each other in business, work and public services, to communicate and organise with each other on politics, independently of the business-class-owned media; that they develop their own politics and support and vote for progressive parties.*

*It will be recognised that most of rich people's wealth comes from paying workers less than the value of the work they do for them; that they get so well-off from that that they don't need public services and public support; that that is why they oppose taxes; that it is fair to reclaim the wealth they make from workers by taxing them to fund good public services and welfare.*

*Due to the majority being class-conscious as workers and aware of the difference of political interests between them and business people, and organised politically as well as at work, they will always elect progressive governments. These will regulate business people generally to make society fair and sustainable.*

## **What's In The Full Work**

|  |                |
|--|----------------|
| <i>Why This Book and The Big Picture</i>                         | 56             |
| <i>Setting The Scene: Nations and Classes</i>                    | 596            |
| <i>Whoever You Vote For, The Business Class Always Get In</i>    | 65             |
| - <i>How We Relate At Work – (RTU 1)</i>                         | <b>73-113</b>  |
| <i>They've Got A Lot of Others.</i>                              | 74             |
| <i>Can They Do That? Manager's Power – Contracts – Tribunals</i> | 81             |
| <i>The Need And The Entitlement To Organise</i>                  | 87             |
| <i>The Case For Taking Action Together and Striking</i>          | 88             |
| <i>The Unions Are Their Members</i>                              | 90             |
| <i>They Can Play As A Team But We Can't?</i>                     | 99             |
| <i>How To Stand Up To Employers</i>                              | 100            |
| <i>Class and Work - Real Identities</i>                          | <b>104-113</b> |
| <i>The Business Class Exposed, Defined and named</i>             | 113            |
| <i>Free Markets, Your Work and Competition (RTU 2)</i>           | <b>128-143</b> |
| <i>There's No 'We' With The Business Class</i>                   | 143            |
| <i>Free Speech Is For Criticising Government</i>                 | 158            |
| <i>No White 'We' With Them</i>                                   | 159            |
| <i>Identity Politics – National and Other</i>                    | 173            |
| <i>Organised As Our Unions - The Real <u>We</u> (RTU 3)</i>      | <b>175-176</b> |
| <i>It's Not Where You're From, It's Where You're At</i>          | 176            |
| <i>How Their Press Promotes False Identities</i>                 | 180            |
| <i>The <u>Unions</u> Were Too Powerful? (RTU 4)</i>              | <b>188-190</b> |
| <i>National Identity - The Base For Racism and Fascism</i>       | 193            |
| <i>Why People Over-do 'Where They're From'</i>                   | 195            |
| <i>Why People Over-do Football Identities</i>                    | 203            |
| <i>Other Identities – Family, Gender, Religion, Humanism</i>     | 212            |
| <i>Working Class Identity - The Real <u>We</u> (RTU 5)</i>       | <b>221</b>     |
| <i>How We Relate in Politics</i>                                 | 230            |
| <i>Power From Free Markets In People</i>                         | 238            |
| <i>Union Democracy Exceeds Parliament's</i>                      | 241            |
| <i>Our Right to Associate, The Case For Union Freedom</i>        | <b>246-269</b> |
| <i>Promoting Unionisation</i>                                    | 269            |
| <i>The Parties Are All The Same and They Aren't</i>              | 272            |

**What's In The Full Book continued**

|   |   |            |
|---|---|------------|
| <b><u>The Summaries</u></b>   | <b><u>The Micro-Summary</u></b>           | <b>276</b> |
|   | <b><u>Basic Politics Chart</u></b>        | <b>277</b> |
|   | <b><u>The Right To Unionise Chart</u></b> | <b>278</b> |
|   | <b><u>It's Our Money Not Theirs</u></b>   | <b>279</b> |
| <b>HOW TO TALK POLITICS WITH EACH OTHER</b>                           |   | <b>281</b> |
| <b>Activity 'Talking With Voters'</b>                                 |   | <b>298</b> |
| <b>ADD-ONS</b>  |   |            |
| <i>Nationalism &amp; Classism</i>                                     |   | 303        |
| <i>Labour Is Fit To Govern</i>  |   | 315        |
| <i>The Rich - Are They Worth the Expense?</i>                         |   | 322        |
| <i>How To Save The Environment</i>                                    |   | 333        |
| <i>Racism – Look At 'Your Own' Side</i>                               |   | 335        |
| <i>Anti-social Behaviour</i>  |   | 343        |
| <i>Brexit, Trump and Populism Worker To Worker</i>                    |   | 343        |
| <b>DIGRESSIONS Expansions from the main text</b>                      |   |            |
| <i>D1. World War 2 - Fighting Fascism? Or Rival Business Classes?</i> |   | 346        |
| <i>D2. What Their Wars Are Really For</i>                             |   | 348        |
| <i>D3. Don't Blame 'The Germans' for the War</i>                      |   | 349        |
| <i>D4. Many 'Whites' Are Brutal To Other Whites</i>                   |   | 350        |
| <i>D5. Business Class Newspapers Provoke Racism</i>                   |   | 351        |
| <i>D6. The Business Class and a Planned Coup</i>                      |   | 352        |
| <i>D7. 'The British' and the French and Russian Revolutions</i>       |   | 353        |
| <i>D8. &amp; 9 Football Fans Hating Each Other</i>                    |   | 356        |
| <b><i>Why People Should Read This Book</i></b>                        |   | <b>358</b> |
| <i>Work &amp; Politics As Football</i>                                |   | 361        |
| <b><i>About The Author</i></b>  |   | <b>362</b> |
| <i>Reviews</i>  |   | 364        |
| <i>Appendix 1 - The Right To Unionise Starter Material</i>            |   | 365        |
| <i>A List of the book's main points for discussion</i>                |   | 371        |
| <i>Record of Improved Versions</i>                                    |   | <b>372</b> |