

The Compact Us, Politics, The System And Class

*How we relate in politics
and producing the wealth.
What's wrong with it,
how to put it right, worldwide.*

What's in this Compact 'UsPol' -

(from the full 'Us, Politics, The System And Class')

The Essential Us, Politics, page 2 to 20

(with Work & Politics As Football page 20)

The Ten Minute Read page 21

The Twenty Minute Read page 29

The Thirty Minute Read page 49

(with The Right To Unionise Three-page Read at page 58)

What Will It Be Like page 67 then

Nationalism And Classism page 69

Trump And The American D...elusion page 82

The Basics of Politics Chart page 85

The Right To Unionise Chart page 87

Talking With Voters Activity page 88

How To Talk Politics With Each Other page 93

The Work's Main Points To Discuss page 125

Why People Should Read This Work page 116

About The Author page 119

Reviews page 121

Contents of the main work page 122

The Blog Archive to Blog 23 page 123

<https://www.uspoliticsandthesystem.org/blog>

The Essential Us, Politics, The System And Class (To page 19)

The Micro-Summary, then, from page 4, the original Essential UsPol

Now with 'It's Our Money Not Theirs' - how the huge inequality in wealth comes from the business class using their power over workers to pay them less than the value of their work and keep the difference, while claiming it is just reward for their own contribution.

(at page 16)

And at page 19, the graphic explanation of why we should call the system 'The Business System', Not 'Capitalism'.

Then at page 20 Work And Politics As Football

Starting with The Micro-summary (to page 4)

We're in a state about politics. It's because we don't base it on 'the system' – how some people run businesses, producing goods and services, with multiple staff, industrially; and trade in free markets; and the classes it produces. We need to get each other to base political views and discussions on it...

People think political parties and governments run the country. But they don't run the business and work relationships where we make our living and some get wealthy - the economy. They are mostly left to run as free markets. And the point of free markets is that governments don't control them.

Conservatives claim free markets mean everyone is free to run a business so the extreme differences in power and wealth is fair – anyone can 'make it'. But that's a fantastical view, it's not how the system works. In making goods and providing services, mass, high-volume production (industrialism) is more efficient than small. So, trading in free markets, high-volume producers constantly drive out small ones. So most production and work comes to be done not with everybody producing and trading as independent individuals but with a smallish number of large, collective operations, owned and run by a small minority, business people.

*And in these large operations, the workings of the most important free market, the one in jobs and people, is ignored. With multiple-staffing in most businesses, even small ones, they can keep production going without any one particular worker because **They've Got All The Rest**. That means they can trade harshly with each separate worker over their pay and conditions. And so can sell their work for more than they pay them. And that's where their wealth comes from. Even though they might be enterprising and able and deserve more than the rest, that's actually how they get so wealthy – through control of the work process.*

So, with mass production, even at the small-business end, whose operations are larger than real individual traders, business people are not making wealth as individuals but, collectively. With many staff, they get wealthy more from the collective work everyone else does for them than from what they themselves do. They trade as companies and corporations, with multiple staff, as collective operations. But the ludicrous conservative claim that this is all about individual rights and freedom is accepted and gives legitimacy to the freedom and wealth of business people.

It all means business people run most of the economy, not governments. They are a class, the business class. Their activity is the economy. That gives them inherent political power that drastically limits what progressive governments can do.

And they use the wealth they take from running the system to actively promote politics that favours them. Business people of all sizes, down to the smallest, organise and support conservative parties and media or influence progressive parties. They protect their power over everyone else in the work process by making business freedom in free markets the dominant political view.

So the political parties are not, as a lot of people think, just different teams from a non-partisan elite of managers just claiming to be the ones who can most competently 'run the country' or 'the system' for everyone's benefit. They come from the system, from people in it organising to protect their partisan roles and interests in it.

And the majority don't get what they want from work or politics because the business class put more into looking out for their

interests than most workers put into organising as workers, at work, and into progressive politics.

For a foundation for discussing politics, we need a clear view of these basic political and trading relationships – the system. The works that make up 'Us, Politics, The System And Class' provide it. Then we need to put our relationships with the business class – at work, and in taxation and provision of public services – at the centre of political debate.

(End of Micro-summary)

The Original Essential UsPol

People all over feel they're not getting what they need and are entitled to. They expect political parties and governments to provide it, which they claim they can do.

But political parties and governments don't simply 'run the country'. People make their living, and some get wealthy, outside politics: where people work together, mostly in free markets that governments don't control, producing goods and services in the business system.

So political parties have a limited role in people getting what they need and they need to look beyond politics and governments.

The effectiveness of high-volume, industrialised production and trade in free markets inevitably leads to larger businesses displacing small ones. And that inevitably leads to a small class of business people dominating work and wealth and using their power for their own benefit and against everyone else's.

To justify how the high-volume, free-market business system enables business people to have such power and wealth, conservatives claim it embodies freedom - the freedom for anyone to run their own business. Then they say - 'they're entitled to what they get from their individual efforts, ability and risk-taking.'

This vision of individual freedom might fit for the legendary little guy. But it gives political cover to how, with volume production, most business people take wealth from the system collectively – as companies and corporations with large workforces. They get wealthy through collectivist production, more from the work everybody else does for them than their own. It's the big basic wrong in the system and society.

Business people are, and run, the economy. And, through conservative media and parties, they maintain as the dominant political view that business people's freedoms are sacred, and can impose their rights over worker's rights.

They are a class and it is key to ordinary people and progressives getting anywhere to recognise them as one, the business class. Talking only of billionaires, 'oligarchs' or 'the 1%' obscures how it's the whole business class, with their strong belief in their rights, that they expressed forcefully in political argument, that achieves the wide acceptance of them, that is the main problem. It's the whole business class, and their political support for their rights, that enables them to run the world. As in the USA right now.

Political parties don't make, or much control, the economic system, except in state-run economies. It's the other way round – political parties come from people in the economic system organising politically to protect their role and interests in it. And ordinary people don't get what they need because business people put more into that and into political activity as conservatives, than they do.

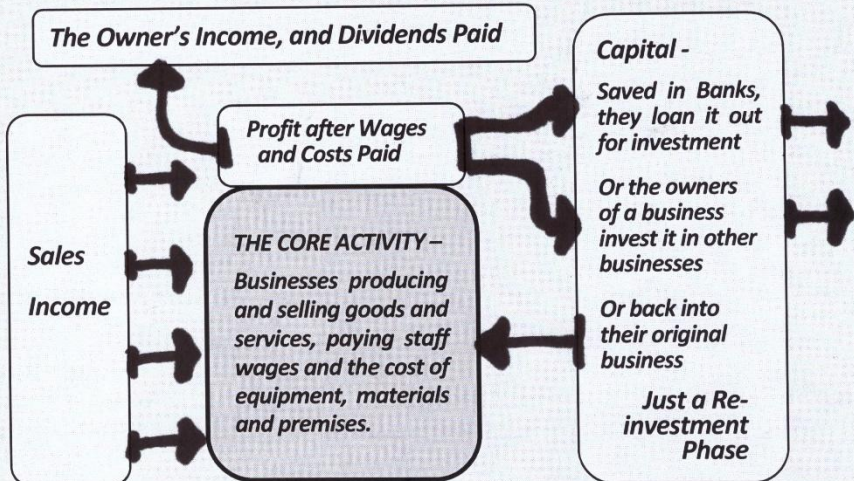
We need a clear view of these basic political and trading relationships as a foundation for politics and for people getting what they are entitled to. This work provides one.

Everyone calls the system 'capitalism' but capitalism is just the investment stage of the business system. The term obscures the central process, the work process, in business, where we produce goods, services, and wealth before capital. It obscures that central process and the whole business class.

On the next page, a diagram showing this clearly -

Business System, Not Capitalism

To tackle conservatism, the dominant ideology, we need to point people past politics and at the system. Most call it capitalism. That makes it sound like an obscure thing-in-itself, outside human agency. And capital isn't the core of the system. What is, is ordinary everyday business activity - business people, using us as workers, organising the production of goods and services and selling them in free markets. *Capital* is just the surplus money created in the business system, *capitalism* just the re-cycling of it, just a development phase of the main business system. Here, a graphic to show this...



Business people invest capital in better production methods. This brings constant growth, importantly. But it's not the core of the system. The core is ordinary business, business people producing goods and services, and selling them in free markets.

SO WE SHOULD CALL IT THE BUSINESS SYSTEM, NOT CAPITALISM.

This changes our sense of the system from a remote, mysterious, inaccessible thing, to one easily recognisable in daily experience. It enables us to see and talk to each other about 'the economy'. And to identify and name the class who run it, the business class. And to see how the business system and the business class's power and wealth in it is the central thing to consider in politics.

But everybody, including commentators and politicians, takes how we relate in politics and how we trade with each other for granted. They ignore the basic facts of how we do it and flail about, arguing about the wrong issues, supporting the wrong people, and blaming innocent people and each other.

So we get some ordinary people making things worse for themselves by voting conservatives, hostile to their interests and those of their relatives, workmates, friends and neighbours, into government; deserting progressive parties that do try to look after them, for not doing enough; or turning to malicious 'strongmen' who divert them from tackling those who are responsible, the business class, into attacking each other, often over personal things; turning off from politics; getting angry about politics and with each other over politics; and, in making their living, the business class bossing and mis-treating them and cornering huge wealth from their work. All because we don't base politics on the facts of how we relate to each other in politics and how we trade together in producing wealth and allocating it.

To do that, we need to put aside talk of left, right, capitalism, socialism, conservatism and communism and of Thatcher, Reagan, Hayek and Marx. And to put aside politics based just on political views and even just feelings.

Before all that, we need to establish what actually goes on outside our heads. To establish the key facts of what we do. To get an observable, demonstrable, view of how we relate and trade with each other, a framework that people can agree on, and base political debate on it.

In politics, we need to go deeper than every little thing each of us wants and think about what everybody else wants too, and how to co-ordinate it all. And to go beyond leaders and what they 'are like' or do. Like Starmer being cautious or Trump being what he is. We do need to try to influence political leaders when in office but if they are so wrong, we need to work on how they get there.

That comes from how our fellow-citizens vote, and that comes from how they see the world and politics. Like, if unhappy with Starmer's centrism, recognise that the evidence is, over many elections, that there's not enough fellow-citizens prepared to vote progressive parties like Labour into government with anything other than centrist programmes. Last time they offered a radical programme, people even voted in the

conservative clown Johnson instead. And accept that the problem with Trump isn't him but the American business class and those who voted for him or didn't vote for the more civilised Democrats.

We need to get fellow-citizens to be more progressive but it isn't just the party leader's job. Conservatives don't just leave that to their leaders - they have independent activists owning and running most of the media, campaigning relentlessly. Progressives don't have media power but can counter that by communicating with fellow-voters directly themselves. This work provides material that will help.

(See '**How To Talk Politics With Each Other**', page 286.)

**How Politics Comes From What We Do –
Especially From How We Create The Wealth**

But before politics, we need to persuade people of the importance of understanding how we trade with each other. Because who gets what is the big thing, isn't it? **To understand that, we have to understand how we relate to each other in the work process, where most make a living and some get wealthy.**

It means recognising this central fact - we exist by volume-production of goods and services. It started hundreds of years ago with the industrial revolution, is the biggest change in our history, and now dominates human life worldwide. But we've never worked out the power relationships of how we trade with each other in it, seen how they are unacceptable, and dealt with them. We need to. It's our most pressing task.

Producing The Wealth

It's not a difficult or academic thing - you can easily observe and explain the relationships in it from how we take part in everyday life. Then see how the economy and politics are built on top of this core factual social process. Only then discuss political views about it all.

We create wealth by producing goods and providing services, but all that's talked about is how they are sold, in free markets, or provided, by public bodies. Nobody talks about how we work together in producing them. **The work process** is the central activity in society but everyone takes how we do it for granted.

Conservatives push a fantasy that we do it trading as individuals, as if we are all self-employed. Some are, but they talk absolute nonsense when they say it's the basic way we relate. How they get

away with it shows how we haven't got to grips with the industrial revolution.

High-volume production dominates how we live but we need the language to put the facts of how it works at the centre of politics. Industrialism, the usual term, to some people means just the manufacture of goods in factories. But high-volume, large-scale operations dominate services too. We do talk of 'service industries' and 'the chains.' Maybe say 'mass production, of goods and services'? 'High-volume production of goods and services'? Or 'large-scale.' Or just 'volume.' **But whatever we call it, we have to get to grips with the industrial revolution.**

Volume production and selling is more efficient than small-volume and relentlessly displaces most of it. And from high-volume production we get large workforces. So it is collective. Volume production includes small businesses, because small businesses are crucially different from individual trading in having many staff, which determines how the key job relationship works. Individual 'sole traders' are a small minority compared to how most people work, in 'jobs', for 'bosses.' It means the conservative stress on 'the individual' is nonsense.

The Business System, Not Capitalism

We generate wages and wealth by our work in familiar everyday business. 'Capitalism' is just where business people re-invest the surplus money they accumulate from that. Important, but only a supplementary process to the main activity, not the core process. That's normal business, production and selling. So call the economy 'the business system', not 'capitalism'. (See graphic page 6).

Conservative parties claim the system is about the individual and individual rights because they represent business people's interests in politics. Especially important is the right for anyone to start and run a business. That right should indeed exist. But their core imagery of the plucky self-reliant individual, and the 'self-made' wealthy, and of it being the essence of freedom, gives crucial political cover for business people. Because most of them are not the worthy individuals of conservative mythology. Because high-volume production inevitably takes the market from most small-business. And those who run it – even including those smaller ones - don't operate as individuals. They operate as companies and corporations. Very collectively. They are business organisations using large workforces for collective production.

And the inevitable result of volume production is that a small number of businesses - as a proportion of the population - dominate the markets. So a minority of people will necessarily own and manage most work. **That's the business class.** And most of the rest can only get work by working for them, or for public bodies. You can see it in how people always talk of themselves or others 'getting a job.' That's a vital fact that demolishes the conservative argument 'you can always start a business yourself.' You can, but the efficiency of volume production means most will inevitably be forced out.

From all that you can easily explain to others how there is a class who run most production of wealth through control of the work process. And that with volume production such a class develops inevitably.

What It Means For Wealth Allocation

The business class allocate themselves huge wealth from it, justifying it with well-worn arguments about ability, risk and hard work. These are valid arguments but their wealth comes not so much from them but from the collectivism of companies with volume-production and large-workforces, and the key relationship in them, which comes next.

With volume production, services as well as goods, employers, including public bodies and small businesses, have multiple-staffed workforces. Where they trade with them each trading as an individual, they have so many they can easily do without any one because They've Got All The Rest still working. They use that advantage to bargain hard. This is why workers are weaker than employers. This is not 'Well that's your opinion' or 'point of view.' Even a Trumper said 'Right - it's just the arithmetic', accepting it as fact, not opinion. (It's the biggest 'bad trade deal' affecting American workers and Trump is on the business class's side in it.)

Here is how the wealth extraction process works - with this power over staff, business people can pay them less than what they sell their work for, and keep the difference. That's how they get wealthy, not just from their own ability and effort.

That's how the business class dominate work. Here's how they dominate politics too. Simply because they run the economy, they can and do severely limit what governments can do. And they organise politically. They get wealthy enough to not need public services, so oppose them and the taxes to pay for them. Conservative parties

represent business people's interests. They claim the system is about individual freedom to justify government having a limited role, as that leaves the business class as the most powerful actors in society. And to justify opposing worker's own collectivism, unionisation.

But, as shown, the business class actually trade not as individuals but as collectives. As **companies**. The rest, the majority, mostly workers - people who need jobs - do mostly trade as individuals, un-unionised. And trading with employers as individuals in large workforces, and small government, doesn't mean freedom for them - it leaves them as atomised individuals, weak in trading with the organised business class at work, needing public services to make up for that, and governments that will regulate business people.

For actual freedom they need to match up to the business class's collectivism and organisation at work by organising too, by unionising. In politics, by organising too and voting into government parties that will provide basic rights and good public services and regulate the minority business class for the good of the majority.

We can debate the rights and wrongs of all that but it's not opinion, is it? It's fact? We should base all political debate on it. I do, and it works.

Do you think about how we relate and trade together in politics, business, production, and work? About 'the system'? Do commentators and leading political activists? And, most importantly, do ordinary citizens, as workers and voters? The answer is no, or not much. Isn't it?

We need to, because of people having a hard time making a living and getting basic needs; public services not being good enough; hostility between fellow-citizens and to people cast as outsiders; distrust in politics; giving up even on thinking about it and basing it just on feelings; turning to daft conspiracy theories, misleading nationalism and nasty populists. And even wrecking our own habitat.

So base political debate and opinion on these facts about the volume-production business system – most people can only find work with business people or state employers; are weak if not unionised; low unionisation enables the business class to take great wealth out of the production process; enough to also spend on commanding political debate. Debate how to vote based on these facts of how trading relationships in the work process determine wealth and income. Refer often simply to the existence of the business class. On all political issues, ask 'What's

the role of the business class in this?’ And build what level of unionisation and political organisation you can.

To deal with it all, worldwide, we need a shareable knowledge base, a factual framework, like this one, of how we relate, how we trade and work together in producing wealth and wages in business, jobs, in politics. A common understanding of these basics of society to found political opinion and action on. This work helps to develop this, to show what it is about how we relate that causes our problems, and what we can do about it.

How The Business Class Dominate And How To Stand Up To Them

Here, once the start of this work, an alternative run-through of these observations. Repetitious, yes, but maybe that balances how little this crucial stuff is discussed.

It’s through business, work and politics that we get what we most need - money, housing, clothes, food, wi-fi; public support, health services. In business and work we work collectively to make things and provide services, they are bought and sold or funded by public spending. We make our living, some get wealthy. Politics and government are supposed to run it all for us and insure us against its shortcomings.

So how we relate in this is central. Our problems start with not having a clear view of how we do, especially how we trade together, where some make their living and some get power and wealth; and how to make it work for everyone.

We call it all the economy, free markets or capitalism. But they sound like self-existing ‘things’, outside and above us. And they don’t say anything about the core, everyday activities - business, work and trade.

Property is important but can be only about storage and transfer of wealth. **More important than free markets or property are the relationships where wealth is created – relationships in production, the work process, the labour process.**

It’s all not really a system, not laid down anywhere, just the established customs of buying and selling, of contract law - including, importantly, but neglected, employment contracts.

These trades that we make every day are the basis of society, not politics and the state. Governments, public services and law come from the system, they don’t make it. People actually get diverted from this central process by expecting to be able to sort everything through politics.

How we trade with each other enables business people, the business

class, to dominate everyone else at work, annex obscene wealth, and dominate politics too. People accept the business system as if it's our natural habitat, like fish accept water. This explains how conservatives get themselves elected into government despite being hostile to most people's interests. They mistreat the majority as policy but because everyone accepts the trading relationships of the business system they claim to be working for everyone and pose as just managers of 'the economy', and, ridiculously, they get away with it.

They resist government regulation of the business system as that enables the power and wealth of their class. But progressive parties accept the business system too. So while claiming to 'run the country', all parties actually leave business people to do it and people are mis-treated whichever is in government. As policy by conservatives, reluctantly by progressives.

So people, not even recognising that the business class exists, blame politicians as a group and even call them a class, which they aren't. And then they believe maverick conservatives who cast politicians as a ruling elite. But the business class is the elite. They run the economy and dominate government, the state and politics. They are the ruling class. All conservatives are of them, including Trump. They divert people from blaming the business class into blaming each other via shallow identities. And into blaming progressive parties, who, by failing to tackle the business system and the business class, enable the view 'They're all as bad as each other.' (They aren't.)

The observations made in this work can seem remote from normal political discussion because conservatives convince people that the business system is the only way, they take its relationships for granted, fail to base politics on it, and let conservatives divert them onto lesser issues. But it is a grounded explanation of the essentials that we should base all politics on.

It shows how we work together in the system, worldwide, how we co-operate, collectively, intensely, but also antagonistically; how a minority dominate the majority; who they both are; and how the majority can stand up to and regulate the business class minority, in the workplaces and in politics.

*Uniquely, it identifies the basic problem - that business people are organised, at work as businesses, and in politics; that the rest, mostly workers, are mostly not; that employers overpower each worker because they have many others – **All The Rest** – to rely on, that this entitles*

workers to organise too, to unionise; that they desperately need to do, and to organise in politics as well - **to match up to the business class at work and in politics, do what they do, and organise.**

The argument to make to business people and conservatives about unionisation is this: you assert business people's right to organise, collectively, in their economic activity, as companies and corporations. The rest of the population, mostly workers, are entitled to organise too.

'Us, Politics, The System And Class' helps you make more sense of politics and our everyday world by explaining the key public relationships, from the daily experience of ordinary working people, and shows how to make them fairer. It will help you talk about them and work and politics - which we need to do.

Again, 'How To Talk Politics With Each Other' is at page 286 of the full work and free-standing on the website.

Why This Work Is Needed

(Again, maybe repetitious but it's not heard elsewhere...)
People think the everyday world is run by politics but it's the other way round - politics comes from the everyday world. Especially from how we relate in making goods, providing services, and selling them, to making our living or get wealthy - business, trade and work. With us only having flimsy relationships in politics it actually diverts us from the basics of society and wealth and power. It's 'the economy' then politics.

Most people think there's lot wrong with it, and that governments let us down. We're even wrecking our own habitat. But rather than tackle the system, many are diverted into phony loyalties and divisions and daft conspiracy theories. That's because we ignore the system. We need to build a clear understanding of it and relate all politics to it, including our own and other ordinary people's politics. And to relate discussion not just to someone's opinions or attitudes, like left or right, socialist or conservative, but to their role in the system. To their economic class.

People look to 'politicians' to put things right and see the political parties as just interchangeable management teams, all aiming to 'run the country', for everyone. As if from above the system. But politicians don't make the system, and not from above. They come from it, to represent the interests of different groups in it. That are often against the interests of other groups.

The key process where interests are different is in how we produce goods and services to create wealth and make our living. It involves working together so much, is so industrialised - including the service industries - so social, collective, it's really a public activity. That's why we call it 'the economy'. But it is run privately, by a self-confessed selfish minority. They run this key activity, us making our living together intensely inter-connected, and they control the allocation of income and wealth. This obstructs protection of people in their basic needs and democratic regulation of the economy.

The system is the business system. The minority, business people. The business class. But we don't see them as a class. And most people are workers but don't see themselves as the worker class either.

Conservatives say the system is about 'the individual'. Nonsense. It is industrialised, including the service industries, requiring people to work highly collectively, co-operatively, with millions of others, under the control of organisations, mainly of business people. And, doing this as individual workers, they relate to collectively organised business people on very unequal terms.

In claiming the system is based on people looking out for themselves, conservatives also say that makes it work best for everyone. That's nonsense too, borne out by the outcome - great unfairness, misery, instability and inequality of power and wealth. It's dynamic, true. But negatively almost as much as positively and, on balance, dreadful.

Conservatives also claim that this system works best (for all!) when governments don't regulate it. Conservatives think the government shouldn't govern! This - leave the system alone, 'laissez-faire' - is the core of conservatism. It's more nonsense. They oppose regulation of the business system because it favours business people and they represent them, the business class, and are mostly members of it.

Exploiting the majority to get great wealth, running the economy, dominating politics and the state - the business class are the ruling class. Not all of them are bastards but their system pressures them to be. And it's them who create, support and sustain the conservative parties.

When people vote in 'progressive' parties who aim to govern for all, they can't do enough for people to vote them in regularly. One, because the business class organise the economy, they can't much challenge them. And two, because there's so many relationships in the system, established in so many long-standing laws and institutions, they can't promise much change without a lot more backing from we voters. So it's

our fault too - we accept the system and don't give progressive parties the votes to regulate the business class and their system.

But people don't see how the system works and how it enables the business class to dominate. They don't even see that the business class exist as a class. So they can't make sense of how they are treated and some say politics is confusing. Some support politicians they just 'like'. Some do take positions on policies but others give up on politics and don't vote.

Some think political debate is exchanging broad views, in those brief social exchanges we have, on vague notions of 'capitalism' or 'socialism' or 'communism', as if in a micro constitutional convention. But we need to base politics not on abstract discussions of ideal social systems or 'isms but on what is, on how politics, public services, the economy; markets, business, workers, class, jobs; unions, income, wealth generation and distribution, poverty, opportunity; media, identities, racism, nationality - all actually work. On where we are.

And people believe they can 'make it' on their own, especially in the USA. But the business system often means they can't. See the 2008 crash and since. So, not understanding how their suffering is caused by the business system and the business class, they turn for security to vague collective identities like colour and nationality where nothing is said about how those in the identity group might relate if there were no outsiders, just themselves. No actual policies, just following political leaders who promise salvation through hostility to harmless fellow-citizens, or outsiders, not the business class.

All this is because we've no accurate, widely-held, view of the system that exposes the absurdity of the conservative world view, on which to base political thinking, debate and actions. We need to get it widely accepted that the main issue in society is business-class supremacy - that they have it because they organise, at work and in politics - that the worker majority - defined by how you make your living - must talk to each other about how they relate and organise and unionise widely and organise more in politics.

With this clear understanding of what is, then we can talk about how society should be - about political change for fairness, dignity, security, support, equality and preserving our environment. To meet this need, *Us, Politics, The System And Class* explains the system, from everyone's everyday experience, from how you are involved. It will help you think and talk about where we are and what to do. **The key**

is to see that there is a business class and how it's their organisation that enables their supremacy, and that to stand up to them we need to organise too, as workers, at work and in politics.

Here is a stand-alone explanation of the unequal distribution of wealth - probably the biggest issue. It's been brought forward from later on in this work. There'll be some overlap with the rest of 'The Essential UsPol'.

How It's Our Wealth, Not Theirs

Wealth comes from adding value with work...

*Business people spend on premises, materials and equipment.
They spend some more on staff to work on the materials.*

The work produces goods or services of greater value than what is spent.

That's the point of most business and work activity.

The greater value is set by what they are sold for.

What that is above the original spending is added value.

*The equipment and materials can't increase their value themselves.
The work done on them does that.*

The owners might do some hands-on work, but the bigger the business, the more it's the staff who do most of the work.

*The business owners pay staff less than the value their work adds;
they charge more for it than they pay them. After paying interest on loans etc, they pocket the rest and call it theirs.*

That's how they make profits. That's what profits are.

They can do it because of the inequality in the job relationship – see The Entitlement to Unionise, later.

The business economics view is different. They say business people buy 'the factors of production' - premises, equipment, materials and labour – that's 'costs' - and add the higher, sale price on top as a separate thing. They say profit is from this, from what they add on top.

This is absurd, fatuous, ridiculous. Although there is some trading where sharp operators play the market to make money by just buying and selling things, the non-human 'factors of production' are (mostly) bought in at the going market price and don't increase their own value. The work done on them by staff is what does that.

When they sell at the 'added-on' price, or value, what are they selling? It's still the workforce's original work. Even the 'adding-on' is done by workers, in the Accounts or Sales departments! Likewise, if

they buy equipment and materials for less than the usual market price, and claim that is where some of the profit comes from, that's the work of the workers in Buying.

No - the money is made by the work done on materials, by adding value to them - turning metal and other materials into cars, maybe - and selling them. The staff do that.

They buy the staff's work at one price and sell it at another. If they don't make money out of the staff's work, why do they employ them? To create jobs, as they sometimes claim to be doing? If they sold their work at cost it might be believable.

Is their own work worth all of the added value?

Business people and the rich claim they are entitled to the added value, seen as profit, because of their enterprise, their taking of responsibility, their managerial talents, the risk of losing money, and their hard work.

They do deserve more but they overdo it. *Again, the bigger the business, in our high-volume-production economies, the more the staff do most of the work.*

What the business class take for their role – which is central, sure – isn't from some reasonable assessment. It's from the unfair trading relationship they have with the staff in the job deal – see the brief 'The Entitlement To Unionise' below – to take an unjustifiable share of the added value for their own role.

On the 'risk-taking' – it can be high for small businesses but big businesses generally cover losses with successes. And they all use bankruptcy to evade their debts, meaning suppliers and banks carry much of the risk. And most of the capital they 'risk' was skimmed off workers' earlier work, as shown. And if they do go bust, they just join the rest of us as workers. They claim to be 'self-made' but usually, we staff create most of the value - Jeff Bezos doesn't shift many parcels.

*Higher **taxes** on them is just workers reclaiming what's theirs originally.*

Note 1.- income tax is only part of general taxation. The rich pay less national insurance, the same VAT as everyone else, and capital gains at only standard rate. In the UK. Note 2 - some make money from buying and selling not-easily-manufactured resources like property and even currencies. This is just gaming the system. The work process is still the root source of wealth.

But their wealth can also be regulated at source, by staff being able to bargain effectively for their fair share. Here is how...

Fair Trade Deals – The Entitlement To Unionise

Most work is industrialised. So most employers have many staff. **With the rest working** they can get by without any **one** who leaves, any **one** they sack, or any **one** new who wants more than they are prepared to pay. Each is weak in the job deal they make with their employer **not because they can replace them from the unemployed but because even without them They've Got All The Rest.**

People shouldn't have to make their living on such unfair terms. That's anybody, whatever colour, gender, or nationality. They all have the right to bargain with business people and public sector managers as equals, **by unionising.** See www.therighttounionise.org

Note – 'Go somewhere else if you don't like it'? With most work industrialised and most workforces not unionized, there's the same unfair relationship in jobs wherever you go.

Note - the issue explained here is the allocation of money between the owners and all of the staff. That's the big issue and is explained by 'They've Got All The Rest', explained above and in the chart 'The Right To Unionise'. Within a workforce there's the secondary question of variation between how much each worker contributes and what each should get. It is the very stuff of unionised negotiation - unions negotiate comprehensive Agreements with employers on Pay grades. They are referred to at pages 109, 146, and, in 'The Rich – Are They Worth The Expense?', at page 327, in the full work 'Us, Politics, The System And Class' at www.uspol.org.

Work & Politics As Football

At work, in your trading relationship with employers over wages and conditions, it's like you're playing football against a team on your own.

They are companies or public bodies, organised to play together. They wear the same kit. They pass the ball to each other.

You and your workmates don't play as a team, you play them as individuals. You don't wear the same kit and don't pass the ball to each other.

So you usually lose to them.

You all resent it but accept it as the way of the world.

Most people like you outside work think the same and don't notice or speak about the significance of them being organised and yourselves not being.

Or that that to match up to their organisation you need to organise with each other too.

And the employers playing you as a team have the rules of the game on their side from way back.

They know the rules and take an interest in them. Most people like you don't, thinking they are just the way the world is. One of the rules is that they can obstruct you from playing as a team.

If you want to change the rules, they concede to you a remote regulatory political forum - parliament, congress.

Being organised and very committed to their own interests, they campaign for it better than you do.

You don't, much, so don't get much of what you want from it.

Their representatives in the forum argue that them beating you is actually in your interests - that they know best and wealth will trickle down to you from them, so you should vote for their people. Some of you are taken in by that.

They tell you your problems are from your representatives in the forum letting you down. Some of you are taken in by that.

Or they say your problem is that the remote forum is a self-serving elite. So, many give up on the forum. Or turn to alternative big-talking representatives put up by the other team.

To play them at this game, you and your workmates need to play as a team like they do, and unionise at work.

And in politics, to see each other as people on the same side, talk to each other about the system, and organise too.

End of The Essential 'UsPol'.

**The Ten Minute Read of
'Us, Politics, The System And Class'** v.2025.1

Humanity is in a ridiculous, unnecessary state. On top of our usual problems with jobs, health services, recessions, war and the rest, we're allowing the least public-spirited of us, some of them malevolent crazies, to run our world, and we're wrecking our own habitat. With our amazing technical knowledge and ability to cooperate to produce all we need and more, it needn't be like this. To change it we need to get the basics of politics, the economy, work and business - 'The System' - clear in our heads.

'It's the system' - what workmates would say to this writer when he argued against employers' power over workers and how it enables them to annex wealth and the power to dominate society; and the need to organise to match up to them, at work and in politics.

'A lesson from the Obama years – failure to seize the opportunities offered by the great recession to reform an economic system that has worked against most Americans for four decades.'

(The Observer 17-1-2021)

People, politicians and media commentators only talk about things that happen, not about how they come from how we interact in business, the economy and politics. They treat that as just how the world is. While obsessing about all sorts of things, we ignore how we relate in the vital tasks of making products and services, making a living, making money!

But conservatives, when arguing against wealth re-distribution, by government, do mention it, saying it's wealth creation that really matters. Yes, OK. Yes, and let's take a good look at it. Let's bring the trading relationships and social processes where wealth is created out of the private arena of business and work and into the light of public, political discussion.

Central but neglected is the work process. And central to that is the employment relationship. Examine them and you see how the distribution of wealth at source is the issue, and how it is the foundation issue in the debates about taxes, public spending and the role of the state.

We ignore it because conservatives convince us that the business system is the only way. So people get on with their lives, meeting their needs, enjoying their pleasures, and just expect whoever is in government to 'run the country'. But Presidents, Prime Ministers, Members of Congress, Parliaments and Assemblies, don't simply 'run the country'. They don't initiate all that happens in society - that, and they, come from society and from how people relate in the system, the business system.

Conservatives use politics to divert workers from tackling the business class. It gives only weak opportunities for workers to exercise any power over them. Because conservative parties only intend to represent the business class and progressive parties haven't the ideological tools or the backing to tackle them. So then conservatives - representing the actual elite - spread confusion and disillusion with politics, telling people that politicians are an elite that fails them. And persuade some to back alternative conservative 'strongmen' who offer them the self-defeating answer of uniting with the business class in national identity and turning on outsider groups.

So put 'politics' aside while we examine the underlying system. People have different roles in it, especially in that most necessary activity - making a living or making money. We need to be much clearer about how we interact with each other to do this and how it means people's interests in the system are different.

A minority, business people, run businesses. So it's them who organise the production and sale of goods and services and provide most work - the supremely important activities. Most other people get a job, working for business people, or for public bodies. So, in this central arena, business and jobs, people relate differently. They have different power, get different incomes, are different in their need for public services and support. They have different interests. We should group them by this. The different interest groups look out for their interests in everyday business or work. In politics they promote relationships and public policies that suit these interests and oppose those that don't. They are classes, better defined than what are commonly referred to as classes, based on less significant attributes. Political parties and politicians come from and represent these different classes, defined by functional relationships not income or culture.

Each party claims to represent everyone's interests but it's not true. Certainly not of conservatives. They represent the interests of business people, the business class and the wealthy. Labour or progressive, social-democrat parties mainly represent the rest, who are mostly workers.

Business People - The Business Class -Run The System

The key to understanding the system is to see that business people run it. They organise the production and distribution of most of the goods and services we need and the jobs we need. They dominate politics simply because of that. They are a class - the business class. They organise politically too, generally as conservatives. Business-class supremacy is the basis of the system. With this in mind, the rest, particularly politics, becomes clearer.

Most people make their living working for these business people or for public bodies. We should call this majority a class too, probably the working or worker class, but defined by their definite, vital, unarguable, role in the system, being a worker.

Not enough people support the state organising production so we do need business people to organise most of it. But we need to make them behave civilly, to regulate them. For that, we need to be far more organised, and these works explain how. But if we don't do that, let's at least get everyone to see how the system works and build it into political debate.

Conservatives claim the basis of the system is 'the individual', trading freely with others, as equals, in free markets. Ok, we do have or should have individual rights. But the conservative view is simplistic, highlighted to distract us from how society actually works.

The view that it's all about individual rights comes from centuries ago, when people worked out the case for freedom from the absolute dictatorship of monarchy - for freedom of religion, for political rights and free markets. Conservatives still speak of it like this. They say the key issue is 'the individual' versus 'the state' and promote a small state and low taxes. They trumpet this as the essence of freedom, of liberty. And many people see it like this, particularly in the US, and is why some call it 'The Land of The Free'.

But with a small state, you might be less controlled by the state but you still have to make your way in life in the unequal relationships of the business system, and they control you as much or even more than the state. With the state you should at least have some egalitarian democratic voice, which you don't in the business system. And that is a reason why business class conservatives are hostile to the state.

In the business system you have to trade, to buy and sell, under its rules, often to people with far more power than you. Crucially, you have to trade with people who are organised, who don't trade as individuals, especially business people in their businesses, their organisations. Because most business-class conservatives don't themselves operate as individuals: Because in the business system, with trade in free markets, the efficiency of mass production leads inevitably to the collectivism of industrial production, owned by a few powerful and wealthy people.

The business class are the people who organise all the collectivism! They set up and run all the collective companies and corporations, and organise the rest of us into industrial workforces. They run the collective global system of mass production and trade. In this highly industrialised, trading, mass-marketized, commercialised, corporate, financialised, micro-managed, nation-state, inter-connected, globalized society, we are hugely collective and inter-dependent.

Business-class conservatives feel, correctly judging by the huge wealth many of them acquire, that they are good at operating in this privately-run collectivism. So they resist the state regulating it in the interests of everyone else. And they get wealthy enough from it to not need collective public support and services. But everybody else needs them, to make up for the brutality, insecurity and instability of business people's system in making their living.

The issue isn't the simple 'the individual versus the state' but the distribution of power in all this collectivism. Conservatives represent business people and that is why they oppose the state. Their talk of individualism might make sense in an imaginary world of small traders and genuine self-employed. In the industrialised real world, it's nonsense. They do it to divert us from organising while these very collective business people do organise.

Simple individualism is just not how the world works. The very existence of things like money, inflation, interest rates, banks, and the many other powerful business organisations, in the business system, all show this.

In many, many trading interactions you are a long way from being equal. Particularly, crucially, in making your living, in getting work, in getting a job. More on that soon.

And it's nonsense to claim individualism is in general the basis of society. With all our collectivism like family, community, religion, identity, clubs, football fandom and patriotism, we are highly social. Our talk, our mindset, what we do, are full of 'we' and 'us' and 'our'.

All the above is obvious if you just look at it. It results, first of all, in huge inequality of power, and, as a result, of wealth. Yet people ignore it. We need everyone to talk about it and develop a common understanding of it.

Everyone knows what's wrong with the outcomes of the system but not the processes that enable it. People call it capitalism but that evokes something remote where some invisible people accumulate money, invisibly. It doesn't explain capitalism's key relationships and how they are rooted in, and observable in, everyday life.

We give the system status above and beyond us, as apparently self-standing 'capitalism'. But it's just how we relate ordinarily to each other, dominated in the everyday world by business people. We can do it differently.

However, it has many well-established relationships, many embedded in law. To change all that through politics, our rights

are limited. You get one vote, every four years, isolated from each other, on all of the issues bundled together, for political representatives who can ignore you, with minority parties hostile to the interests of the majority often getting into government.

Most people oppose excess wealth and agree the wealthy should be taxed more. But they claim they earn their wealth from their abilities and effort. They get away with that claim because workers don't see that business people make most of their wealth from the work they themselves do. How capital and wealth is made, in the work process, by workers, is concealed by just referring to 'capitalism'. It means the central relationship in creating and distributing wealth - how employers buy labour and workers sell it, the trade in our labour, the trade in people - goes unexamined.

Here it is - with most workers not being organised in unions, not negotiating their conditions together, the deal on starting, or keeping, a job is made between an employer and an individual worker.

In these industrial economies, most employers have many staff, even small businesses. With the other staff producing whatever the business or service does, they have enough staff to be able to do without any one of them. That is why employers can drive a hard bargain with each one individually.

That is how workers are in an unequal bargaining position. With these 'free' labour market conditions, each worker has only 'marginal utility' (usefulness) to the employer. Any one worker needs the job more than the employer needs them. Call it the unequal 'ratio of need'. While it's a hugely important political point it's also just plain arithmetic and undeniable!

It is why business people, and public employers, can say 'take it or leave it'. It is how employers can be the 'boss' of people who are, according to the free market propagandists, equal trading partners. And when they say 'Go somewhere else if you don't like it', in any other job in these industrialised economies you are usually up against the same unequal trading relationship with the employer.

It's the most important feature of the system. The inequality of it is what enables the imbalance of power between business people and workers. Business owners use it to not pay staff the full price they sell their work for and keep the difference for themselves. That is how most wealth is gained. They don't earn their power and wealth from what they actually do in production but from taking the trouble to organise it and get us to do it, on these unfair terms of trade.

They inflict this unfairness on fellow-citizens, their fellow-country(w)men who they should treat with respect, the great majority, in making their living. It gives them the right to organise, in unions, to respond to and match up to business people's organisation. It's up to us to do the same as them - take the trouble to organise, act together,

collectively, and negotiate with them as equals.

But because the system is so established, accepted and poorly-understood, people don't notice how the inequality in the production process is the real problem. So, confused and dismayed, some give up on politics. Others, angrily seeking answers, adopt crazy conspiracy theories; divide us by racial groupings and culture wars; blame flimsily-defined 'elites'; and support business-class mavericks like Trump who get them to blame anybody and anything but them and their system.

We'll do better when we share a clear, factual, understanding of the system as the framework for political debate. 'Us, Politics, The System And Class' provides one. It explains the roles and relationships, rewards, and penalties, obligations and protections, rights and wrongs, of public life, which includes economic activity. It shows how power and wealth, powerlessness and unfairness, come from social organisation and lack of organisation.

It shows how the majority organising in their economic role as workers would make the system much fairer. It shows how humanity can relate better, fairly, and run a sustainable global society. It does it without any academic talk of capitalism, liberalism, socialism, communism or economics, but simply by showing how we interact together ordinarily, daily.

Political thinking and debate not based on the system is futile. When you hear anyone talk about politics, relate what they say to the system. When you talk politics with people, don't just exchange views and attitudes - relate it to the system, to your role in it, theirs, their family, friends, neighbours and workmates roles.

Finally - 'capitalism' and 'free markets' as names for the system place it up above us, beyond our reach. Capitalism's core activity is business. Capital is created in business. We encounter business every day, take part in it as workers and consumers, speak naturally about it. We can locate it in our normal experience. So let's call it 'the business system', and be more comfortable talking about it and evaluating it.

What We Need To Do

To solve humanity's problems, we need to get it widely understood, accepted in everyday political talk, that -

...business people run the world more than politicians do...

...because they organise the production of goods and services, the buying and selling of them and of people's labour - work, jobs and trade...this makes them 'the economy' (most of it)...being the economy gives them inherent political power, under any government, even without them acting directly in politics ...

...to act directly, the most class-conscious of them organise and

run the conservative parties...some run the conservative media...
...and that - politics comes from this system, that business people dominate, and not the other way round...politicians can regulate its unfairness but conservatives won't...and progressives won't enough.

...Conservative parties exist to obstruct the system from being regulated...because they represent business people and it's their system... the business system is the main thing conservatives work to conserve.

...politics 'rides-on-top' of the system...you might get improvements in how you and your fellow-workers are treated through it but not many.

To see how little individual freedom people have in business and work, look again at how free markets operate. They develop inevitably to industrialism so that the majority have to work for the minority business class, and be dominated by them, unless regulated and made fair by workers unionizing and putting in progressive governments.

Conservatives claim, and liberals accept, that free markets provide everyone with 'opportunity'. But in industrial systems only a few can really succeed. Most people will inevitably be standard workers. There can only be fairness in who gets the better positions.

And, as said, business people don't themselves operate as individuals! **Each and every day, all day, night-time too, they organise and act together collectively, as businesses, as companies, as corporations.** They are a class - the business class. Some are alright, and credit them for their organisation and enterprise etc. But as a group they exploit and mistreat the great majority, viciously so in their opposition to us organising too.

The majority of citizens are workers. But compared to the business class we represent ourselves weakly in everyday society and politics. We let them dominate us at work, in political debate; in political action. We are so weak we don't even see them as a class, nor ourselves... haven't got names for their class or ours and ... don't organise together and act together like they do.

Business people organise in their meaningful, active, everyday economic roles (in companies and corporations). We need the majority of citizens to organise in their everyday economic roles, as workers, in unions...

... with this collective strength, stand up at work to the business class... and to public sector managers... and also...represent themselves in public life, as mature citizens... speaking together through credible institutions, their unions... join business people as 'players' in the system.

...in politics, match up to the business class by doing as they do and act in politics organised in their own economic role...in mass progressive political forces and parties, with other progressive groups ...

...and run their own media to counter the effect on political thinking of the propagandist conservative media.

Progressives always have better policies for the majority than conservatives. What they lack is organisation and its use to communicate policy and get support for it.

Widespread organisation will enable communication of progressive attitudes and policies throughout society and politics, independent and counter to conservative media. (Social media is not good for this. It's not people acting together meaningfully, in meaningful social organisations, but mostly just mouthing off as atomised individuals).

It's because we aren't clear about these basics of the system that many find politics confusing and, not recognising and opposing the business class, the dominant people in society, group themselves and others by low-content 'identities' based on passive attributes like skin colour and country of birth, and allow these identities to define their politics...

...and allow the business class minority, who mostly care only for themselves, to govern, disastrously for all of us and even for themselves at times.

We need to persuade fellow-citizens to stop identifying themselves and others trivially by appearance, locality, mass culture or personal preferences... but by more meaningful things like how they behave, by what they do - especially by how they act and interact in the practical world of business, jobs, the economy and politics - by economic class ...

...to persuade the worker majority, blue-collar, white-collar, whatever colour, whatever gender, to find their main identity in their most important, practical role, in being, with most other citizens, a worker, a member of the worker class.

When we share a clear understanding of the system such as put here and in the full book, it'll be easier to make sense of politics, discuss the issues widely, and organise to get society working fairly for all. Us, Politics, The System And Class will help, explaining the system clearly using everyday language and locating it in our daily experience.

We need to spread widely this explanation of the system... the rights and wrongs of it... show it is true, because drawn from everyone's observable everyday life experience, and not just opinion... explaining especially how business people and public employers get power over workers from having many staff and being able to do without any one... and how to make it fairer by organising... spread this view widely, globally. and ...how to make it fairer by organising...spread this view widely, globally.

The Twenty Minute Read Of Us, Politics, The System And Class

(v.2024.4)

Go By Facts or By Feelings?

'Us, Politics, The System And Class' shows how the system - work, business, money, politics - works, by looking at it in everyday life. What it shows is observable fact, not just opinion or one narrative of many. Taking the key example - As even a Trumper said when I explained the unfairness and inequality of the labour trade to him – find it on page 30, The Job Deal – 'It's just the arithmetic, isn't it?' Meaning it's not a contentious political point. It's plain undisputable fact.

But many say they don't understand politics and vote by feelings. They won't vote for a party leader because they don't 'like' them. Or they'll vote for a party because they do like their leader. Or they'll vote for politicians who just promise 'change' or 'hope' instead of voting on real policies.

And many see political parties as just alternative management teams who offer to 'run things' better than the others and all we do is vote for one or another. As when people say - 'I thought we should give the other lot a chance'. Or they'll base their politics on the feelings of belonging offered by low-content 'identities'.

Basing your politics on how you feel instead of on the facts of business and job relationships and on policies is no way to use your democratic rights. 'Feelings' will be addressed again at the end of this paper. But first, a

A System Analysis to base politics on, a common framework for our political thinking...starting with –

Business people run the world.

Because they organise together.

And because the rest mostly don't.

This helps to explain most of politics.

*Business people are a class and they run the world because they run 'the economy', because they organize (most of) the goods, services, and jobs. But people don't talk about this as the hugely significant political fact that it is. They just accept, unspoken, that business people organise production, trade and jobs as if it's the natural order. They don't even speak of business **people** but of businesses, companies, corporations. Or more likely just of what 'they' are doing.*

So most political debate is not about how we all earn our living, income and wealth. For all the serious issues around public services and the role of the state, and the daft

distractions of culture and identity wars, this, the basic, underlying issue, is not addressed.

If people do talk of the system, usually as 'capitalism', it's as if it's self-existing. They don't talk about how it works, think they haven't the power to change it, and think all we could so is change to another 'self-existing' system like socialism or communism, that most people think won't work. So they just expect 'politicians' to 'run the country', which means managing the system or letting it alone.

This is all a consequence of conservatives winning the argument on the key economic issues so everyone treats them as settled. Yet conservative ideas are facile and don't correspond with observable reality. Progressive politics makes far more sense but isn't argued for strongly enough. This paper aims to enable it to be.

Most of the system runs independently of politics. Politicians don't normally really control what goes on every day. And the basic business and job relationships that shape it all were established over the centuries, in practice and in piecemeal legal decisions, never publicly debated or democratically voted for. They persist from before we won limited democracy. Since then we've not developed an adequate awareness of how the system works, or the organised strength, to change it. In countries with little or no democracy, business people just seize political power through their conservative activists.

We can challenge business people through politics but, by being the economy, they have the power to seriously limit what politicians can do. We need to look at how we can regulate this most powerful group.

Some think the world is secretly run by 'the deep state' or some Jewish people or 'the Illuminati'. But it's business people, and not a secret. You can see it by just looking around you, at what you've got in your home, what's in the high street, what's on the road, in your job, in leisure activities. It's business people, who are represented in politics by conservatives. (Who come in all colours, races and nationalities.)

We depend on business people to organize production and jobs because we aren't mature and organized enough to do it ourselves. But it means we leave essential public needs – jobs, incomes, the economy – to be provided privately, by them, not for us all, their fellow-countryfolk, but for their own gain. We allow them to run the world economy greedily and

recklessly, with the unregulated free markets they demand, and to cause instability such as the crash of 2008. In Britain, the Conservatives used that as an excuse to attack public services and support. That attack caused many affected workers to support Brexit – ‘we can’t see what’s wrong and who causes it, let’s blame foreigners’. The US business class instigated the forty-year standstill in American workers’ living standards and the job losses in the rust-belt that led many to turn, angry, insecure and confused, to Trump.

The big business class people get insanely wealthy from our work while causing billions to live in insecure jobs and poverty. Insisting on a right to ‘make a return on capital’, they generate the needless growth that is wrecking our planet.

Since we do depend on them we have to do deals with them, at work and in politics. But we need fairer deals. For that, we, the worker majority, first need to see how they dominate us.

We need a better term for the system than ‘capitalism’. That just evokes remote financial operations. ‘Free markets’ only refers to trade. Neither refer to production, work and business - the central processes where capital is made and where we are all involved! Business is how we experience the system and how we refer to it every day. So let’s call it ‘the business system’.

*And call them **the business class**. When politicians and commentators even acknowledge that they are an identifiable group, they call them ‘the business community’. Community? Community?? They are a class and we need to name them as one. Especially the corporate and financial operators. Not ‘the 1%’. Too vague, doesn’t refer to what they do. The business class are the ruling class, not vague ‘elites’ or ‘the establishment’.*

Conservative politicians and parties are of them and represent them. Their key policy is to let business people do what they want. That’s what ‘free markets’ and ‘laissez-faire’ economics mean. The power the business system grants to business people is what conservatives aim to conserve.

They conceal this by:

- *presenting the system as a self-existing thing, above us, just ‘there’. But it is only the customary everyday relationships in business, work, jobs and trade.*
- *talking about ‘businesses’, ‘companies’, ‘corporations’, ‘multi-nationals’ and ‘the markets’ as if they too are extra-human, self-existing entities. But they are just **people**, fellow-citizens and we can hold them to account in political debate and democratic government.*

- *claiming to be just ‘politicians’ looking after everyone’s interests. They just honestly think the business system is fair for everybody, and effective: just honestly believe giving business people great freedom, protection and low taxes, with the rest not having the right to organize, and little state support, is how to do it!*
- *justifying business people's power and wealth as fair outcomes of a fair system. They aren't, it isn't. It is loaded against the worker majority.*

Their case is absurd but they get away with it because we don't examine it. This system doesn't exist by itself - it's an ongoing set of relationships that conservatives actively maintain, protect and extend. Capitalism isn't the problem – it's capitalists. It's their system, not ours. Their business system has its points and the rest of us have no complete alternative system to hand. But however good they claim it to be everyone knows it's not good enough. We need to regulate it, and them.

Progressives and organised workers have better policies, that can make the system fair, civilized, stable and sustainable. But they don't see what it is that enables business people to dominate, and what's wrong with it, and concede to them their free-market business system. That limits progressives' ability to do what's needed so they often disappoint people.

But progressive parties can't do it all on their own. We, the voters, also don't understand the system and how it limits progressive parties, and workers don't vote with enough conviction, in enough numbers, for progressive party policies that will regulate business people and improve the majority's lives.

For this, and for civilized, planet-saving politics, we need to match business people's organised power as the business class by getting ourselves organised into a corresponding mass political force, operative every day, permanent. Just as business people are organised together as businesses, the central framework needs to be non-business people, mostly workers, blue collar and white, organised as workers.

We need to spread knowledge of more key features of the system:

- *in industrial society economies of scale mean production, trade and services inevitably come to be dominated by fewer, larger operations; run by a minority, the business class; and inevitably the majority have no option to make their living but to work for one or another of them.*
 - *business people are organized. A business is people organized*

together, at work, with shareholders, suppliers, customers, managers and staff; endorsed by the state with privileges such as limited company status.

- their collective organisation and activity at work makes them the economy (most of).
- so they can and do dictate to governments.
- when conservative parties win elections, it amount to business people themselves being the government. What conservatives really exist to conserve is business people's rights and privileges.
- independent conservative activists run mass media to set a pro-business political agenda and pro-business political thinking, and divert attention from what they do and direct it at minorities.

Business people, the business class, do deserve more than the rest, because they take the trouble to organize and be active every day, in businesses. And we can credit them for the public utility of their enterprise and risk-taking. (But not, on risk-taking, as much as they credit themselves. The bigger the business, the more they spread the risk across projects and investment funds, successes cover losses. And losses are protected by limited company and bankruptcy laws).

Some can be decent, maybe more the smaller ones and small traders. But competition pressures even the decent ones to be bad so we need to regulate competition. It has benefits, but not as many as co-operation.

The Rest - The Worker Class?

Aside from them, all who need a job to make a living are workers. Blue-collar, white-collar; shop floor, office; manual, technical, engineer; teacher, lecturer. Even managers. The working class, the great majority of the population. But people muddle definition of class with 'middle class', that 'classes' by spending power and lifestyle, and 'working class' that 'classes' people by culture and education. We need to class people by how they make their money, by how they take part in the vital activities of production, work, business and wealth creation. So maybe it's the worker class and the business class?

The Job Deal – A Bad Deal

Every worker knows the power an employer has over them in the job transaction - when starting a job; in a job; in how easily they can sack you.

Unique to the book 'Us, Politics, The System And Class' is that it shows just how business people, and public bodies, overpower people in this transaction. Workers and progressive parties need to understand this clearly, and how it entitles those who are workers to organize in unions.

This is how ... in our industrialised world, economies of scale mean most jobs are in workplaces with many workers. So the employer can get the work done without any one of them – They've Got All The Rest.

This is why workers are weak and employers and the business class strong and why there is the huge disparity in wealth.

'The 'Market Ratio' In 'Free' Labour Markets

Here it is again - In the transaction each of us makes with an employer, a worker is ten, hundreds or thousands of times weaker. depending on how many other staff they have. That's how big a difference there is between how much they need one worker and how much one worker needs the job. It is great inequality in the ratio of need.

It means each worker is of only 'marginal use' to an employer. That's why people get a bad deal and bad treatment in jobs - because whilst making a deal with one worker, the employer has all the others to rely on for output. Go to another job - 'There's the door if you don't like it ' – and, in our industrial societies, you are at the same disadvantage. It operates against better-qualified, so-called middle class workers the same as the less-qualified.

This demolishes the conservative claim that free markets mean freedom and opportunity. That 'you can make it by your own efforts' and, in the US, achieve 'the American Dream'. This claim vaporizes before the plain fact that in modern industrial society most work isn't individual, it's collective, and having many staff gives employers power over workers that far outweighs whatever opportunity there may be. To make their living, people shouldn't have to sell themselves so unfairly.

And the huge inequality in wealth is because this unfair job deal enables business people to pay workers less than the full value of the work they do. This is where profits and most wealth come from, from control of the work process, because that is where wealth is produced. The wealthy claim it is because of their superiority, their ability and effort. Yes, some is from that. But it's mostly from the unrecognised and unfair power they have in the labour process that produces wealth.

This all entitles the worker majority of citizens to organize in unions. It is the mature, adult, legitimate response to the injustice of trading with employers alone, one at a time: to organize together so employers

can only have **all** of us or none of us, and negotiate together, with strength, for union conditions.

Centrists and Liberals – Not Woke Enough

There's a few inequalities but the biggest is in the job relationship because it's inequality in everyone's most important task – making their living. Inequality of power. We fail to identify it, expose it, and use it to establish and spread the case for the right to organize as workers. Most workers do recognise bosses' power but see it as part of the natural order and let the business class alone. While some then blame other people for their problems instead.

The failure to challenge the inequality of power in the job transaction enables some 'white working class' people to see action against other inequalities as favours done for minorities, that they don't get. They are badly-treated by their fellow-white conservative business class. But not knowing the case for their right to organise to stand up to them, they turn and are easily turned on minorities and liberals and progressive parties and, in the USA, vote for business-class boss-class Trump's minority-bashing.

The 'white working class' should see non-union job deals as an over-riding inequality shared with minorities and that they should organise with the minorities and liberals to tackle it. This will improve their condition more than attacking the minorities, who don't in fact do much or anything against their interests, and voting for outsider-bashing businessmen like Trump; or, in the UK, for outsider-blaming policies like Brexit.

Liberals are just fair-minded better-off people who tackle the obvious inequalities based on skin colour and gender. But they depend on business people to run the economy and some are business class themselves so don't see the biggest inequality clearly enough, that between employers and all workers. They need to challenge this inequality as much as the others and support all workers, white and of colour, whatever gender or personal tastes, in getting equal to employers by unionising.

The Case For Organising Summed Up

Look at all the institutions that organise and operate in society. Business people organise together and operate as companies, even protected from their responsibilities by limited company and bankruptcy laws. They have trade and employer associations. There's government itself, government departments, national, state and regional government, city and town councils, courts, schools, hospitals, fire authorities, the police and military, churches, sports clubs, printed, televised and digital media and more. These are all people organised, collectively. For so many of us, the worker class

majority, not to be organised likewise in making our living is ridiculous. And, by being so hostile to workers organizing, vicious, from the conservative, business class side.

Make the case for the right to organize to fellow-workers, and even conservatives, with the simple arithmetic - employers with many workers have an unfair advantage over them as individuals.

For equality for all, for workers of all colours, genders and personal lives, the right to organize and the right to union recognition from employers should be a recognised civil right.

Individual But Very Collective Too

Conservatives, representing the business class, talk of the individual as the basis of society. Yes, we are individuals, but in a very social and collective world.

Keep in mind - these are industrialised societies. That means all large-scale collective working methods, not just smoky factories. We co-operate very collectively in all the companies, corporations and banks, the public authorities, in production, trade, and at work. It's the business class who do the collectivizing, by constantly industrializing work. It's collective even though it's not democratically controlled.

In this collective world, look at how collectively organized business people themselves are – the owners, the boards, the CEO's, multiple departments, middle managers, supervisors, and we staff, on many work sites and in many countries. Team-building exercises, 'There's no I in team' and so on. Compared to them, the rest of us are mostly poorly organised as workers, atomised. Many are organised but not with enough confidence and conviction, and nowhere near as many as need to be. As said, we need to take the trouble to organize at work and trade with employers on equal terms; and in politics to identify and organize distinctly as the worker class, to be strong enough to regulate the whole business class.

How Collective Do We Want To Be?

The conservative argument that making our living is about the individual and politics mainly about the liberty to do so imagines a non-industrial fairytale world that has never existed. Except maybe in 19th century America where land was easily available to whites. In this fantasy land we can all be small traders, set up in business, and it's all in your own hands, you aren't affected by what everybody else does. But the success of industrialism means we can't all be small traders, most

people *have* to work in large organisations and in most jobs, without union organisation, you are dominated by your boss, with little individual freedom.

The self-employed, one-person businesses, traders, tradespeople, do operate as individuals in making their living, and unintentionally act as a buffer class, obscuring the fundamental reality of mass, business class-organised industrialised collectivism. And even for them, the market system means they too are affected by what everybody else does, particularly big business people.

How much we want to operate as individuals is an issue but the fact is we are highly collective and the question is more 'How collective do we want to be and in what ways?' It's a big political question, at the heart of US politics and elections. We need to make it central to the debates about the state, freedom, public spending on public support and public services, taxes, socialism, patriotism, military spending and military service. So here goes...

Public Services and Taxes – The Individual, Liberty, and the State

The business class do 'take care of business', make the big decisions on money, managing, and selling goods and services, in activities we all depend on to make our living. For that, they deserve a fair amount. But they take more than their fair share using the unfair power in the job transaction.

They take so much from this collective work they get enough wealth to not need public services and support. They claim they get the money by individual effort so their conservative parties say everyone is individually responsible for meeting their needs by doing the same. With that argument they block **public services and income security** for the worst-off, and the taxes needed for them.

Many people think the wealthy have too much money but also accept this claim that it's from their own effort and that in the business system everybody has the freedom to do the same. So conservatives, notably in the US, deter many from supporting public spending and public services by convincing them that taxes to pay for them are attacks on this liberty. But the claim that the money is from their own efforts is false, and taxes just a way for the majority who helped make it to reclaim some of it from them. And public services and welfare are just fellow-citizens backing each other up on basic needs, spreading the risks and costs with the common practice of insurance. Taxes are just for collective spending, democratically decided, like people do in many types of clubs.

But the conservative claim to be for individual liberty, a small state, and being against public support is false. To

protect themselves and their business interests, they are vigorous collectivists. They strongly promote patriotism, and even compel allegiance to 'the nation' and 'the country'. They support huge public spending on the police and the military. They even force citizens into compulsory, life-risking military service to protect their privileged trading relationships. They oppose socialized health care but support socialized warfare. We need to ask, are they simply rugged individuals, or also collectivists?

We need to say to workers who conservatives deter from supporting progressive parties by calling public services 'socialism' – 'To support conservative politics instead, while expecting 'the country' to look after you, as the MAGA people do, is a kind of socialist expectation itself. But it's one that must fail. Because conservatives' core policy is that everyone has to look out for themselves in the business system and the country – the state - shouldn't support those who can't make it on their own'. They say the unregulated business system will enable people to meet their needs and their ambitions themselves. And sometimes it does, for many. But the evidence keeps re-appearing – it often doesn't, disastrously, and you need the state to provide. The business class won't.

Taxes and Public Services isn't all one way – you need to support others too, which can mean collective spending via taxes that doesn't always benefit you directly. There's plusses and minuses. But you can't rely on conservative business people for support. You need to ally with fellow-citizens who actually believe in mutual support, and support and vote for progressive parties.

Just blaming conservatives and the business class for diverting people from voting for public support and services like this does us no good. They are just taking the trouble to look out for themselves in their brutal, uncaring system and if that involves diverting us that's what they'll do. It's our own fault for not taking the trouble to understand the system and not demolishing conservatism's feeble, self-contradicting politics.

The Individual and 'Identities'

Now, look at individualism and the 'Identities' that people readily adopt, and conservatives promote. They too are in opposition to the supposedly basic notion of individualism. They are collective. And though they are low-content, everyone makes a lot of them. Far more than they do of class, properly defined by how people earn a living or make money.

Identities divert us from seeing the business class and blaming them and their system. So note again, we need to see how we relate to business people, public service managers and each other; to see that we are the worker class; to see it as our main identity; and to talk to each other about it, as fellow-workers and mature citizens. And to organize, at work and in politics, and not let them distract and disarm us with low-content 'identities', some that unite us falsely with them; others that divide us against each other.

The National Identity

Conservatives' trumpeting of individualism is nonsense. It's demolished by the reality of how collectively our societies function, with our intensely collective economic systems, with the job deal that enables employers to treat fellow-countrymen and women terribly, and with their unstable business system regularly hurting many innocent people, enterprising individuals and small business people too. But many believe in the individualist view, and to believe conservatives, so do they.

Yet they and most people adopt this opposite, collectivist view – the national 'we'. Conservatives use the 'we' to mask class identities, theirs and ours. We don't see their dominant role, workers drop their class identity in favour of it. Progressive parties lose their independence from the business class in it.

People go along with it because it gives them feelings of significance, belonging and security, from being (weakly) part of so strong an institution as a country and being one of so many other people – being 'British', 'Americans', Russians, French, and the rest. You don't have to do anything like organize, at work or in politics. Just by living in a country you get to be in a big national 'we'.

Conservatives use the prestige of the nation state to draw people into national identities which mean unity with them rather than with each other in opposition to them. Independently active conservatives overwhelm people with national identities in print, radio and digital media. But again, conservatives contradict themselves with their core belief that people should manage on their own (dressed up as individual freedom) - 'it's everybody for themselves' - the well-off earn it through ability and hard work - that the less well-off are less able or are idle - that those in trouble should not get state support - that people should be left to sink or swim.

To conservatives 'the nation' only really means the laws and institutions that enable business people to use, misuse, discard and abandon fellow-country(w)men. Their opposition to public services and welfare means they don't believe 'the country' should support its citizens! Conservative parties talk

big about 'the nation' but won't support the people who are the nation. In the US, not even with their health.

Workers who vote for them self-harm. We should ask - Is 'the nation' the institutions or is it the people? Is this one society? What will conservatives and business people do for their fellow-nationals? What will they give up for them? Will they be enterprising, not just for their own greed but for the good of fellow-nationals, for only fair rewards? Will they agree their fellow-citizens shouldn't have to trade with them for work in unfair tyransactions? Shouldn't they have the right to organise in unions (and be recognized by employers)?

If we vote in governments to regulate the business class, make them act decently towards fellow-nationals (and the planet), will they accept it? Or will they, if regulated, disinvest, as conservatives always threaten?

With how little conservatives and business people care for their compatriots, nationality only really means people reside in the same system of politics and law. There are practical things to it, rights and obligations you are entitled to, or had better abide by, but anything more depends on what fellow-citizens actually do with and for each other.

To accommodate to how people do suffer from their brutality, conservatives do promise citizens their needs will be met, but by the business system. It doesn't do that of course and they have to promise the state will support. But they do no more to support fellow-countrymen and women than the minimum they can get away with.

People who are workers - the great majority - shouldn't share with the business class and conservatives the national identity they laughably claim to believe in and should downplay the whole notion of 'the country' and a 'we' with them.

'The Nation' Hides The Business Class

But most people, and progressive parties, ignore this clear conflict of interests between the business class and the worker class and do go along with 'the nation', incorporating the system, as the framework for politics. So when the business system fails, people can't even see the business class or take them on about its failings. The business system is accepted as the natural way of things, as part of the national framework. The business class blend into it and recede from view.

So conservative business class activists are able to divert us into blaming an abstraction, 'the economy'.

Progressive parties and voters also accept the business system and go along with conservative's talk of problems being with 'the economy' and affecting all of 'us', and limit themselves to disputing which party has the greater competence to 'manage' the economy. Which they don't in fact do.

'The Nation' Blames Outsiders

So, having hidden themselves and their system from responsibility, conservative business class media and politicians use the national mindset to further divert 'Britons', 'Americans' etc. into thinking that their problems are caused not by them but by 'outsiders'. Falling in with the powerful voices of conservatives and their media and blaming outsiders is an easy option. This is people unable to tackle the people above them turning on those below them. It's punching down instead of up.

The key to tackling this is to grasp that being able to blame outsider groups depends on there being an insider group and to examine its credentials.

For outsiders to blame there's 'foreigners', people in other countries, who don't live under this system of politics and law, so are outside the national 'we'. 'Foreign competition' is blamed for job losses. But native business competitors do the same.

In the UK after the 2008 crash, many workers, instead of blaming conservative free market madness, and the Conservative government for making them pay for it with huge cuts in public services, blamed the foreigners of the European Union for their problems and thought leaving it would fix them. They supported 'taking back control' only to hand it to the Conservatives. Now, in 2024, that is being seen as the bad move it was.

And inside the country there's foreigners who people are encouraged to believe they have 'insider' entitlement over - migrant workers, refugees. Brexit voters were against Eastern European workers using EU free movement of labour to 'come here and take our jobs'. Yet they didn't blame British business people who used free movement for them and their operations and investment to export their jobs,' often to EU countries. Anyway, migrant workers create jobs - they buy things here, so businesses don't have to go to the trouble of exporting them to them.

Also inside 'the country', conservative and populists divert people from blaming them by encouraging citizens to divide into 'insiders' and minority 'outsiders' by colour, gender or being different by personal things like sexuality. National and white - or, as in India, religious 'identities' - set people against each other instead of them.

When challenging the 'outsider' diversions don't over-debate the 'outsiders' themselves. The hostility to them depends on the insider 'we' and that's what you need to question. There's usually little content in it. We need to call out conservatives and the business class on nationalism and patriotism. Ask how much 'the country' really means to conservatives? How much do they really care about fellow-nationals? What will they pay towards the taxes needed for their fellow-citizen's health and public services, and support when they suffer from their unstable business system?

Nationalism can never work for workers simply because it leaves business people unchallenged. Conservatives will lead workers in being hostile to foreigners, and workers might vote in nationalist governments. But then what? The business class will still have power over workers, will still misuse and abandon them, obstruct them from organizing, and won't release their wealth for public services.

That's conservatives. But as well, how much does anyone white care for other white people? What do the 'we's' of colour (and nation) mean in real mutual support in getting the basics you need in life? What policies would an all-white society have to ensure fairness, security in getting life's needs, health services, and the rest?

Another Conservative Diversion – 'Them' and Conspiracy Theories

Another diversion used by populist conservatives is to point people at local and central government rather than the business class. As said, the business class dominate, and don't want to be regulated. In democracies, central and local government could be a way of the non-business class majority getting some control over them and providing some social support to make up for the mis-use of citizens at work and in wealth distribution that the business system embodies. But they don't give citizens much power, and that is why conservative argue that everything should be done via the ballot box, because it's a remote way of getting at them. Business people claim the right to be able to do what they want and you have to understand the system to see how they should be called to account, and people don't.

But local and central government do make the promise of acting in people's interests. And much of what local and central government does can be found fault with, and the democratic connections with citizens

are weak and remote. So a lot of people, not seeing the business class, are being wound up by conservative media to see traffic control, necessary because we have all made millions of private decisions to run far too many cars on the road, as 'the council' or 'them' conspiring to control people. And environmental protection, clean air zones. And vaccinations. The answer? Show people the power of the business class, the ruling class, such as in cutting council funding through their conservative parties, and how that needs tackling before the council. As for the council, look into Sortition, people's assemblies, to make what they do more accountable and have more legitimacy.

Voters And The Economy, The Business System

The mainstream parties rely on business people to run the economy, the business system. Allowing them the freedoms to do that is the main policy of the conservative parties who represent them. And the centrist parties accept the business system. So, either because of wealthy business people's demands for incentives and personal riches, or because their system goes into crisis, both conservatives and centrist parties often don't deliver what they promise to voters.

Conservatives often get away with not delivering (for the majority) because of being effective at blaming other things and other people than their system, that they maintain works best left free of regulation. They are good at dividing voters and diverting them onto scapegoats. Often successfully enough to stay in government.

Centrist parties also leave the economy to be run by the business class, but don't say so, so take the blame when it goes wrong. Not being as nasty, as uncivilized, as conservatives, they don't blame minorities so they can't evade responsibility like they do. Because everybody thinks the government 'runs the country', voters blame them for the crises. E.g. after the 2008 crash caused by the finance section of the business class, Labour got blamed in the 2010 election in the UK; the Democrats in the US in 2016.

So then, when all mainstream parties fail, fringe conservatives – also supporters of the business system, members of the ruling business class – call the main parties and the state 'the establishment' and 'the elite', charge them with letting down workers and 'the country', and pose as radical challengers to 'the establishment'. Workers, and people in general, don't see how the business system works and how the economic failures are the responsibility of the business class and the business system. Believing in the promise of 'the country' and national identity, they are pointed at the 'metropolitan elite' as people betraying their insider status. That includes those established parties who try to treat

everyone fairly. And at outsider minority groups. So, many, taken in by the radical challengers, back nationalist, populist, business-class people like Trump. This is not the answer.

Class Organisation In Politics

The case has been made for people's right to organise at work. Organisation should be the base from where they represent themselves in politics too. It should be about having the sense and the right to participate in the economy and politics as mature, dignified adults with comparable power to the business class. About full citizenship.

This is a leap for many people. When conservatives even accept our right to organise unions, they say it should only be about conditions at work, that political rights are only individual, only to be exercised in place-based geographical constituencies.

And this is how most people do see political activity. That you are grouped by where you live, some of your fellow-constituents associate as political parties, the constituency parties form the national parties; and every few years you can vote for one of them.

But in place-based constituencies people have no organic connection. Being grouped just by address, without functional connections to each other, doesn't amount to much. It is far more meaningful to base political activity on how we associate in making our living in business, the economy and work, the central, vital activities. And so are the relationships we have there, with fellow-citizens, as bosses or workers.

In the years between elections, voters, atomised, don't talk to each other much about politics or how they vote, in an organised way. Mouthing off to people you don't know on social media doesn't amount to that. And nor do they in election campaigns. And they vote secretly, individually.

But they do get, day in and day out, a huge amount of information and debate about the parties' leaders and policies from the mostly business class owned or business-system accepting media. Media businesses are run by business people, formally independent of conservative parties, who pose as independent commentators while campaigning frenziedly for conservative politics. The daily blast of conservative, business-class politics from them shapes much of political debate and influences most people's political opinions and how they vote when elections do take

place. The parties themselves only contact you during the elections, and even during elections you still receive most of your information and debate from the conservative dominated media.

Conservatives and business people don't build their political strength from just being individual, atomised voters in the constituencies. They build it from being organised, collectively. Firstly in their economic roles, in businesses, at work, where they organize by class without even being in political parties. As said, this gives them great political power because governments, and the rest of us, rely upon them to organize most of the goods, services and jobs we need - they organise most of 'the economy'. Look at how national governments and local councils entice them with grants, tax breaks, planning permission, low regulation, 'flexible labour markets' (that's us being dominated by our bosses). Then, as companies and through trade associations, they fund think-tanks, contribute to conservative parties, and lobby politicians.

Then, being individually wealthy, they fund conservative parties, campaigns and candidates. But they mostly don't earn their money from their individual efforts. Their political donations are from what they make at work, from us, from our work! So they take money from us at work and use it against us in politics; then say politics is nothing to do with us in our unions, only about us as atomised individuals, once every few years, in place-based constituencies.

So, as well as their economic and financial strength, the business class get their political strength from work. The worker class majority need to do the same. But worker's organization in politics is pitiful compared to business people's. Politics is about running the country collectively but we don't do much together, aside from a few party activists at election times. We accept the limits of constituency-based politics, that atomises us, where we don't talk to each other about our shared class position, where we can't develop class politics. While all the time, between elections and during them, we ingest business class political thinking from their media.

Like business people, workers are entitled to, and should, base their political thinking, their debate and their activity on their shared economic, work-based role, their work-based collective organisation. They should use the meaningful relationships they have with each other as union-organised fellow-workers to communicate with each other, daily, on political issues and voting choices. Political views developed there can go into the voting system expressed in constituencies.

Wherever workers organize, in unions, activists do act together politically. But it is marginalized, not getting through

to inactive members and the millions who are not unionised. Just as the case for organizing together on pay and conditions at work needs to be more clearly made to workers, so does the case for using that as their main political base.

*Here are the central arguments of 'Us, Politics, The System And Class': we need to establish, as a civil right, the right to organise as workers, and be recognized by employers; we need to **do** it, to actually organise, all across the world; and if we are not to forever flounder around weakly in the vague constituency-based relationships of the electoral system, being divided and overwhelmed by conservatives, the business class and their media, we need to use our workplace organisation as our main forum for developing our politics as the worker class.*

What To Do

Spread this or some similar understanding of the system. Urge people to use the relationships between the business class and the worker class as the framework for political thinking; and downplay the framework of 'the nation'; to base their politics on who they actually are in 'the system' - urge each other to adopt authentic identities that come from their real, active roles, especially in making a living, in working together; as blue-collar workers, white-collar workers, shop floor, office; manual, technical; teacher, lecturer; and even managers (as workers); of all nations, colours, genders, ages and personal tastes.

Business people inter-act intensely 24/7/365, in serious work-based relationships, between countries, worldwide. And they identify as business people. Convince each other of our right to do the same. Base it on the undeniable simple arithmetic of the job deal – on how employers having many workers makes it an unacceptably unequal deal for every worker.

Urge workmates and other workers to see being a union member as normal, natural, everyday, expected. And for this relationship with each other at work to be as serious and meaningful as the one they have there with our employers. Say to each other 'Organized, you aren't alone against the boss. You get a feeling and a reality of support, security and fair treatment. You get real action to protect and improve your conditions. You get the adult dignity of being on an equal footing them.'

Urge each other to get organized, in nearly every job, section, department, workplace and trade; between almost every workplace and industry, trans-nationally,

worldwide. Then do deals with business people and public service managers as near-equals.

And with politics based on class, convince each other as voters not to fall for conservative myths of individualism, opportunity, and seemingly low taxation; nor let them divert us into targeting fellow-worker 'outsiders' instead of them.

Conservatives should never get into government. With workers being such a large majority, we should always be able to vote into government strong progressive, pro-worker parties and back them to strike fair deals on worker's rights with the business class as a whole.

But basing your hopes on finding great leaders won't work. However able, they can't regulate the business class on their own. For that, we need an organised, everyday, permanent, social force that can match business people's everyday, permanent, recognized social force. That is us, organised as workers, in our unions and in our progressive parties.

Ambitious, all this? Yes. It would take many steps, by many millions, organizing together. But it's what's needed if we are to get our world into a civilized state and to not wreck it.

We can start by getting each other to see that the system is the problem, and to talk about it. And to agree that we are entitled to and should be organizing so we can play active, mature, roles in the system.

So, Go By Facts Or By Feelings?

Returning to people not wanting to bother with all that and just go by feelings - Us, Politics, The System And Class deals with that by giving people, for the first time, a clear explanation of the system, that anyone can understand, so they shouldn't find politics too much to think about.

But on feelings and facts –

The great majority of decent humanitarian people - progressives, liberals, trade unionists and socialists - have the strongest hand in making people feel they belong, are fairly treated, supported, secure and looked after. Conservative identities - nationalist, white, nativist - and anti-outsider politics don't offer real support. They say nothing about what they would do for people if the 'outsiders' weren't there to blame. Nothing about how relationships would be between fellow-nationals and 'whites'. Nothing about what to do about the business class's power, about jobs and incomes. Nothing about support at work, supporting each other in health, housing, education, social insurance.

And we can show

- *how the ‘individual freedom’ conservatives claim to offer is cover for business people’s collective seizure of wealth in the work process.*
- *that real freedom is based on supporting each other, not abandonment.*
- *that shallow ‘identities’ can’t deliver what proper organisation as workers and voters can.*

At work, strong union organisation replaces feelings of powerlessness with feelings of real support and dignity. Progressive and socialist politics and governments give genuine support and security in income, health, education, equal treatment and equal opportunity and in regulating business people.

Most people want fairness in society. Conservatism aims for unfairness, abandonment, and isolation. The fairness that progressive politics is all about is a powerful appeal to people’s feelings that conservatism can’t offer. And with wide, everyday organisation, we can get all this over to people, and deliver it. So though this work offers not an appeal to feelings but a thought-out factual analysis, we can do that too.

The Thirty Minute Read

The Essential Debate – Who Gets What?

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 too.* 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 All The Rest 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 All The Rest* 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 *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 each member of staff - ***They've Got All The Rest***. 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 de-regulate 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. *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 All The Rest' relationship. This flaw in the system needs challenging before any of the others can be. The response to *They've Got All The Rest* 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, allow that it has merits. It encourages enterprise, it 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 out-performs 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, The System And Class 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 is 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 - Becoming Mature Citizens

Organising is firstly about bargaining at work. That's on the next page. But in politics, we do poorly at getting governments that will work for the majority. It's because the worker majority operate weakly in politics compared to business people and their conservative parties. But 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's available to the rest simply through voting. As well as controlling people at work, 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 business activity is 'the economy'. From this everyday, practical organisation, and from their effective 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.

To respond to this, 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.

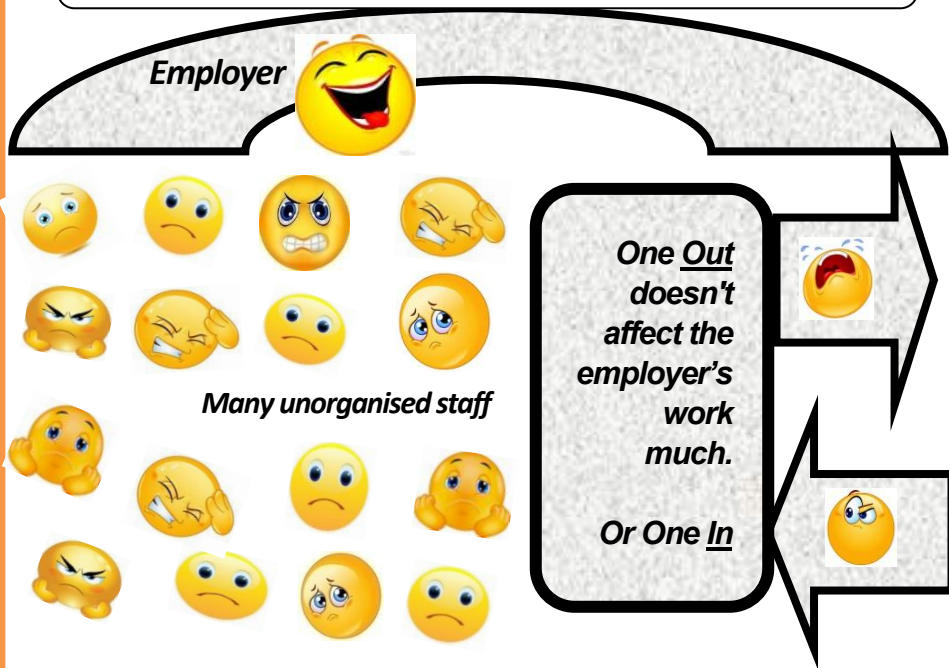
Seen as a form of collective organisation and action, the voting process is too flimsy to enable other people to challenge the business class. So many people are not organised in their meaningful economic role that they can't develop their own collective politics. To stand up for themselves against business people's workplace *and* political power, the great majority of the population - workers – need better organisation than just being atomised voters in occasional elections. 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 is based on the individual's need for social support 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, The System And Class argue all this fully.

***Weak As A Worker Because Employers Have Many Others –
The Personal Case for the Right To Unionise***

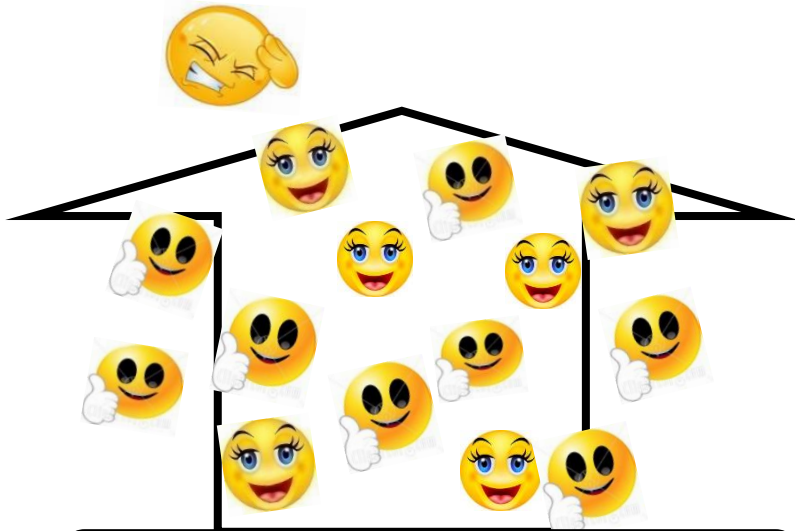


Work relationships as shown explain why people are not equal to employers. It's because They've Got All The Rest Working and gives us the personal and the political Right To Organise.

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. It 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 The System - 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 All The Rest** 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 **They've Got All The Rest** 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, Brazilian 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 dismayingly 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.

Nationalism & Classism 2024.4 Sept.

How conservatives and the business class show that national identity and nationalism are shallow

A lot of people are turning to nationalism. It's not the answer to their problems but is a big problem for everyone else. Many people fiercely oppose it. This work aims to help, by showing how nationalism is an expression of the commonly-held belief in nation, nationality and country, and to argue for toning that down.

'The Country' Is Just The Government

It starts with the fact that countries and nations are really just pieces of territory where human relations are regulated by certain institutions - the systems of government, the state. They are probably necessary. That just seems to be so - for society to function, in any territory, some people will set up a system of political control and a system of laws. But everyone gives them more meaning than that and that meaning is never examined and evaluated. This work does, and will show that we should discuss national identity and patriotism and, while recognising the practical meaning and authority of government, law and the state, take a good look at how we actually relate in them and challenge the fervent belief in them.

People identify as a meaningful group by just having been born in a certain territory, whose institutions and laws most have a poor knowledge of. Nationalists just take that commonly-held belief to the extreme and, to get their needs met, ignore real relationships and turn on people who are a bit different.

But who is crazy about the political system or the government they live under? Most people resent them. They talk of the government and authorities that define the country as *them*. That makes sense - how much *do* states care about people? State support is a battleground in politics because in most countries there are well-organised groups of people - conservatives - who are determinedly against it. In most countries people do have rights that are worth defending but that's a practical thing. And people are entitled to more protections and rights than they get. Some countries are better in some ways, worse in others. All should be much better. None is worth the intense mass identification you get. It obscures big, practical issues about how people in them view each other and treat each other. People don't do enough together and for each other to justify the ever-present identification with nation and country.

Define Patriotism As 'The People' – ALL The People

The awful behaviour of conservatives to fellow-nationals, over centuries, and them having got ingrained into our minds that the nation means the institutions and laws that enable the awful treatment, has long made the case for challenging the notions of loyalty and patriotism. This work goes on to make that case, and for not supporting their wars with the abdication of adult responsibility of 'my country, right or wrong'. But the ideas of country, nation and nationality are so strongly established and difficult to challenge, it is maybe better to start re-defining patriotism rather than trying to squash it, and to argue the view that a proper base for a nation than the governing institutions is *'the people'*. So a patriot defends and promotes the well-being not just of themselves but of their fellow-citizens, in the important, practical

things. Supporting them with their health by voting for good, free health services; voting for them to have good social insurance, good education services, job security, the right to unionise, and more. A patriot will be a progressive, a social democrat or a socialist. And this view enables civilised people to challenge conservatives by saying 'Look, to say you are a patriot, you need to show more concern for your fellow-citizens'.

Common Culture?

There's little common feeling and supportive action between citizens simply as fellow-nationals. You never hear people say, about a contractual dispute, maybe a work-based one, or others, 'Oh, s/he's a fellow-countryman/woman, so I'll be considerate and fair about it'. When you say to them that nationality is just having been born in a particular political system, they say it's about something else, usually feelings of attachment to the surroundings and culture they grew up in and are familiar with, and about just identifying as part of 'the country'. These feelings have some validity but not enough to justify the intensity of nationalism. They are discussed at length in *Us, Politics, The System And Class* pp. 176-229 but there are real antagonisms, soon to be discussed here.

How Countries Are Formed

But when people say 'the country' is based on a shared culture, ask 'Was that how the country was formed? Did the people, all those ordinary folk, feeling that culture, come together to form the political system that makes up a country? Or did it come from small numbers of powerful people, usually the landowner class and the business class, taking control, often by force?'

Take the country you identify with, and one other. Think about how they grew, as political power structures. In the main book *Us, Politics, The System And Class*, this is discussed in relation to Wales, Italy, Spain, the USA, India and Pakistan (*It's The Same All Over*, page 177).

And countries have usually been set up by some people long before the current population were born. And it rarely involved everybody. Take the American War of Independence, fought for freedom from the British landowner class who ruled both Britain and America up to 1783. Many of the colonists were acquiescent or even loyal to British rule and didn't support the war. Many people in Britain *did* support it, because they wanted freedom from the landowner class in Britain too! And today, few in any country play any part in the governing institutions they so identify with. The mass of citizens don't bother to get involved, not in proper, organised relationships, like in political parties, where membership is often quite a small number of citizens.

Where Is The 'We' Of National Identity?

What do the 'we' actually do with and for each other? How much do fellow-nationals *care* about each other? In most countries, real supportive relationships between people *simply as fellow-nationals* are shallow. Most countries are very unequal, very unfair and it is obvious and well-recognised.

Everyone in the USA knows about the excess power and wealth of the corporate business class, although they make the universal mistake of not actually calling business people a class. But the Democratic National

Convention in August '24, where Kamala Harris was endorsed as their candidate for President, was a stunning and encouraging statement of mutual support, of 'the country' being about fairness, neighbourliness, and decent behaviour to each other. We'll see if that philosophy prevails – seventy million Americans will vote for the fascism that Trump fronts for. And Harris's optimism and belief in all Americans having 'the opportunity to succeed' in small businesses is limited by the blunt reality that industrialism is more efficient than homesteading and small trading and will always dominate. So what most people are going to get is work in the industrial production of goods and services, dominated by business employers, corporate and smaller. Then, the right to unionise to make industrialised work bearable and even fulfilling has to be the main thing a government can do to help the majority to succeed in the life they actually live. Thankfully, the Democrats do get that, more than any other progressive parties.

But most countries are not genuinely supportive of the mass of the population, except for what trade unionists and progressives achieve. Casual assertions such as 'this is the best country in the world' (UK) and 'a great country' (the USA) leave this unexamined.

People's only joint activity as fellow-nationals is voting, every few years. (If they have the vote). It's not a shared, collective, open activity. There's not much real, structured political discussion, debate and decision-making between citizens. You just go to the school room and, privately, make a mark on a scrap of paper.

Conservatives, The National 'We' And 'The Individual'

Conservatives are big on the hugely collective 'we' of 'the country'. They do it to bind people to the system that enables them to dominate everybody else. More on that below. But they contradict themselves nonsensically by also saying the country is all about the individual. About looking out just for yourself. They glorify it as freedom, the freedom to be aspirational, to succeed through your own efforts, be able to keep the benefits, to 'make it'. It's to justify their wealth and, when their fellow-nationals, mostly workers, suffer from the faults and failings of their system, to legitimise neglecting them in their most basic needs like health, homes and basic income. And to obstruct their fellow-nationals from taxing their wealth to support them. And to obstruct them from regulating the business people conservatives are and who they represent.

Conservatives And Reality - Collectivism -

But saying the basis of the country is the individual obscures the fact that almost everybody - business people themselves, and the great mass of people who are workers – *don't* simply make their living as individuals. A small proportion do - small traders and the genuine self-employed - but the great majority - including themselves - do it collectively. That is because we have industrial economies that run on mass industrial production of goods and services. It is a system of relationships fundamental to most countries. The most important relationship is in business and work, in the process where we produce goods and services, where wealth is made and wages earned. It is basic to everyone's lives. It is defined in laws which help define 'the country'. ***And in them, we relate intensely collectively.*** Not democratically. But collectively all the same.

Conservatives and business people operate *collectively* as *companies and corporations*. Their 'self-made' success usually comes not just from their individual skill and effort but from them organising as collectives, as businesses; and organising the rest in collective, industrialised work. Yet they deny fellow-citizens the right to do the same and operate collectively as trade unionists, leaving them with just employment contract law that treats *them* as individuals.

Conservatives, The Business System & The Business Class

These basic relationships of business and work, established and maintained by conservatives, enable business people to exploit or discard the majority, their fellow-nationals: to employ them on unfair, unequal terms, to make money from them unfairly. They produce unfair, unequal results. Most countries have these relationships, implemented, sometimes viciously, by conservatives. They embody serious, differing, organised interests, with antagonisms between them.

So in most nations there is this class of person who disagrees with the nation being about all the people. They say it is about the strongest, most able, most enterprising being able to get as much as they can and bugged the rest. ***The class is business people and conservative parties aim to represent their interests.***

Well-established political arguments, and laws, deter and prevent people from challenging the inequality and unfairness of the business system. People allow themselves to be persuaded that it is just there, as if part of nature, and everyone just jostles in it for success or survival equally. But it is a set of relationships that favour business people, the business class, against everybody else. They create a class system, based on the reality of everyday trading relationships, so divisive that it seriously undermines the 'we' of national identity.

Conservatives *talk* with concern for all citizens, because their conservative parties need votes. But that's all it is – just talk, to mask a real lack of concern.

The USA has been the free-est experiment in all this. The common view in America is fiercely in favour of individual economic freedom, of opportunity, of 'making it big on your own', of 'the American Dream'. But industrialism and the reality of everybody's inter-dependence in the collectivism of the economy gets through. The support for Trump is a demand for collective help. They won't get it from him, he is a front man for the business class, who express themselves most nastily as the Republican party, diverting people's anger onto other people than their class.

The False Unity Of Nationalism

The business class, through their conservative parties, really run countries but people don't see it because they don't see them as a class. So the nationalist mindset unconsciously unites working class people with them and conservatives. ***The single most effective way of countering nationalism is Classism – theirs, first of all - to just show people the existence of the business class and to name them.***

Identities & Nationalism

That all describes reality doesn't it? So why *do* most working class people take on national identity, the cover for business-class domination and anti-working class conservatism? It's because, despite the talk of individualism, most people need to feel they belong to things bigger than themselves, to recognised or successful associations or organisations. They need group status and authority. You can see this with how people identify by town or region, by 'where you're from'. These identities don't involve real relationships, they are mainly just tenuous associations with well-known places and a barely-associated aggregation of people. But people adopt them, because of that need to belong to something recognised.

Take people's fervent identification with football teams. Watch the international football championships, with almost everybody, in most countries, even those who don't really follow football, in a state of berserker assertion and aggression, or despair, over the performances of their national football team. (Though the writer is a football man.) Look at the extreme expressions of national identity by the fans, all the wearing the team kit, the face-painting, and the rest of it, broadcast approvingly and enthusiastically from the stadiums to living rooms all over the world. Ask if they express any real, practical collectivism in things that really matter.

Fans identify with national football teams just because they live in or were born in the same political system. But beneath that, few have any real relationship with the teams. They've no cause to be proud of whatever the players achieve and no right to feel let down by them nor abuse them when they fail. In England, the national team that fans fervently support and expect success from is organised by the FA, The Football Association. Yet England fans despise the FA. And within the football fandom, there's no real unity. In Euro24 there was admiration for Scottish fans displays of fervent support, marching to the stadiums in kilts and playing bagpipes and all that. But the one thing most people know about football in Scotland is that supporters of the two big clubs, Celtic and Rangers, hate each other viciously. Same in England, between supporters of Manchester United, Manchester city, Liverpool, and Leeds. Same in Italy, Spain and Argentina.

And there's no real involvement in the actual game. Few of the fans who go wild about the national team's performance in the championships give any time and effort at the grassroots, developing facilities and players, the base for the national team. They don't get youngsters together on weekday evenings to coach them, get them together for matches, organise transport, get the nets and corner flags up, do any referee-ing. (This writer has done all that, organising and managing adult and youth teams. And he has been a regular in the most fervent section of fans at one of the biggest clubs in the world. So this is no anti-football outsider view.)

Supporting the national teams, and club teams, is baseless. It's associating with and identifying with *other people's* success and achievements, people you have no real links to – the people who actually play the game and the business people who run the teams. Aside from a game of football or whatever sport, it's pretty meaningless.

And take relationships between citizens more generally, of any country where many of them fervidly support the national team together. For example, the relationships between the landowning and business class, and the workers and peasants, of Brazil, and their political parties. Or Columbia. Or many other countries.

People say it brings a much-needed degree of unity. It really covers up and enables the reality of deep disunity.

Many, maybe most, of the identities people adopt or are pressed on them are almost completely insubstantial, identities based on real relationships very under-developed. People use the false ones because it's easy. You can loosely associate with people you have little real connection with. Buy a football shirt and wear it. Job done! You can associate and ride on the back of the group's recognition, status and success. It helps you overcome feelings of being isolated, insecure, insignificant.

Sports identities can be just good fun. But national identities mean more, because the nation has real, established political power, the power to make laws and wars. Belief in your country, in nationality and the political system, is the most serious political belief.

The Main Problem With National identity

It unites working people, unconsciously, with the business class and their conservative parties. National mindsets mask how badly they treat fellow-nationals and don't threaten their influence and power. *And that's the main objection to them.* And they are so strong, people acquiesce to whatever governments do, like make war, with the awful belief 'my country right or wrong.'

But being a fervid follower of a football team or a regional identity is just assumed to be what people do and is overwhelmingly endorsed. It comes from people's own need to identify but the media promote it energetically too. That's partly for newspaper sales and viewing figures but the media is mainly owned by business people and they magnify the fervour so as to push working class people into group mindsets that divert them and divide them from each other and unite them with the business class.

There *are* real relationships between people, of which more later, and there are real groups. But not in mass sporting identities. Enjoy the game. But realise that by taking these affiliations and rivalries as seriously as they do, to the extent of real, deep, lasting hatred between fans of different club teams, working class people divide themselves when they need to unite. Football is just the best example, people identify with many insubstantial social groupings, *Now if membership of a group involves real relationships, real mutual support, that makes sense. More on that shortly.*

The 'Insider' Identity

Still, again, why do people feel so strongly about 'the country' and nation and nationality, when they themselves will tell you plenty about what's wrong with it? Again, it's because each one person feels safer, stronger, more validated, as part of social groups or organisations that are widely recognised.

None are bigger than 'the nation', 'the country'. It has real authority and power. And even in the least democratic countries, it claims to be the guardian of the people's needs and promises to satisfy them. So when people feel they are owed better treatment they look to the nation for help and support. They feel a sense of entitlement, as they should.

But Conservatives have got people to see their system as just how the world is. So within the national identity, most people don't see the business system and how it unfairly favours business people and enables them to abuse and neglect themselves. And don't see them **as a class**. So they haven't got a sense of entitlement to challenge and claim decent treatment from those of their fellow-nationals who actually run the country, conservatives and the business **class**. And don't see how central to what they need is the right to unionise, to be able to stand up to the business class, at work and in politics. So they don't take on the business class as the main cause of their problems.

The 'Outsider' Identity

But from national identities they do get an 'insider' sense of entitlement over those seen as outsiders, those who 'aren't from here'. And when they think or are told that outsiders cause their problems, that turns some to turn on outsiders to attempt to protect their interests, to nationalism. They see the answer to their own mistreatment by their fellow-national business class in worse treatment for outsiders. They don't 'punch up' against those who run the country and mistreat them, the business class, but 'punch down' against people they see as less entitled and turn on minority groups, immigrants and immigration, foreigners.

Its Migration, Not Immigration

Immigration is the main issue for nationalists. Colour of skin is the visual thing that gets them going, but, for people like white Eastern European workers, they do raise the same allegations of immigrants taking jobs, using services, eroding native culture and the rest. We need to discuss it more, but only while saying it's a minor issue compared to the power and the deeds of the business class, and their obstruction and destruction of public services. And asylum seekers are even less of an issue, except for them. And pointing out the benefits they bring, like staffing the services they are alleged to be overloading. Here's another - *Don't immigrants actually bring jobs?* Because, once here, they buy the usual goods and services. If you sold them that where they came from, as exports, that would be seen as good. Sell it to them in the host country, with them resident and shipping costs saved, being less costly, you can sell more. (That idea came to me when the Polish building workers over the road asked me where they could get their dinnertime sandwiches).

And treat immigration as part of an entirely normal thing that happens within countries, without such attention – migration. When this writer worked in industry in Manchester from the 1960's onwards, he always had Scottish workmates. And Welsh. After the Conservatives demolished a lot of industry in Britain in the 1980's, a huge proportion of Liverpool people moved out, mostly to London. Such movement is the same in its effects on jobs, services and housing to migration from outside but people don't generate the same hatred about it and don't make it the central cause of diversionary political movements.

Opposing Racism

Independent conservative political activists, the conservative media, build the base for racism by promoting this image of an insider group and a varying cast of outsiders - Jewish peoples, West Indians, Asians, Mexicans, immigrants, asylum seekers, refugees, East European workers, Muslims. Anti-racists usually limit themselves to defending the outsiders.

But Look In The Other Direction – Look At The Insider Group

Looking at the scape-goated outsider groups is looking in the wrong direction. The real issue is the insider identity of white-ism, nativism and nationalism and what little sense it makes. The big problem with it is the business class and how they believe in looking after only themselves, viciously. Getting that widely recognised is the key to opposing nationalism and racism.

More generally, there's nothing about anyone's skin colour that guarantees their behaviour towards others of the same colour. That applies to people of all colours, black, Asian, whatever. The 'outsider' groups are usually talked of as 'them' but are rarely acting as a group. They are just individual humans doing their best for themselves, like we all do. So just like there's no real insider group, there is no real outsider group, in economic or political sense, just on less important cultural habits. So talk of an outsider 'them' is as wrong as the insider 'we'.

There is nothing about any racial group that means they are all on the same side on the real issues of how people relate to get what they need. Take white people as the example. People who see skin colour as important should be asked 'what do you think about how little support, and a lot of hostility, the white business class members of the national insider group give to native working class people? As they do to the working class altogether, of all origins?' And what is there about you and other ordinary people being white that means you are all on the same side? Are you prepared to do something for each other, like on the practical issues of health, jobs, public support, and the rest? If so, good, but that's a class attitude, not a nationalist one.

Ask What If They Got What They Want?

And what benefits do white workers expect from supporting nationalist parties and politicians that promise action against outsiders? They are business-class activists more than nationalists, simply diverting people from attacking *them*. They might do things against minorities to get support from nativist workers but they have no serious plans to do anything for their fellow-nationals, nothing really positive for working class people, white or any other colour.

Nationalists have little to say about what, if they got their way with anti-outsider action, they would do about all the other issues. Like jobs being crap, or poor job protection, under the business class and their system. Like support for you when ill or out of work. Like health services. Like education and housing. And transport. And most of all, about the working class's right to unionise, to be able to stand up to the business class. So we shouldn't only oppose nationalism because it's anti-outsider - we should ridicule it because that's all it does.

Some British workers voting to leave the EU, blaming migrant workers, American workers supporting businessman Trump because he attacks 'outsiders', and others supporting populists like him in some European countries, are examples of the mistaken actions that come from nativist, national and white-ist anti-outsider views. It is because they don't see how the problem is the people in the insider group - business people, the business class – who run the country. It is workers taking the limited opportunities available to them to strike out against being mistreated. Blaming 'outsiders' is going for the wrong targets and is futile but it's made easy by the whole widespread

mindset of identifying by nationality or colour. You just have to feel you are an insider entitled to decent treatment from the political system (which you are), see 'outsiders' as a threat, and support populist, nationalist business-class politicians.

But it's not just some misguided workers who don't see the centrality of the business class and the business system. Even our activists and politicians, and liberal politicians and the liberal press, don't get that. They, and we, need to, urgently, and get it across to everybody, especially those who have turned to nationalism. Look at the full book, Us, Politics, The System And Class at www.uspol.org

Nationalism Is Easier Than Real Identities

Nationalism is easier than challenging the powerful insiders - business people, conservatives. To do that, you have to identify by real, relationship-based roles, mainly being a worker, and you have to do more. You have to join together with others on the basis of real commitments *to each other*. With national identity and white-ism you don't have to do any of that. No real input, no real commitment needed. Radical-sounding, populist business politicians will do the organising. Just back them. (Populism is when people, atomised, not seeing and not organised by their real relationships, take the easy route of voting for confident-sounding leaders who don't have much in the way of real policies, just rousing oppressed 'insiders' against innocent 'outsiders'.)

People Like Yourself in Other Nations

There are real relationships *between people in different countries* as well as within countries. And the same identity – decent people who will really do things for you and together with you - felt internationally, makes more sense than 'the nation'. Nationalism divides you from them, people like yourself, just because they live under different political systems, in other countries.

Nationalism & War

And nationalism is the bedrock belief that enables the biggest of horrors, fighting each other in wars that are usually for business class interests in access to and control of markets and materials.

In economic crashes, when 'normal' parties can't manage the economy, the damaging effects of national identity are extreme. Take what happened in Germany under the Nazis. Not only what was done to Jewish people, but to all Germans. Nationalist sometimes say the Nazis were right but the German people were led to disaster, to mass death and destruction. In invading and being beaten by Russia, in being heavily bombed and invaded by Britain and the US. So many lives ruined and lost. It was from the strength of the national idea that enough people voted for the Nazis to let them into government. Note though that in the last free election, in 1933, only 26% of German people did that. But that was enough to let them form a government, with a party of big business people.

The Effects Of Nationalism On Progressive Politics

In most countries, conservative parties encourage everybody to feel they are part of 'the country'. But so do the 'newspaper' and other media owners, who are conservatives, business people, operating outside the party system. They reassure them with the inclusivity of belonging to the country and frighten them by dramatising threats from the various 'outsider' groups. The inclusivity diverts workers from 'punching up' against the big business class; the supposed threats from

'outsiders' divert them into 'punching down' against them. Most people are not taken in by nationalist parties who promise the futile policy of attacking outsiders while leaving big business people alone but Conservatives don't need to divert everybody like this, just enough to split and reduce the opposition to them. It doesn't take many workers to be pulled that way to stop progressive parties from getting into government.

Another Look At Nationalism, Colour & Racism

Let's look a bit more at what people base national identities on. As said, on being born under a particular governing system. Then, a shared culture or 'way of life'. But even amongst nativists, there are too many varieties of culture for there to be a single one worth defining as a national identity. And of course having many cultures is a benefit, it enriches life. Anyone for a curry?

But colour of skin is a big identifier, visually. But what real meaning is there in skin colour? Certainly not enough to base political, group identities on. It's nowhere near as important for grouping people as what they *do*, especially their roles in business and work, on how they relate to other people, including nationalists. We notice it because there's an evolutionary benefit in spotting difference - we notice it more than sameness. – and we need to rise above that involuntary reaction.

'Outsider' groups themselves adopt, in a positive way, the identity seemingly given them by colour. But to identify positively by colour, and sometimes by gender, is as low in meaning as the hostile discrimination. Yes, there is the shared issue of the oppression placed upon you by 'insiders' and it has to be fought. But to base politics on shallow 'happenstance' identities instead of on real business and work relationships is accepting the discrimination!

In earlier history and still, in some geographical locations, there have been societies where everybody is of the same colour and culture. But there's nothing fixed about it. People don't really function together by race, certainly not in today's industrial and urban societies. There's more to you than your colour or gender. For example, working class women are more oppressed by their class than by their gender. Working class people of colour, the same. So refuse to be discriminated against because of these identifiers *and* don't self-define by it.

Meaningful identities need to come from real relationships. Outsiders as well as insiders need to see the centrality of people's actual behaviour and politics, of business and job relationships, see the business class identity and the working class identity, and see, in the light of that, the superficiality of the commonly accepted identity groups.

Real Groups and Classism To Tackle The 'Insider' Mindset

In all countries, there *are* real relationships, that really mean something, and real groups to feel you belong to, to identify with. There's real (grassroots) football clubs and other sports clubs, parent's associations, neighbourhood associations, motoring clubs, charities, run by many thousands of volunteers; religions. And lots more. Maybe family too. ***But class is the main one. Again, start with identifying, naming and exposing the business class.***

Then, where workers, the working class, organise in unions, there's mutual protection and promotion of each other's interests in their jobs, against business people and state employers, in the essential activity of making a living. Being able to rely on each other by class, at work, against bosses' bossiness, by being unionised. And not just locally but across your employers operation, that can be worldwide. And talking politics to each other as organised workmates. And taking part in progressive political parties.

What *real* groups do you belong in? Who can you *really* identify with - people you can define as a group because they share your problems and offer support, who will actually do things for you and with you and for others like you?

Equality For All Workers - How To Disperse The 'Wokism' Attack

All workers are treated unfairly because all politicians (and everybody else, really) support or accept the business system and so don't challenge the business class's unfair power over all workers. But some are badly treated more so because of colour, gender or personal preferences. Liberals and progressives are more civilised than conservatives. Mis-treatment based on people's personal biological or private attributes is so obviously wrong, they tackle it. Oppressed white workers see this, and are encouraged to see it by conservatives, as favouritism while they see neglect and oppression of 'the white working class.' They *are* neglected and oppressed and need to tackle that, but turning on workers who are even worse treated because of minor differences but have got some protection from that by fighting for it and by decent politicians granting it, is out of order. Absurdly, conservatives, who clearly are of and represent the real elite, the business class, point worse-off workers at the liberals, who, being professionals, business people, or better-off workers, are portrayed a 'liberal metropolitan elite'.

*To counter this diversion, liberals, progressives and organised workers need to challenge not only discrimination on personal attributes but the bigger discrimination against **all** workers in the unfair relationships of the business system and politics. The key to challenging it and them isn't in legislation from above, though that should be done. It's in supporting the empowerment of workers with the right to unionise, laid out in my book 'The Right To Unionise' which is mainly the relevant extracts from the work 'Us, Politics, The System And Class'.*

Just Political Systems

The actual existence of a country, with a political system and laws and all that, is significant enough, sure. But we need a pragmatic attitude to it. Live in it and with it as far as daily life requires, but don't feel serious, emotional collective identity with people just because they were born and live under the same political system as you, because it has little to do with whether or not they'll treat you right. Far from it - some of them are your worst enemies. Recognise how shallow national identity is and reject the flag-waving. It's just people grasping personal significance by identifying with something big and successful that, in most cases, they aren't *really* part of. 'My country right or wrong' is an abandonment of mature, adult citizenship in favour of allowing people at the top of the institutions do some awful things. Iraq. Stay emotionally independent of them and those of your fellow-nationals who don't care about you. Particularly conservatives and their class, the business class.

Declare your emotional and group identity independence from what are just institutions of government and law. Don't follow the government blindly on international issues, don't let national identities excuse illegal, mass-murdering wars, made in your name. And in some countries they have excused the most awful genocide. We do need to feel part of big, successful organisations but they should be those we really do get support from and, as much as you can, contribute to. That's argued thoroughly in *Us, Politics, The System And Class* at www.uspol.org

Classism And Nationalism

People do need something to believe in but we have to work to show them something meaningful and decent. The big division in a country is between the business class and the rest, who are mostly the working class, but the term is a mess of meaning. The real meaning is examined in *Us, Politics and The System*. ***But for here, let's just say we need to counter nationalism with Classism. But not, initially, working class classism. The starting point is to get people to see the existence of the business class and their dominance.*** They're not all bastards, but many are. And their system pressures them all to be, unless regulated by strong unionism and progressive government.

Working class classism, class awareness, is much easier to promote once you establish the business class. It flows naturally from it. It's not very strong at present but that's got a lot to do with people not taking a cool look at the system, at how industrial production organised by the business class makes most people workers. *Us, Politics, The System And Class* at www.uspol.org, is a comprehensive explanation of the essentials of the system.

Working class classism (which has nothing to do with minor things like culture, accent and origin) has been strong. This writer was involved with union activity in the 1970's, in engineering and had a career as a trade union educator. He also had some dealings with miners during the strike in the 1980's, and most of them were *solid*.

And when you stand back from sharing national identity with the business class, you realise you have to be internationalist too. That you should identify with 'the people' and workers in other countries too. Because you have real links with them that mean as much as those you have with your fellow-worker fellow-nationals. Conservatives themselves, while they urge you to be nationalist, actually operate their trade, their financial dealings and businesses in many countries. That links you too with their staff there. While smaller businesses may not operate in other countries, their supplies and sales are almost certainly international to a degree. It's an inter-linked world.

So if you want support and help from others, you can't just look inside the country you live in. The business class don't. While pressing nationalism on workers, and using it to promote their business interests, they also act internationally. One of the first things the Conservative party did in the UK after getting into government in 1979 was to remove restrictions on them sending capital to wherever benefited them the most, rather than keeping it in 'the country' where it could benefit their fellow-countryfolk.

Countries are just the political and legal systems. Be against all national identities and nationalisms. (Except when its resistance to real aggression from other countries.)

How To Persuade People To Tackle Nationalism

People expect the leading political activists (politicians) to do all the work. (Meaning progressive parties, don't expect anything of conservatives.) But they are seeking people's votes so challenging their views can lose them votes. Conservatives do that all the time, by their media posing as being not the conservative *parties*. But we haven't got an activist progressive media.

Progressive parties can still do it, if they took it up thoughtfully as an ongoing process not limited to election periods. But ordinary citizens and workers are the best people to do it. We aren't asking for our fellow-citizens and fellow-workers votes, we can just talk with them as equals. We talk to each other all the time, all we need to do is thoughtfully question the assumptions people make about national identity. Supporting the national football team and other sports activities is one. Just ask 'What, actually, do you or I have to do with these people? Good luck to them, but we just live under the same government, we have nothing else to do with them and their sporting activity.' But raise also the positives – that an awful lot of fellow-citizens do an awful lot of good things together, in various groupings.

People say social media makes a big difference to how we discuss things and how views get spread these days. Maybe. But we do talk to each other face to face, as people who know each other, still. In *Us, Politics, The System And Class* and at www.uspol.org is a short paper *How To Talk Politics With Each Other*.

Challenge Nationalism with Classism

Promote the idea that patriotism is about the people, not the institutions of government, and to be a proper patriot, you need to care about your fellow-country-folk, and probably be a socialist, or at least a social democrat or liberal.

But, as said, the most effective thing is to just raise the existence of the business class. Just expose and name them, as a class. And then their role and dominance, and how most of them believe in a self-centred, selfish approach to life and wealth and oppose public services that help the rest to get by despite them cornering vast wealth. Say they are not all bastards but the relationships we have with them are not co-operative enough to justify the level of shared national identity that is usual. When they talk of a national 'we', challenge them and their conservative representatives to behave in a more civilised way towards their fellow-citizens, at work and in provision of public services. And when you name the business class and their place in society, it follows easily that most of the rest are working class and need to adopt the national 'we' with the business class and conservatives less fervently. And to organise as themselves, to create a proper working class identity independent of the business class, and unionise widely.

Its not about Trump – Its about The American D...elusion

People are saying a lot about Trump. He is the immediate problem but let's reject personality politics and not be mesmerised by him. Trump and other leaders, whether mainstream or other populists like Farage, Meloni or Milei, are only there because political movements put them there. Our job is to identify these movements and tackle them, not just talk about their front(w)men. They are conservative movements. They exist in most countries.

To identify the one that put Trump in, start with the people in his administration. Then the Republican members of Congress, the Republican activists who organise and fund their electoral campaigns, the Republican judges, the Republican National Committee, State Senators and State congress(w)men. The State Governors and Secretary's and Committees. The Republicans on electoral boards and school boards. The whole membership of the Republican party. Then there's the many ordinary people – like the seventy or more million Americans who voted for Trump and for those other office-holders.

To identify the whole conservative movement - Politically active members of the business class lead it and run the conservative media and think tanks. Then there's the corporations and other big business people using their wealth in politics. But importantly, the movement has a broad base of ideological support in many or most of the whole business class, people who run all sizes of business, all the way down to the small traders. And, with some of the best-qualified workers and some who aren't, from many ordinary citizens. In the UK, we call them 'working class Tories'.

To bind this support together as a body of conservative political opinion that they use to justify monstrous wealth inequality, the conservative movement in America uses 'the American Dream' – the claim that with free markets or 'capitalism', 'anyone can make it'. That everybody can operate independently and succeed by their own efforts. Most Americans believe in it. Conservative ideologues claim it is the essence of liberty. It can deliver at times, in enough work for most people and high enough wages. And that wins the support of many workers. It has people believing the conservative claim that the system is all about self-reliance', with a whole cultural imagery of 'the rugged individual'.

But its not 'The American Dream', its 'The American Delusion'. (Though not really American - conservatives worldwide make the same claim. Its 'The Conservative Delusion'.)

Here is why it's a delusion - Conservatives talk a fantasy as if we can all be independent traders. But high-volume, industrial production of goods and services constantly drives out small. So 'the free market business system' develops, inevitably, to a small number of people, business people, running most production. Most economic activity isn't done by independent individuals but, with large workforces, highly collectively, with

most people having to be workers (white collar included). People don't spot how it all being about the individual doesn't match how things actually work collectively. That's because there's an infinite gradation of business size from truly independent small traders up to the corporations and the multi-ownership billionaires and you can't easily see a crossover point. But it starts with even smaller businesses, when they employ people, however few.

With this small class, business people – the business class - running most of the production of goods and services, most work is in working for them or for public bodies. In large workforces. And as just one worker in a large workforce, you have to trade your labour to them along with many others, each of whom they can easily do without, one at a time - 'There's the door if you don't like it.'

And so, while any one can achieve 'The American Dream' and 'make it' on their own, its just impossible for most to. Because the business class dominate everybody else in the key work process where they might do it, where most have to make their living.

And through the unequal job relationship, they get their wealth largely off everybody else's work.

They get political support from their whole class. Down to most small business people, or up from them, business rights are their core political belief. And support for conservative policies and parties. But they get wider acceptance beyond their class by presenting their wealth as fair reward for their own individual effort and skills. That gives vital moral and political cover to the business class's actually collective power. It masks how their power and wealth is actually gained through the collectivism of high-volume, industrial production of goods and services, by the majority, as workers, in a very unequal power relationship with them.

This draws most people into passively endorsing the core conservative aim of economic freedom for business people. They just accept it as the system, without much thought. And the business class distract people's attention from their key role and power, and divide them, with various well-known alternative topics.

So most people's ability to achieve The American Dream depends on their weak power relationship with them, if not unionised. And they viciously oppose that.

Then, built into the idea of individual liberty, conservative movements say that everyone is only out for themselves, that self-interest is just how people naturally are. They justify brutality in the process of wealth creation and distribution with 'It's 'Sink or swim' and 'Survival of the fittest'. They use these anti-social ideas to justify harsh, unpatriotic behaviour towards fellow-citizens, the worker majority.

So, being treated brutally in making their living, workers need insurance against it from good government services. But conservatives claim caring about your fellow-country(w)men is socialism or communism. Their political philosophy is not to care about them. And that small government means freedom.

But with small government we are left with this system of high-volume production, or 'industrialism', in unregulated 'free markets', run by these selfish uncaring people, with them in power instead of democratic institutions.

They are not all bad but the dominant, most politically active of them are. Over the last forty years, fronted by Reagan and Thatcher in the US and UK, they have consciously attacked the majority of people. The system, in their hands, won't deliver The American Dream.

So the majority suffer, but don't see all this. They are diverted onto minor issues, and divided amongst themselves. And so we get conservative governments, including populist pretend-alternatives led by frontmen like Trump, and the support for Farage. Even though their central, conservative policies, mainstream and populist, are against the interests of the great majority.

And, from not seeing that the business class dominate, whichever party is in government, some workers see progressive parties and politicians as no different to conservative ones – 'they're all the same'. And, not having their needs met, just wanting blind 'change'. Even though, as with the Republicans and Trump, and would be with Reform and Farage, it's for the worse.

The Democrats in the USA, and Labour in the UK, go along with the conservative delusion that free markets, dominated by the business class, with the values just enumerated, can deliver for all. They try to not be as vicious as conservatives about how it works, and to try instead to insure citizens against its inadequacies.

To tackle the unfairness they offer 'opportunity'. But that doesn't improve things for the majority. It just means the outcome of who gets on in the system is fairer. We need to press the progressive parties to provide fairness for all, on the basic issue of economic power, by encouraging worker's collective response to the business class's collective power – widespread, universal unionisation.

In summary - our job as progressives is to show the worker majority how the Conservative Delusion is a delusion – to say, again and again, that conservatives and the business class get to dominate and abuse fellow-citizens not by individualism but from collectivising the non-business-class majority in mass production of goods and services. And, as the solution, not to vote for their parties and front(w)men like Trump but to unionise and vote progressive to tackle them.

The Two Charts

The charts on the next two pages aim to summarise the main points of this work in graph form.

The Basics of Politics Chart –

shows how the majority need to base their politics on their class role as a worker, just like business people base their politics, and their dominating political strength, on theirs as business people.

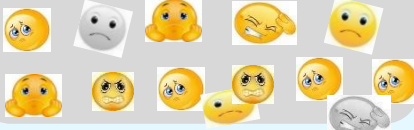
The Right To Unionise Chart –

the key issue is that business people are organised and the majority, workers, are mostly not; or need to be more confident about their right to be organised and to take action, like business people are.

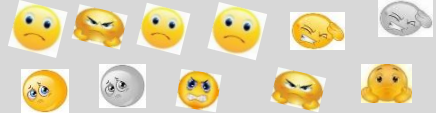
Politics - The Basics – In Chart Form

Workers – the majority of people - are mostly atomised, not organised.
Business people, their conservative media and parties - are organised.

Workers at work - under-organised



Workers as voters – under-organised



At work, business people and public employers – organised as businesses and public bodies - control unorganised workers.

In Politics – little inter-action between workers in their shared public role as voters. Low level of collective, progressive, political views and voting. Civilised politics and parties not strong enough. Overwhelmed, even in government.

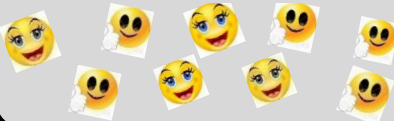
The Media – mostly Business-owned
Confuse people
Divert people
Divide people

Business people are (most of) **the economy**, so they automatically dominate **governments**.
 They have a clear view of **business people's class rights**.
 They dominate **political debate**.
Conservative parties represent them.

How To Fix Things

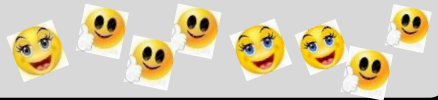
Workers Unionised At Work

**Confidently Organised,
 Dealing with Employers as one**



Equal at work to business owners & public service managers
And also now 'players' with them in the economy

Voting As Workers in Politics



The worker majority, organised together as workers, in unions, developing their own independent, collective, civilised politics.

Resistant to the business class media

Civilised, easily electable progressive parties, able to govern confidently with mass voter support, and regulate the business class.

Business people – the business class – their conservative parties and their conservative media

The Right To Unionise

Business people and public employers are organised - as businesses and public bodies

Most people aren't organised as workers

Un-unionised, each worker is weak because the employer has many others to do the work and doesn't much need any one more..... or one less

One Starting

One Sacked

The Right – the Entitlement - To Unionise

Most work is industrialised. Most employers have many staff. They can get by without any one leaving, any one new, or any one they sack, with the rest working. Each is weak in the job deal with their employer not because the employer can replace them from the unemployed but because even without them they still have all the others. And, with most workforces ununionized, there's the same unfair relationship in other jobs they might go to instead.

People shouldn't have to make their living on such unfair terms. It operates against everybody - whatever gender, colour, or nationality. They have the right to bargain with business people and public sector managers as equals, by unionising.

**Get Strength, Equality and Dignity
At Work By Being Organised,
Negotiate As One, As Equals,
With Business Owners
And Public Service Managers**

Employers Are Organised - Workers Should Be

Such power for employers from 'having many others' is not on. It just grows out of industrialising, it was never decided. People are entitled to respond by unionising. It's about more than pay and conditions. By getting equal to managers you become adults at work, with dignity, not minions. Being in a trade union should be normal, accepted, expected and respectable in everyday life and politics.

Business people dominate the majority in politics as well as work. Their **work-based, trade-based** organisation makes them 'the economy'. Because of that they dictate to progressive governments. And by owning most of the media they dominate political debate. And they often get to **be** the government, through their conservative parties. Yet they say we should not be involved in politics through our unions, just work and working conditions! No – we, the great majority, workers, are entitled to use **our** trade organisation too, to become 'players' in the economy, alongside business people and the state, and to build **our** political parties and power.

People need to convince each other of their right to unionise – and do it.

This version is in landscape view and columns, laid out as if for printing as A5 booklets. Although it wouldn't print both sides back-to-back correctly like this.

Talking With Voters for progressive parties

The following small-group activity aims to help progressive parties to support members in promoting the party's politics, independently of conservative mass media, through the natural relationships they have with voters,

Members' everyday relationships with family, friends, neighbours, workmates, acquaintances are the best route for communicating with voters. Several hundred thousand members talking politics with people they have 'organic' relationships with, in everyday conversation, is more natural and substantive than the usual forms of communication and campaigning.

It will overcome the alienation of the campaigning relationship of 'we Labour, you voter' and replace it with many scenarios where members and the many voters they know discuss politics as fellow-voters, equals, all members of that majority who need progressive governments. It will help develop us as a society to where it becomes the norm for citizens to discuss politics together.

The present situations in the UK, the USA and many other countries show that we *must* talk politics to each other as fellow-citizens and voters. The accompanying paper 'How To Talk Politics With Each Other' explains how to do it.

The small-group activity is drawn from the writer's experience as a trade union tutor (now retired), where group methods were the norm, were effective, and greatly enjoyed by union reps and members.

Activity: Talking With Voters

(Initially written offered to the Labour Party in the UK)

- Aims:** To exchange experience of talking about politics
To develop skills and confidence in talking with voters
To develop best practice

Setting Up Your Group:

A facilitator will organise you into small groups.
(See *Notes for Facilitators*, following)

In your group get someone to start and informally chair your discussion – like, keep it to one speaker at a time; indicate who that person is; allow everybody the chance to speak once before anybody speaks twice.

Choose someone else to take notes of key points, maybe on this sheet, on card provided by the facilitator, or on a smart device.

Group Task:

- 1. Ask members in turn about discussions they've had, or have observed, about politics, voting and the party.**
(see *Notes for Facilitators*1 * overleaf)

Ask:

Who was the discussion with? (no need for names)
Where? (tea break, party, across the garden wall etc?).
What was the political issue?

How did the discussion start?

What did they say? What did you say?

How did it develop?

Did it seem the other person's views
were influenced by the mass media?

What do they do for a living? (if you know)

How did it end?

2. **Finish the group work** by noting down **ideas on best practice** in talking with voters, or on the issues discussed, or just in general.
3. **Full-branch Report Back from each group**, and general discussion. Aim to take reports on one topic from each group in turn.

We may not get to every group but all will have had the benefit of their own group's work and will get the benefit of the whole report back.

A **Resource document** or takeaway for this activity titled ***How To Talk Politics With Each Other*** is provided here immediately after this activity (when printed for use in meetings) and is permanently available at www.uspoliticsandthesystem.org

See Notes for Facilitators2 overleaf **

Notes for Facilitators1*

... with neighbours, relatives, friends; workmates, fellow-union members; people met while campaigning or door-knocking; discussions seen or taken part in on social media, things read in 'the papers' or seen on TV, etc.

Some members might not be willing to talk with voters on their own, or not be in a position to. The activity is to support those who can, and all can contribute to that. Members (and senior officers of the party!) should be reassured that this is just about talking with voters as fellow-voters, not as official spokespersons of the party. And they need not feel they have to strenuously defend every party policy. The aim is simply to talk with people as fellow-voters but also as a Labour member; and for the party in this way to have grass-roots dialogue with voters, independently of the conservative-dominated media.

Notes for Facilitators2 **

Setting Up The Groups

The following points aim to help set up the small groups. They might seem complicated but are worth doing to avoid time-wasting confusion and to achieve good discussions.

1. **Have pieces of card** ready cut for numbering groups and for group note takers.
2. Ideally, set up groups mixed by experience of activism, age, life roles, gender, ethnicity etc. But for early sessions with a particular group, or for just one session at a Branch meeting, just **mixing people up randomly**, as suggested below, is probably all that is achievable.
3. **The preferred scenario is to have tables laid out**, enough for groups of four (divide expected numbers attending by four).

Place a number on each table. Groups as big as five or six might have to do, though people then tend to sub-divide into twos or threes.

4. **The 'at-the-door' method** - As members come in, explain that we are having discussion groups and are mixing people up so they can meet and discuss with those they don't know. At the door, allocate them to tables like this: first person to table 1, next to table 2, and so on.

5. The 'moving people around' method -

If there are tables, but not numbered and people are sat at them already, go round and number the tables.

Then explain, apologise and seek agreement for moving them and their coats and bags. (Good luck!) Then go to each table and allocate the members there to table 1, then 2, then 3 etc.

This method is a bind, avoided by pre-numbering and allocation at the door as in method 4. But still worth it.

6. The 'chairs' method -

If there are no tables, with members just on chairs, this might seem a bind too but again, is worth it: have numbered cards for the number of groups (of four) you will get from the numbers you are expecting.

So if you expect twenty, you'll need cards numbered 1 to 5.

If there's more, scraps of paper, numbered, will do.

Go along the chairs giving number 1 to the first person, 2 to the second, and so on up to 5. Then carry on along telling the next five people they are in group 1, 2,3, 4 or 5, then 1,2,3,4 or 5 again and so on round the room. Then get people to assemble in their groups around the person with their numbered card. The card holder for Group 1 might stay where they are, the one for Group 2 will need to move along, the other card holders will find a suitable spot, maybe Group 5 will be near the end of the seating. The person with the number is just an assembly point, not necessarily group chair.

How To Talk Politics With Each Other

This is written about politics in the UK but it applies to most countries because the basics of economics and politics, and people, are the same worldwide. It is about ordinary citizens talking to each other about politics, and about progressive parties such as the Labour party in the UK, and elsewhere, talking with voters.

People think politics is about politicians and what they do, but it's far more than that, it's about us running society together. And we need to talk to each other more about how we do it, as fellow-citizens. That we don't do it enough was shown by, in Britain, the referendum on Europe and the Brexit saga that followed; and by voters (as a whole) electing into government conservative parties that are hostile to most people's interests. Likewise in America with the support for Trump.

In Britain, the Labour Party (I am a member) only really talk to voters just before elections, going round the streets knocking on doors asking people who they intend to vote for. That's like approaching strangers and asking about their sex lives! And when the media, mostly owned by conservative business people, have been on at people every day, year in, year out, distracting and mis-directing them, talking to them at election time is too little, too late.

By-Pass Their Media

To overcome the conservative media's demonisation of progressive policies, parties and leaders, we need to by-pass them, by building our own independent communications. Running newspapers and mass broadcast media like they can afford to run – and take the trouble to run - seem to be beyond our current confidence and level of organisation. But no matter. ***Talking about politics is best, most naturally done, by people talking to fellow-citizens they have relationships with, in normal everyday conversation. Talking to each other 'organically'.*** That can be our mass media. So let's look at how to do it.

(Social media is not addressed here, yet. But talking with people you have real, definite, maybe organisational

relationships with, is far more useful than social media. There we just fling snappy opinions at each other, usually as strangers, and only in our role as voters who only act together, if you can call it that, at occasional elections. The thrust of all these writings is that we need to associate in definite social organisations in which we can act with real social and political power.)

How To Talk To Each Other About Politics

You can talk politics with people all the time. You don't have to push it. You probably shouldn't. No need for 'Let's talk politics.' Though maybe sometimes. 'Let's have a heated debate!' But things come up naturally in conversation, at work with fellow-workers; with friends, relatives, neighbours; in pubs and bars. Most people are actually keen to voice their political opinions.

You just have to develop the skill of noticing how people say things that have political meaning while often appearing to think they haven't, that open the possibility for political debate, and be prepared to broaden it into a proper political discussion. Like, 'Aren't these pavements bad' can lead into how Conservative governments slashed council funding; how they always want to do that anyway; but how from 2010 they used as cover for doing it what Labour had to spend to solve the financial crash of 2008; how that was caused by Labour having conceded too much to conservative free market ideas and allowed conservative bankers to cause the crisis; and how Labour took the blame - for being conservative!

You'll need to deal with '*Don't talk politics in the pub or club, or at family events*'. Get over that with 'Look, we're fellow-citizens. Look at the divisions in Britain over the EU referendum. Look at the election of Trump in the USA. Voting isn't just an individual act - politics and how we vote, or don't vote, affects us all together. How I vote affects you; how you vote affects me'. It's a collective decision. And as well as being fellow-citizens we are fellow-workers (mostly), maybe actual workmates, relatives, friends, neighbours. To be adult citizens, we

have to be able to talk to each other about how the society we all live in works and what we do about it.'

It's essential to lead discussions away from politics as being just about what each person *thinks*. What they think is, in the end, important, as it guides their actions. But what we think has to be based on the world outside our heads. Always base political discussion on the reality of *the system*, the economy, production, sales, work, jobs and wealth, and their place in it. It makes discussions much easier and more productive.

And the single most important, normally overlooked feature of politics and the system is that business people dominate it. We need to point out to each other how they are 'the economy', since they control production, sales, work and jobs; that they dominate politics for that reason; and they control much of the media too. And to say that we need to see them as a class - the business class. And to see that Conservative parties represent them. In discussions you can move outwards from these central facts but keep referring back to them. Not all of the business class are hateful capitalists, some are alright (discuss) but, as a minimum to all agree on, we have to recognise the central role they play in society, talk about it, and include it in any political discussions we have.

When talking about politics it would be best to agree some basics about how to conduct ourselves

- When getting onto political territory during an ordinary conversation, instead of spontaneously firing out a few random and contrary political opinions at each other then rapidly reverting to safer ground such as sport and consumer issues, agree to discuss politics properly for a few minutes.

- Agree that 'OK, it often does get heated. But let's agree to try to make an effort to keep calm!'

- Maybe agree early on, as a basic framework, that we all want society to be fair and we are discussing how to make it work fairly. That whatever different political opinions we have, we are talking as decent people, in favour of people treating each other decently. And possibly as humanitarians or liberals (people in favour of treating others properly).

- That, as well as being fellow-citizens, we are (mostly) each of us a worker, with common interests based on that.

Try for evenly balanced debate, allow each other to speak. (A tricky skill, this, judging when to interrupt in order to have your say, and when not to!) Don't let disagreements dominate - look for things you can agree on.

Finish with 'Well, have we agreed on anything?' And, since there will be some things you don't agree on - there always are - 'Can we go away agreeing to think about what we've each said?' People - me and you included - do change their mind later that way.

If you are regularly too keen to open up political discussion, you might need to deal with 'There s/he goes again, on about politics'. Deal with that, again, with the *need* for us to do it, and how, if we don't, we are not fully mature, adult citizens.

For any who say '*I'm not interested in politics*' say 'Well politics is interested in you. It affects your life hugely. Here's how.....'

There's an attitude that denies political debate and agreement where people say '*Well you think that, I think this. Everybody has their own opinion.*' This is true, we do all have our own opinions. But we also all live and operate in the same system, the same society. Leaving it at everybody having their own opinion might be Ok for survivalists living in the woods. But probably not, even for them.

The whole point of democracy is to come to agreed decisions on how to run the society we share. We can't do this with every last detail - we have to leave a lot to legislators, governments, public service managers, judges and more. But in principle that's what we aim to do.

And democratic politics requires us to combine our varying opinions into coherent public policy, on a wide range of issues. Human society is mostly run not by individuals but by those who organise together and

organisations can't function with everybody pleasing themselves. You won't do very well as a football team unless you agree on what is happening – agree the facts – and what to do together. At work, bosses don't say 'Yeah, just please yourselves what you do, whatever.' They more or less dictate facts and actions, from everything to do with the actual task to even how you dress. Do the military just let all their troops have their own view? Then there's the law - the whole point of the law is to determine who is 'right' in how we behave towards each other.

Denying political discussion with 'everybody has their own opinion' doesn't *elevate* individual opinions, it downgrades them. Because if they are all left at being different, the opinion-holders actually lose their right to have a say. Because for opinions and votes to have effect, some significant number of people have to discuss, agree, and pool their views into coherent ideas. It's what the conservative media does, raising some issues and downplaying others, setting the political agenda. It's what the political parties do. And single-issue campaign groups. They devise proposals and policies, that the remaining people can vote on. So the effect of 'everybody has their opinion', if universal, would make it impossible even to draw up anything for us to vote on. Those saying 'Everybody has their own opinion' and 'If I ruled the world' makes them ineffectual followers of those who organise collective platforms, who realise that to have any real say you have to do the hard work of agreeing things with each other.

There *are* things that are pretty much people's own business. But not work, politics and law. They are collaborative and collective. Most things in public life are done by some form of common purpose, by agreement on facts and actions, collectively. It may sometimes be imposed by autocrats, but preferably by various degrees of democracy.

It has been said here 'Don't let discussion be limited to what the person you are talking to thinks, or whatever political label they have attached to them'. Instead, raise the external actuality of their lives, their place in the system. Anchor the discussion on their actual role in it. Ask how they make their living. Most will be workers. This writer declines

to be labelled as 'left', which bases things on my opinions. I identify by my role in the system, as a worker, on my being working class, a fact that comes before my attitudes and political opinions and actions.

Conservatives stress 'the individual'. A lot of people go along with that and say '*I just look after No. 1*'. Some indeed can seem to get by OK like that. But they are inevitably affected by the overall state of the society they live in. And they usually have relatives, friends, neighbours and workmates. What about them?

And the majority can't get by simply by 'Looking after No. 1'. The main response to both points is 'We live very inter-dependently. Much of society is collective. Especially work, which, with high-volume production of goods and service (industrialism) in big organisations, is *intensely* collective'. So ask also about theirs and their relatives, friends, neighbours and workmate's place in the system. Ask how a particular political policy affects not just them but these other people close to them. And about how *they* vote or don't vote affects *you*. Acknowledge that of course they are entitled to their opinions but couch discussion of voting intentions to also include 'Well look, if you vote for or allow the conservatives in, you are doing harm to me, your relatives, friends, neighbours, workmates, and your fellow-citizens in general'.

Feelings Not Facts?

Another attitude to challenge is *people going by feelings* instead of facts, policies and debate. Going by feelings is actually declining to exercise your right to have your say. You can't have a credible opinion on most political issues without some consideration of facts and options. Going by feelings means handing that right over to some politician, many of whom deliberately only appeal to your feelings, with extravagant rhetoric assuring you they'll look after you but with little real content, just invoking fear, hate, belonging, security, hope or change.

What should we say to fellow-voters who say they just go by feelings? Maybe this - 'Well we do function with feelings, it can't be all about facts and reasoning. But don't you think the two should go together? Don't use feelings as an excuse for not weighing things up properly. It just doesn't make sense, if you really want to get what you want. But what are your feelings? Let's talk about them then.'

Values

Another approach might be to ask about their social values. *How caring should we be to others?* Do they agree we should aim for *fairness* in society? (That's not the same thing as *equality*). What do they think we should expect from each other as citizens? How much should we be able to depend upon each other? What do they think of the term 'solidarity'? What do they think of '*It's everybody for themselves*'?

And of 'People should be able to keep what they've earned'. The key response to this big conservative argument is to say 'Well let's look at how they get it.' Most of the rich's wealth is made from other people's work. From ours, in fact.

Who We Vote For

And we need to be open with each other about who we vote for. In the UK, voting originally needed to be by secret ballot because landlords would evict you or employers sack you if you didn't vote for their candidate. And it still does need to be by secret ballot, as far as employers and the state not knowing how you vote. But between ourselves, equal citizens who aren't going to intimidate each other, we should be more open with each other in conversation about how we vote, and why.

In summary - we need to talk to each other, and organise together, as citizens and as workers, and work towards mass, mature, involved citizenship.

It's Not About Leaders - It's About Parties

The media, and many ordinary people, treat politics as if it's all about the party leaders. Almost all media coverage of politics is about how leaders do or don't hold sway over their party; their prospects for winning elections; their qualities and shortcomings as possible or actual Prime Ministers. This is ridiculous. For party members and voters who place all their

hopes in whoever is leader, it's 'Messiah' politics. It's immature. Messiah politics demeans those many who are active in their parties.

Leaders are important but their key qualities shouldn't be as one-person policy-makers and decision-makers. In a proper democracy, we all matter. On policy-making, parties have many members and activists, and policies are decided by thorough democratic processes. Major decisions that come up unexpectedly should be made by collective party leadership, not one person. The leader's key qualities are being able to bring together and hold together coalitions of views, in cabinets, in Parliaments and in the party membership as a whole.

Expecting so much from leaders is doomed to failure anyway. It's foolish to expect them to be all-wise. They can't be. So in talking to people about politics, argue against people just going on about the qualities and failings of potential prime ministers or presidents. Or just saying they 'like' one more than another. There's more to any party than the attributes of just one person. *Argue instead for supporting parties and policies rather than leaders.*

And the media and many people place on the leader all the responsibility for getting voters to vote for the party. But that's not only the leader's job - it's every member's job. And they can do it better than the leader. Whoever is leader doesn't know the relatives, friends, neighbours, workmates of several hundred thousand members. They do, and they are the best people to talk politics with them.

Taking Responsibility

One reason people pay so much attention to the leader is that they give up trying to make sense of politics themselves and take the easy option of 'Leave it to somebody else', i.e. one leader or another.

This is because we don't have a clear, commonly-held understanding of *the system*. Most importantly, of the fact that business people, the business class, dominate it, and how their overblown belief in their own

qualities and rights is the root cause of most of our problems. It's not really difficult to understand and talk about politics when you locate discussion in terms of this central political issue – that business people, the business class, have the most power in society; that most people are workers, the worker class; that business people get power through being organised; that in response the rest need to organise too, mainly as workers (and are entitled to).

Us, Politics, The System And Class, a free download from the website www.uspol.org is a resource for this.

As said, we do need leaders. But the over-emphasis on them is a condemnation of our democracy. We should work towards a thorough, involved democracy, with widespread involvement of mature, rational citizens, acting together all through society. I've seen it done in the trade union movement. Political meetings needn't be boring if discussions are organised with small groups that allow everyone to speak. See the small group activity *Talking With Voters* that goes with this paper.

Persuading Fellow-citizens To Vote Effectively

People give reasons for how they vote or why they don't, that don't make sense. Here are the main ones, and some responses:

- *'I'm not voting for them because of (a single issue).'*

Where people feel so strongly about one party on one issue that they don't want to vote for them, *prompt them to weigh up what the other parties are saying on that issue too.* Prime example – after Tony Blair's war on Iraq, many normally Labour voters stopped voting Labour. But that only, eventually, helped to allow the Conservatives into government. Yet they, and Parliament as a whole, had backed Blair on this war. And Blair and New Labour were, of course, infinitely better than the Conservatives on domestic issues.

You don't usually get a vote on one issue and you shouldn't vote according to only one issue. There are many issues and each party has differing policies on each of them. You normally have to vote for packages of policies. *You need to decide on the best or least bad package.*

Whatever you think of the parties, whatever their leaders or candidates have done or not done, *once you get to the vote, to the actual list of candidates, to the ballot paper, one must be the least bad* and you are surely better off with them in government than a worse one. So, in Britain, it means, even when Labour governments don't do as much as you'd like them too, Labour is always the best option for most people. Most citizens should never let the Conservatives in. The same applies in the US - the Democrats may not do enough but are the obvious better option for the majority than the Republicans.

- *Some will say they are voting for a minor party as a 'protest vote' against what progressive or social democratic parties have done or not done. Usually, it's because they've not been progressive enough.*

In the UK, protest voters see it as teaching Labour a lesson but they damage themselves as much as Labour. The minor party usually has no chance of winning so the protest vote just splits the progressive vote and allows the Conservatives – usually the worst option - to win the seat and get into government with, usually, less than 40% of the vote while the combined progressive vote is regularly in the 50% to 60% range.

Where people are committed to the small party and want to build it long term, it might make sense. But at any particular election, if their party has no chance of winning, all they often achieve is to allow the worst in. What the minority party should do is make tactical decisions about how supporters should vote in each election, to get the best or least-bad party or candidate in. But they are generally in too simplistically positive a mindset about their chances to do that. So then it's up to *voters themselves* to take a cool look at what is possible in any current election and vote for the party that is (a) actually able to win the seat and (b) is nearest to meeting their needs. If protest voters want to build the minor party in the long-term, throwing away their vote and letting the Conservatives in is not the way. They need to build that party in between elections, protest voting is an unlikely way to do it.

- *Many people say their vote makes no difference.* Well, yes, for everyone, it's rare for votes to be so tight that their vote appears to be a deciding vote. But they do add up, don't they?

- *Some don't vote at all, saying 'They're all the same' or 'They're all as bad as each other'.* In the UK, about 30% of those entitled to vote usually don't. And for all the fuss about elections for President in the USA, only about 50% vote. It's a serious problem for progressive parties. It's one of the reasons we usually have parties governing us who have the support of less than (a different) 30% of citizens.

Tell people who say this that the political parties are never all the same. They all disappoint in *some* way, that will be true, but they are never all the same. Saying that is just lazy.

It's a cop-out from doing any thinking. I've taken part in many union elections at all levels and it's easy to find enough difference between candidates to be able to decide on one rather than the other. It's easier still with the political parties. There's too many issues and too many policies for the parties to be the same on all of them. Too much in each parties' package for them to really match up closely over the whole range, if you just actually think about it for a few minutes. More on the nature of the main parties shortly, but argue to people who say this that they should at least *vote*, and to at least make sure the least bad and not the worst gets in.

The Parties Aren't All The Same

'They're all the same' leads to people just talking of 'them' and 'them in Parliament', and Trump calling them 'the swamp'. The media reinforce this, presenting elected representatives as a single, homogenous group - 'politicians'. It happened with Brexit in the UK, where people railed against 'Them in Parliament' or 'Politicians' for not '*sorting it out*'. This is lazy thinking. It's pretty obvious that elected politicians have varying objectives, so you can't talk of them as a homogenous body that you can expect to 'just get on with it'. In his work '*Us, Politics and The System*' this writer shows how you can get a clear view of the differences in politics by basing it on our relationships in the system, at work, in business, in

the economy. But even leaving that aside, just watching the nail-biting Brexit debates in Parliament, it was plain that the Conservatives are mostly an arrogant, entitled, unpleasant bunch, wealthy business people representing wealthy business people. There's a few with some human decency but not many. And it was plain that Labour MP's are mostly caring, well-intentioned people, even with internal disagreements about how to tackle the conservatives and the business class and the many voters under their influence.

Governing Is Not Just Managerial

In Britain the Labour Party loses votes and elections because the conservative 'newspapers' convince people that they are *not competent to manage the economy*. It's a myth – see *Labour Is Fit To Govern* at page 315 of *Us, Politics and The System*. *But we need to point out to people that there's more to governing than competence anyway (important though it is).*

One result of seeing choice of parties as being just about competence is people voting for a party simply because they are unhappy with the incumbent government. They do this because the present situation is unsatisfactory (it always will be, to some extent.) So they'll say '*Let's give the other lot a try*'. They'll vote just for '*change*'.

But few people *really* evaluate a government's competence, and certainly not those who just vote for change. They take the simplistic option to just try something different because they don't have a clear, holistic view of the system and the parties.

But There's Intentions Too

More importantly - the competence charge against Labour rests on the assumption that all the parties aim to govern for everyone. That there is a key task, managing the economy and that it is a neutral skill. So the choice is presented as just being about managerial ability. But although competence is obviously important, first ask people to look at *what are a party's intentions anyway?*

What do they try to do, what are they for, who are they for?

When people say 'they're all the same' what they really mean is 'they're all a disappointment'. But to think 'they are all the same' you must believe they all intend to do right by everybody. As said, that's not true, and we need to make it clear in discussions with fellow-voters.

Conservatives claim they intend to do what's best for everybody. That they get away with that claim is quite an achievement. They don't. They aim to manage the country for the people they represent – business people - the business *class* - and rich people. And to do just enough for some of the rest – managers, some high-earning workers – to get enough votes to win elections.

But it's our fault they get away with this ridiculous pose, for not talking enough ourselves to all those people who get political news and opinions from conservative media, that present conservative parties as well-intentioned, effective managers and also set the agenda for broadcast comment and the media generally. They talk to voters day in and day out and influence them deeply, such as diverting enough of them into blaming outsiders for problems to take election-swinging votes away from progressive parties (who don't blame outsiders.) And they undermine Labour's and progressive party's overall credibility with voters.

The Conservatives shouldn't ever be a *disappointment*. Why expect anything of them but policies largely hostile to the worker majority? They box clever with some policies that appeal to or benefit some workers. But their main aims are clear on the big issues – their fierce support for 'free markets' which essentially means 'freedom for the business class to get rich from everybody else's work', and their opposition to us matching up to their organised strength by ourselves organising together, in unions. And they oppose public services and support. Workers need public services because of how the business class mistreat and exploit them at work. But conservatives and their class – the business class - can afford to buy what they need themselves so don't want to pay taxes for public provision (except for the police and the military to defend their property and system, domestically

and around the world.) They make a show of supporting public services because most of us *do* need and want them and they know they won't get into government without concealing their true attitudes. But look at what they do on public services, not at what they say.

You can observe how they go about looking after their interests and admire the effort they put into achieving dominance in society, and realise it's our own fault, the rest, most voters, for not matching up to them, for not talking to each other properly about politics, for not educating and organising each other enough to show them up.

Updating this piece in May 2025, **Reform** are the alternative conservative party, with the same basic objective, to represent business class interests, just even nastier.

The Labour party genuinely aims to do the best they can for the majority. More on that below. But to get that through to people we first need to get them to see the key features of society – that business people dominate it; that it's because, as businesses, they are most of the economy; that this gives them power in politics even before they are active in political parties; to get them seen as *a class*. Having done that we can show people that most of 'the press', who position themselves as unaffiliated commentators, are actually independent conservatives, business people, working to influence politics and voters in the interests of business people. Only by spreading that basic understanding can we can pull people out of the influence of the conservative media and show how, in various ways, they consciously divert people from blaming the business class and their free-market business system for our problems. Then we can put *our* case clearly.

The Labour Party can disappoint because of a persistent problem it has never, so far, resolved - how much to regulate and tax the wealthy and business people for the benefit of the worker majority. The left in the party wants to offer policies that require that, and to

do it. But the centrists notice that not enough workers will vote for these policies. (That includes those who don't even vote.) So instead, they cobble together less ambitious policies that they hope enough centrist workers will vote for that Labour actually wins elections and gets into government. But then those policies eventually mean disappointing many workers, who don't vote Labour next time, maybe 'trying one of the others'.

The last time before this that we got a Labour government, it was after centrists led by Tony Blair took note of how, during 18 years of Conservative government, 1979 to 1997, many workers allowed or even assisted the Conservatives to win elections on pro-business, anti-worker, anti-union, anti-public services programmes. So to win votes from such workers and win elections the Blairites decided to become, as New Labour, another pro-business party. (That's what endorsing free markets really means). They hoped to still be able to improve public services and welfare, and did. The party as a whole went along with this, conceding to the business class and their media-propagated political arguments, in order to win the votes of better-off, conservative-minded workers and others who accepted their anti-union, and anti-public spending arguments.

It worked, to a degree, allowing New Labour to get elected and improve public services. But it failed in the end because the 'free market' policy left the economy to be steered by the most greedy, reckless, socially irresponsible members of the business class, the bankers, and they caused the crash of 2008. Labour let itself get blamed for that and lost the next election on grounds of incompetence and excessive public spending. As said earlier, all Labour had done was concede to a core conservative economic policy, that seemed to be necessary to get the votes of better-off workers, and the excess public spending was just what they had to spend to rescue the economy from the mis-behaviour of the financial leaders of the business class. It was absurd, and a good example of how awful we are at communicating with voters, and the consequences. A similar accommodation to conservative-influenced voters is happening now, in 2025, with damaging consequences.

But the concession to conservative policies is not only the party's fault. We voters obstruct Labour in what it can do for workers. Not enough of us vote for them on manifestos that would regulate business people and conservatives and govern for the majority. The party is limited in how radical a programme it can offer to workers when many are not as radical as even the centrists in the party.

Labour centrists feel, correctly, that they don't have the support to put forward policies that most members, left, centre and others, know are right, so they cast about for modest policies that might win elections. But when they do, these policies inevitably don't deliver enough for the mass of people.

But however disappointing some might find Labour governments, as a party they simply are better than the Conservatives. Unlike them, they aren't *intentionally* against 'ordinary working people' - workers – and public services. So the parties are *not* all the same.

To state this crucial point again – although there is a lack of conviction in the Labour party that causes bitter, ugly division between the left and the centrists and leads to policies and actions when in government that disappoint workers and voters generally, it is only a reflection of the politics of the whole electorate, including those who are workers. This, the politics of the electorate, needs tackling so that they can be offered, and will vote for, policies and government that won't disappoint them.

The left need to recognise that you can't just put up radical policies at election time: that you have to have thorough, constant dialogue with many millions of voters, through our own connections, to convince them of these policies.

The centrists need to recognise that devising a mish-mash of moderate policies hoping to get votes from voters who are doubtful about stronger policies means people saying they don't know what Labour stands for, not offering what you know is needed, and not doing enough in government to sustain support.

The whole party has to campaign continually with voters and change those voters' minds. Then, left and centre can share a measured assessment of how radical the party's programme can be, to win an election, based on how much constant campaigning has brought how many voters to more progressive views and voting intentions.

And this is not solely Labour's job. It's up to us, the many millions of voters, to talk to each other more and persuade each other to vote Labour and commit to still doing so when they promise more determined policies and action – centrist voters. And even when they don't – left-wingers.

And, again, we - ordinary people, voters, activists, and progressive parties – urgently need to by-pass the conservative mass media. It doesn't look likely we'll set up our own, progressive, mass media any time soon. *But we can talk to each other directly, consistently, thoroughly, every day, as fellow-citizens and (mostly) fellow-workers. The Labour Party particularly needs to talk to voters independently of the anti-Labour media. That's what the activity Talking With Voters is for, to provide encouragement and support for members doing that.*

The Lib Dems are a party of small business people, managers and professionals, with a rural base. They too are pro-business-class and don't intend to do anything for us as workers. They just claim to be able to run the country more effectively and campaign opportunistically on personal rights and single issues.

The Power Of The Business Class

All the main parties can seem the same because they all defer to the business class. As said, they own most of the economy. You could say, and they do, that through their enterprise they are 'the economy'. They are people with a strong sense of their own self-importance, confident and determined. They can and do make sure that governments, of whatever party supposedly 'in power', give them most of what they demand. Progressive parties conceding to them is seen as deferring to the business system (free markets) but it's the business class's system. It's them who benefit from it

far more than the majority. Its them who argue and fight for it, fiercely, determinedly. It is actually conceding to *them*.

One of their main promotional points is that 'free markets' allow individual freedom. That's a myth. The economy is actually, observably, hugely collective, particularly the businesses that they own and organise and we work for.

Conceding to the business class isn't a problem for the *Conservatives*. They *are* (the most politically-active members of) the business class, organised into a political party to represent them *as* a class. For *Labour* it is a problem. They have to either challenge the business class or work with them. How Labour governments handle them, try to get them to behave themselves, act more sociably, is the biggest policy issue they face.

So the parties are not, as some say, 'all the same' - the Conservatives are from the business class and represent their interests. Reform are an alternative, even nastier, business class party. Labour tries to do better for the masses but defers to the business class's power and are unwilling to challenge the business-class 'newspapers' influence on how people think and vote. The Lib Dems are small business and management class.

Again, we need to frame our evaluation of the parties, our attitudes to them, and our political discussions, in terms of the system. Whenever I talk to people about politics and the political parties and government, I declare early on that I am working class. (I'm moving to saying 'a worker' because people limit 'working class' to meaning just less qualified workers on lower incomes.) So why, despite Labour not achieving as much as workers might want, why would I or them vote instead for *anti-worker* parties? Any problems workers have with Labour letting them down or not doing enough aren't solved by turning to parties who are *enthusiastically* anti-worker. The thing to do with Labour is to vote them in as the best option - the least bad if you

want - the nearest to being a party for workers, and then to support and influence them to do more.

Again, the bigger need is for all of us, as ordinary citizens, workers and voters, to talk to each other more about politics and persuade each other to vote for parties genuinely on our side (Labour in the UK, the Democrats in the USA, and similar elsewhere.) And to talk to each other and develop ourselves as an electorate that will not, as at present, hold back those parties from presenting more progressive policies, but support them in doing that and vote them in as more progressive governments.

And to defend ourselves and improve our conditions with more than just progressive governments but with thorough union organisation at work and in politics.

There's another mis-conception about parties that we need to clear up with voters. After Labour lost the December 2019 election to the Conservatives the media, commentators and even Labour leaders themselves accused Labour of letting voters down and even demanded Labour apologise to voters. This is treating the parties as if they are public services or businesses that other people can make demands on. But, unless actually in government, they are not public services. And they are not businesses that people, as consumers, have given money to and can make demands on about quality of goods and services.

We are voters too. We are a voluntary association of those several hundred thousand voters who care enough about the conditions in their own lives and those of other voters to organise and put forward policies and candidates to improve them. They are Labour members like me, and active trade unionists, and others affiliated to the party. We join the party, pay money in, go to meetings, committees and conferences, discuss and vote on the policies we think best for ourselves and the many, and who from amongst us we should put forward as leaders, and as candidates for elections.

Most of our fellow-voters don't take the trouble to do all this. They leave us to do the graft of knocking our heads together to work out policy, with a lot of dissatisfaction

buried in compromise on the way, then expect us to meet their every little individual whim and concern. Now although we do need, for our own good and, we think, theirs, to convince them that the policies, candidates and leaders we choose are the best on offer, it is not a *duty* we owe them. It's more that *they*, as fellow-citizens, owe us a duty to get involved, maybe join the party and do what we do - compromise with each other on many issues to put together the best political offer we can, and the best available, and offer it to the electorate.

But sometimes members are so fervent about their own views that they ignore what other voters will make of it. In the 2019 election campaign, you (and I) might have thought a re-run of the Brexit Referendum was appropriate. But there were maybe four million other probable-Labour voters who'd voted for Brexit and for whom it was the biggest issue and a real vote-swing. So unless you could go out and convince them you were just inviting defeat.

But these things are for members to discuss with each other. We owe no duty to non-members. Although we do need to communicate with them, and them with us, day in, day out. Not as a service supplier though, but as fellow-citizens and fellow-voters.

We let the media embarrass us when we lose elections by asking if we think voters are wrong and would we prefer to choose another electorate? First though, reject the media's simplistic question - there is no homogenous 'the electorate.' An awful lot of people vote Labour. The problem is with a minority, who are mostly workers, who are disillusioned and don't vote; another minority who would be better off with us but are taken in by conservative arguments, especially like the one that the EU was the main problem, when in fact it is the conservatives themselves who are. Add to those minorities the business class minority who really do benefit from conservative government and you get a conservative win.

So do we think those voters are wrong who vote for the conservatives or allow them to win? Of course we do. Because, do we think we are better for them than the conservatives? Of course we do. We need to convince the non-business class majority of this and that means communicating with them much much better to, indeed, change them. Although it would be a dialogue, a mutual process. This writer is urging the party to format branch meetings around exchanging experience and developing best practise on members getting across to voters they know, and has provided an activity for branches to use to do this.

Citizens' Assemblies?

This paper has been about the usual main political act, the vote. And occasionally there's referendums too. But they too suffer from the same problems as how we vote for representatives in Parliament, Congress and other democratic assemblies - there's not enough properly organised discussion between citizens, and no opportunity to have a say on individual policies. People's or Citizen's Assemblies may be a way forward. They are temporary gatherings of citizens selected randomly, maybe with proportions by age, gender, ethnicity and so on, who meet over a cycle of weekend conferences and suchlike, with presentations by political parties, councillors, council officials, MP's, lobbying groups, people with expert knowledge etc, and come up with recommendations for the rest of us on a particular policy issue. This writer's best knowledge of it is a book that calls it '*Sortition*', the book being *Against Elections: The Case for Democracy* by [David Van Reybrouck](#).

A final note to clarify what people should expect from politics - people talk about politics and the political system as if everything about society *starts* from there. As if we, whether politicians or all of us, started from a blank sheet and made society what it is. And as if politics decides everything that goes on.

That's not how it is. Lots of things go on in society, far more than government can reach. And most are governed by customs and rules developed over centuries, often without political action, just 'what is done' or has come to be done.

Some of it will have been set down in law and in political statute but much won't have been.

The crucial example, the central subject of this whole set of writings, is how high-volume, large-workforce production gives an organised minority – the business class - unfair power over the majority when they are just individual, atomised, unorganised workers, which we never decided in politics as the way to allocate what people need to make their living, and wealth.

It's best to see politics is as a way of potentially altering what already *happens* in society. To see *the system* and the basic activities and duties and rights and penalties as pre-existing, and politics as the main, officially-offered way of changing the broadest-ranging of them.

This may be a useful book on talking to each other
<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2021/feb/16/how-to-have-better-arguments-social-media-politics-conflict>

More papers like this, covering all the basic organisational political issues, are at www.uspol.org

The Main Points of Us, Politics, The System And Class –

A List To Discuss

How much do you agree with them?

Which are most worth discussing with other workers?

- *They've Got Many Others explains business and management power over you*
- *They can sack you easily in Contract Law because of Many Others*
- *The case for Our Right to Organise and Strike*
- *Striking and the bottle Issue - the comparison with War*
- *The definition of **the Working class***
- *The definition of **the Business class***
- *Exploitation means Paying Less than is Charged for your Work*
- *The view of the notion of National Identity*
- *The view of Local identity and Football identities*
- *The argument for Real Interest Groups*
- *The case for **Working Class identity and Organisation***
- *The explanation of UK society developed from the Land-Owner's Dictatorship to the Business Class dominating a weak Democracy*
- *The inadequacy of 'the Vote' – just One Little X*
- *The comparison between Union Democracy when Striking and Parliament's lack of any Democracy over War.*
- *Obligations, Rights and Deterrents to Associating with others*
 - *Forced to Associate as 'the Country'*
 - *Business's right to associate as 'Companies'*
 - *Workers denied Rights to associate - 'Free markets in Labour'*
 - *Our Right to Organise and Act*
- *Comparing Democracy in Choosing Leaders – Union v Parliament*
- *The argument for Having Your Say on Issues – Union v Parliament*
- *Interest-Group Constituencies*

Why People Should Read This Work 'Us, Politics, The System And Class'

Q. Why are people treated so badly politically and in making their living, in their jobs? Most are workers: so why do anti-worker, pro-business-people, pro-the-wealthy parties ever get into government? Particularly conservative parties, like the Republicans in the USA and the others across Europe and all over the world?

A. Because that large majority of people who are workers don't understand their key relationship with business people. This book explains it, from everyone's daily experience of jobs and politics. It aims to convince workers of the case for organising together. For people ever to win decent treatment, the kind of views and understandings presented in it need to become widely held, argued for and acted on. If people read it and urge others to read it, it will help people, worldwide, achieve better lives and a better future. It is easily, cheaply and freely available globally.

We never examine 'the economy' and 'the system' as relationships. Even though we suffer many problems when it works - if that's ever really true - and still more when it's in crisis. Instead, we complain about what's done in politics and at work, and the effects on us - "I think it's terrible what they're doing about this or that" but mostly just ask, just plead, for better treatment, in the public arenas open to us, from the weak position the current relationships put us in. As if appealing for fairness and common humanity might work. We need to do more than complain and plead. We need to examine the job, workplace and political relationships that empower business people to treat us harshly, and change them, so we have the practical power to be far more assertive of our interests in 'the system'.

Once, the key relationships were between big landowners and tenants or peasants. In Europe first, the business system replaced that system, and has now spread across the globe. They call that 'globalisation'. The business system defines how people relate to everyone else - the basic relationships in the workplace and 'the economy.' Those who it favours call it free enterprise. Others call it capitalism. *The Free-market Business System* is a better term. We need to examine it. Especially how business people and workers relate to each other. We need a clear view of what's wrong with business relationships and the changes needed. We need it putting across to workers by fellow-workers. This book is provided to help that happen.

We use the business system without ever having taken a close look at how it operates and whether it is right or not. And without ever having chosen to use it. We could have done with doing so at any time in the past few centuries. It runs according to relationships that enable those

said to be the most able, energetic, most hard-working or ruthless to exploit, misuse, bully and discard the rest. It allows them to direct – or misdirect – the economy. It is claimed this is all reasonable because anyone can get to that position. Yet even if that were true it would be unacceptable for one very simple reason. That is that mass production of goods and services, involving most of us, is the dominant way of producing. Most people simply can't be owners, however enterprising they might try to be. Most will be workers. And it is not acceptable for them – us – to be treated as harshly as we are.

It allows business people to obstruct us organising together as workers. We have never written up the arguments against this, 'The Right To Unionise', nor put it out widely, to workers generally. It's urgently necessary that we do. This book enables it for the first time. For example, here is a statement of the unfairness in the job relationship, that should be commonly spoken of but isn't. Each 1 person – you, for example – who sells them self as a worker to those who employ 100 other workers is 100 times weaker than them, the 'employer'. Where the employer has 1000 workers, 1000 times weaker. That's not a fair, reasonable way to run everyone's most basic, important relationship – the one in which they make their living.

Those who champion the business system – business people, their 'news' papers, their conservative parties, in the UK the Tories, in the US the Republicans, their equivalents in other countries – have a well worked out set of arguments claiming that these relationships are fair and just. And even that they are the best for everybody. They manage the impressive feat of getting these views widely accepted. We workers, most people, don't have a clear, thoroughly-thought-out response. That's why we keep getting defeated in politics and at work. As happened in the UK in the 1979 election, when the political arguments against us organising and acting together to stick up for ourselves in the system won. And they continue to win, even amongst some workers, despite them being outrageous.

This has been going on for centuries. In the UK, workers were always treated very badly up to 1939 – not so badly after 1945 – badly again since 1979. And now, even worse. Without a clear, commonly-held understanding of the unfairness of the basic relationships, and of the rightness and necessity of organising together as workers, we will just carry on being treated like this. There's always some who resist but it's never enough. It never will be while most people accept the business system's unfair relationships as the only way to run society. We have no common criticism of these relationships. We don't even have an everyday term for the people whose system it is. The all-pervasive false 'we' of national identity blinds us even to their existence and masks their responsibility for how we are treated. That leads to some blaming our problems on people of different colour and foreigners. The problem is

the Free-market Business System and those who enforce its relationships - those whose system it is. The everyday term for them is 'the Business Class'.

Some argue for a radical change to a socialist system of relationships. That is too big a leap to make while we don't even have a solid criticism of the existing system, while most people accept the existing relationships. While we don't even have a widespread belief in our right to organise together to challenge their unfairness.

It's way beyond the time when people should have a sound criticism of the process, the relationships, that enable them to be treated wrongly. The book *Us, Politics And The System* is such a criticism. The writer believes it is essential that many workers read it and urge others to read it, to help develop a commonly-held worker's philosophy that will support much more organisation and assertive action.

A philosophy that we can use to challenge business people, the Tories, and those many Labour politicians who concede to them. They all grant business people great freedom while restricting us from trying to get equal to them by organising together. Anti-union and anti-strike laws, when properly examined, are an absolute scandal. Yet there they are. And this writer has found even some of the most combative and class-conscious workers accept their rules, like blaming the Unite union for the British Airways cabin crew's strikes being ruled illegal.

In promoting this book the writer finds people show real interest in this notion of examining the basic relationships. But few are actually getting hold of it, reading it and urging other workers to. Even revolutionary socialists don't 'get' the need to take a close look at how the existing society runs and at common, everyday attitudes to 'the system' and to each other. It's no wonder the business class, who do 'get it' and have their arguments sorted out and present them vigorously, dominate society and are able to treat us brutally. It's a history thing – they established these unfair ways of relating several hundred years ago, in practice and in our minds, and we've not yet challenged them on them. It's about time we did.

The book *Us, Politics The System And Class* aims to do this. People can download a free e-copy at www.uspol.org They can also buy it as a proper printed book from <http://www.lulu.com/> for cost price. Plus post and packing. You order it on Lulu's site and it is printed and posted for you locally. Check Lulu's 'print on demand' service at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lulu>

About The Author



Ed McDonnell is a retired lecturer in trade union education. He organised and tutored courses for workplace union representatives, for over twenty years, in the UK. Helping reps to examine how people relate at work was central to the job. That covers how they relate to each other as well as to the employer. It is a key political issue.

Some courses were to help reps deal with laws made by conservatives to shackle workers union organisation, and the author had personal experience of them as an officer of the lecturers' union. In doing that, he learned a lot about the arguments for workers' rights to organise and act together, in response to employer's organisation, free from restrictions made in political systems subservient to business people.

His political and trade union education began when growing up in a community of dockers and shipbuilders on Merseyside, where people were fiercely working class; union; Labour; and politically argumentative. There and at grammar school studying history, he saw how badly workers were treated, as a class, in the industrial revolution, in the 19th century, in the two World Wars, and

in the depression of the 1930's. That stimulated a lifelong determination to work out the rights and wrongs of the relationships and political attitudes that enabled such awful treatment, and how to change them.

At university in the 1960's he was radicalised by the student political activism of the time. Then he worked in a range of jobs. In the engineering industry in Manchester he became active as a union rep in one of the biggest and best-organised factories ever.

He tried to convince fellow-workers of the case for socialist revolution. But in 1979 he saw how a lot of workers allowed the Thatcher-led conservatives to win elections and get into government. He concluded that workers, as a class, far from being likely to organise a revolution and build a socialist society, lacked conviction in their right to organise and defend themselves even under the present system; didn't recognise the existence of the business class, their own existence as a class, and how their relationships with them and with each other are the main problem. He concluded that the practical need was to understand and become players in the system as it is.

Throughout his working life, he found that everyone, including fellow-workers, has views on how we relate in politics, business, production and work, and what's right and wrong with it and will talk vigorously about it. But a work making coherent sense of it has never been written and widely read. So conservative arguments that business people are entitled to power and that workers are not, and their organisation not legitimate, remain unchallenged. And whatever advances are made in making society more civilised are repeatedly repulsed by conservatives, representing the business class. This book aims to help you to change that.

Reviews

The late Tony Benn

"It is a great book to explain the essentials and I hope is widely read."

John the Milkman and daughter Sarah

"I agree with all that" and "I think it's great."

Eddie Little, North West Labour History

"Not so much a book as a toolbox for activists and thinking people, or all of us who should be thinking".

Mark Thompson, North West Labour History

"This pamphlet by retired union activist and trade union education lecturer Eddie McDonnell, extracted from his book *Us, Politics and The System* is as far from an academic handbook on your rights at work and how to win against the bosses as it's possible to imagine. *The Right To Unionise* has the feel of the shop floor, full of anecdotes about confrontations in the workplace... as well as discussions of class, democracy, nationalism, regionalism, religion, war and football. McDonnell looks at the basic relationship between bosses and workers and how it shapes class relations in wider society. His explanation of what happens when workers sell their labour power for wages is clear and unarguable.... he is also very clear about working class and middle class identities, cutting through the idea that your class is about where you live, how you talk, the car you drive or the school you went to rather than 'the most basic issue - how you make your money'. *The Right To Unionise* also includes a useful outline of how Britain developed from 'a dictatorship of a small class of brutal, undemocratic property-owners – the monarchy and the aristocracy ... who owned everything and had all the political power ... from 1640 this propertied class were forced to concede power to a semi-democratic Parliament of large farmers and merchants and manufacturers and not very long ago we workers forced these propertied business classes to concede us just one, occasional little vote".

What's In The Full Work 'Bolded' are 'The Right To Unionise' sections

Why This Book and The Big Picture Promoting Unionisation
Setting The Scene Where Is The National 'We'? It's A Class Society
Whoever You Vote For The Business Class Always Get In
How We Relate At Work - The Need To Be Organised, The
Entitlement To Be Can They Do That? Manager's Power, Contracts,
Tribunals The Case For Organising and Striking What Unions
Are How To Stand Up To Employers.
Real Identities – Class and Work The Business Class Made Visible
Free Markets, Your Work and Competition No National 'We'
With The Business Class Free Speech Is For Criticising **Them** No
White 'We' With Them Identity Politics – National and Other
The Real We – Organised Together As Our Unions How They Put
National Identity In Your Mind How Their Press Promotes False
Identities **'The Unions' Were Too Powerful? No. Business People
Are** National Identity - The Base For Racism and Fascism
Why People Over-do 'Where They Are From' Why People Over-do
Football Identities Other Identities – Family, Gender, Religion,
Humanism **Working Class Identity - The Real 'We'** **How We
Relate in Politics** **Their Power From Free Markets In People**
Our Union Democracy Exceeds Parliament's **Our Right to
Associate, The Case For Our Union Freedoms** The Parties Are All
The Same; and They're Not **Related Debates** - Expansions from the
main text World War 2 - Fighting Fascism? Or Rival Business Classes?
What Their Wars Are Really For Don't Blame 'the Germans' for the
War Many 'Whites' Are Brutal To Other Whites Business Class
Newspapers Provoke Racism The Business Class and a Planned
Coup 'The British' and the French and Russian Revolutions
Football Fans Hatred of Each Other **Related Debates** - The Wealthy -
Are They Worth the Expense? How To Save The Environment
Racism – Look At 'Your Own' Side Anti-Social Behaviour
Nationalism & Classism Labour Is Fit To Govern
Worker To Worker On Brexit, Trump and Populism **The Thirty
Minute Read** **Summary Charts** **The Right To
Unionise** **Basic Politics** **It's Your Money Not Theirs** **'How To Talk
To Each Other About Politics'** **Activity 'Talking With Voters'**
A List of the book's main points for discussion Why People Should
Read This Book **About The Author** **Reviews** **The Right To
Unionise Starter Material**

A rough record of the Blogs **(<https://www.uspoliticsandthesystem.org/blog>)** **Up to 23, June 2026**

These are the drafts, which are copied onto the website. Some tweaks are made once on the website/blog so these are not exactly as published. Very close though.

Standard Header - In these blogs, current political events are illuminated by reference to the basic relationships explained in 'Us, Politics and The System.' To give readers an idea when to look for a new post, the initial plan is to do a new one at least once a week, on Fridays.

Standard Footer - Comments are not being provided for in this blog right now. Reader's reflections are best spread outwards, to somebody else the reader knows, as written about in 'How To Talk Politics With Each Other' at https://www.uspoliticsandthesystem.org/files/uqd/e8d212_1f348918923e4f33bac1b09b314affbb.pdf

Oldest first.

From first round of Blogs May-August 2024

Current events illuminated by the insights of these works.

Examples - In the UK Election - Taxing The Rich -

***People abandoning the Labour Party for not being radical enough –
Manchester United telling staff they can no longer work from home –
the Postmasters scandal in the UK.***

The Blog

18 August 2024

Also in work is 'Parties Are Not Public Services', which shows how people are wrong to think political parties owe them a duty to please them, and to criticise them viciously when they don't, because the parties are just some of the same voters who organise together, bat the options around, and come up with the best policies and candidates they can manage to agree on, and those voters who don't simply have to choose the best on offer.

13 June 2024

Originally a Letter to The Guardian on 3rd August 2024

Taxing The Rich

While agreeing that the super-rich should be made to pay more tax to help fund public services, many voters will still be swayed by the conservatives framing of taxation as taking money off people that they have rightfully earned, and their opposition to taxes as 'allowing people to

keep more of their hard-earned money'. So we could do with legitimising the case for taxing the rich. Conservative opposition to taxation in general is just cover for allowing their class to keep more of the money they take from our hard work. There are few, if any, self-made billionaires. Able though they are, most of their wealth is made in businesses, which usually have many staff. They do most of the work. The owners sell it and pay the staff less than they take in for it. THEY tax us, at source. It's our money not theirs in the first place. Taking it back from them through government is just correcting that.

5 June 2024

Letter to The Guardian 03/06/2024

Alienated Lefties, Get Real

Nesrine Malik excuses the self-indulgence of those who are proposing to abandon Labour because, to get into government, they are accommodating to those of their fellow-voters who aren't as radical as them (or me). (Ignore the plight of the alienated voter at your peril, Guardian Journal, 3rd June). In quoting Ralph Nader, she illustrates the folly of such solipsism. By taking votes from Al Gore in the 2000 US Presidential election, he and those who voted for him gave us George Bush, the Iraq War, and prevented Gore from tackling climate change. Those who feel alienated do, indeed, have to vote for the least bad option, and avoid a peril of their own making; and then to consider what they can do - not just what the Labour leadership can do - to change the views of an electorate who, in the last election, voted in these Conservatives led by a clown, Boris Johnson.

31 May 2024

Manchester United have told staff they can't work from home anymore. There's a lot of discussion about it on forums like //reddit. Whether it's fair or not, whether it's best for United themselves. But the main point is missed - the staff should be organised, unionised, so they can respond to it with a collective, equitably negotiated position. But they aren't organised. They aren't united. That's not to criticise them too much, it's just pointing to the central issue.

And, since they aren't unionised, there is no Manchester United. It's a business run by an anti-union part-owner.

(This writer has supported United since 1957, supported the tradition of playing positive, dynamic football.)

The Postmasters scandal in the UK –

the entire coverage has been of the awful behaviour of Royal mail management. But managements can act brutally because they are organised, as businesses and public services, and the Staff are often not organised.

The postmasters were told for years, individually, that they were the only one having problems. Even at the level of information, proper organisation would have countered that. The Postmasters won their case in the end by organising. If they'd been properly organised from the off, it could all have been nipped in the bud.

(There was an organisation/union but it wasn't solid and active enough, not all postmasters were members, and it is said the officers were too close to management.)

Posted 17/07/25 -Regulate the ruling class...

The UK Chancellor, Rachel Reeves, is going to scale down regulation of the big financial operators that were brought in after they caused the crash of 2008. She's doing it to encourage them to stimulate growth. As a policy, it's obviously dodgy. But we need to observe, and talk to each other, about the bigger, more general point – how we rely on these people for directing much of the economy. To run the country, you could say. And we need to bring that into play when judging the state of things and what governments achieve or don't achieve. Labour let them do it because we don't give them firm enough instructions to regulate them and direct the economy with public spending rather than private. Conservatives - which includes Reform – let them do it because they represent them – the business class.

And beyond this big point is another – what do we do about it? A lot of people and commentators are saying that Reeves de-regulating the financial section of the business class is crazy. But we need to not just talk about that but about how to get a more democratic say in these policies and not just leave them to what amounts to an elected dictatorship, Prime Ministers and other Ministers. We'll come back to that often in future blogs because there is this a big discrepancy between all the opinions we have on politics, and our minimal powers to affect them.

Posted 25 July 2025 -We need more of a say (1)

Here in the UK, people are furious about Starmer's inaction on Israel's mass killings in Gaza. And about him failing to improve public services enough, and refusing to do the obvious thing of doing it by taxing the rich fairly. I'll say more about those actual issues in upcoming blogs but really, the big issue is that we don't get a say in any of this. We just get one vote for an MP every four or so years, choosing that person and their party's promises over a huge range of issues. Then their leader gets dictatorial powers and all the talk is of what they will or won't do. When the MP's we elected challenge the leader, that's seen as something radical when it should be the norm, we shouldn't leave it all to one person. We rail against it all on social media but we all feel, correctly, that we are powerless, except for being able to vote differently next time, probably let in a worse party, and have no power over them either.

We really need more of a say. Protesting on the streets is inadequate – you just fill the streets for a few hours, or maybe longer, but placards and chants leave the actual institutions and processes of power and action untouched. We need more. This blog

will continue this argument over the days ahead, with ideas for what we need to do to get more of a say in what's done and not done.

Posted 26 July 2025 We need more of a say (2) - Gaza

Protesting is not enough. Some big protests have made a difference, like the Civil Rights marches in the US in the 60's, and some of the big regime-change protests in Eastern Europe around 1990. But most are futile, like the massive protests against the UK invading Iraq. Protests are short-lived noise vaguely addressed to the leader or government that are easily ignored, involving no exercise of any real rights or process. We need proper access to power and decision-making.

In the UK, we can write to our MP's. It's not much of a right, as will be discussed in this 'We need more of a say' series of blogs. But, feeling angry and powerless like many people are over Gaza, I figured my MP is a person who does actually have the power, along with other MP's, to force Keir Starmer into action or replace him. So here is my recent letter to him. Not got a response yet but you might like to do something similar –

Dear J,

Could you please give us answers to the following questions -

1. What exactly is the extent of UK military support for Israel?
 - The often-discussed sale of Arms and military equipment?
 - Or also Direct involvement with Israeli military action?

(a Palestine support group were quoted in the Guardian recently saying the UK was re-fuelling Israeli military aircraft).

- Other support like intelligence?

2. Why does the UK support Israel? Is it acquiescence and support for long-standing US policy as summarised here -

Our understanding is that US support for Israel is in order to have a co-operative state in the region as a deterrent to the Arab oil states becoming too free to differ from Western business interests. That includes oil supplies but probably also western business investments in other resources and access for American business people to markets.

3. If so, is it not the case that the UK and we in the Labour party should not continue with this support since Israel is now engaged in mass slaughter of people in Gaza? Plus what they do in the West Bank.

4. Who decides Labour policy and actions on Israeli military action? Is it just Keir Starmer? The Cabinet? The Parliamentary party? The NEC?

- What rights to influence it do we ordinary members have?

The practical elements of his reply

The UK Government does not support Israel's campaign in Gaza, has regularly condemned the actions of the IDF, and since coming into office, has taken a number of significant steps to try to stop the suffering of the Palestinian people:

- Restarted UK funding to UNRWA, reversing the previous Conservative Government's decision to halt support, in recognition of its vital role in providing humanitarian assistance to Palestinians.
- Suspended the around 30 export licences for offensive arms following a legal and risk assessment, covering the items deemed at risk of being used in breach of international humanitarian law. To be clear – the UK does not licence any weapons exports for use in Gaza.
- Suspended negotiations on a UK-Israel Free Trade Agreement and paused wider cooperation under the UK-Israel 2030 Roadmap.
- Sanctioned two Israeli Ministers — Bezalel Smotrich and Itamar Ben-Gvir — alongside individuals and entities within the settler movement, in response to incitement and extremist rhetoric.
- Summoned the Israeli Ambassador to formally raise concerns over the civilian impact of the conflict and breaches of international humanitarian principles.
- Announced millions of pounds of funding in additional humanitarian aid to Palestinians.
- Reaffirmed that the UK is not exporting bombs or ammunition for use in Gaza.
- Coordinated UK-led diplomatic efforts, including visits by the Foreign and Defence Secretaries to key Gulf states to promote de-escalation and humanitarian access.
- Issued a joint international statement with Canada and France condemning Israeli military operations and displacement proposals.
- Withdrawn the previous Government's opposition to the ICC's warrant for Prime Minister Netanyahu and confirmed he would face arrest if he enters the UK.
- Confirmed the UK's position that Israel must change course, with continued calls for an immediate ceasefire and the unimpeded flow of humanitarian aid.
- Agreed to the evacuation of children in urgent need of medical treatment from Gaza, in partnership with international and regional partners.
- Confirmed the UK's intention to recognise the State of Palestine as a step towards a just and lasting peace at the United Nations General Assembly in September 2025.

The Government is keeping the situation under review and will take further actions which might make a positive difference to the situation on the ground. Ministers continue to work for an immediate ceasefire to stop the horror in Gaza. The UN must be allowed to send humanitarian assistance into Gaza on a continuing basis to prevent starvation. Hamas must release the hostages. We support the US, Qatari and Egyptian governments in their attempts to bring about a ceasefire.

I will continue to use my position within Government to push for action that prioritises peace, the provision of aid and the protection of civilians in Gaza.

‘We need more of say’ will be continued over the next week or so, linked to other current issues, taxing the rich to fund public services being the next.

For 1 August

Standard Header - In these blogs, a current political event is illuminated by reference to the basic relationships explained in ‘Us, Politics and The System.’ To give readers an idea when to look for a new post, the initial plan is to do a new one at least once a week, on Fridays.

Let’s have it out in the progressive movement, with the rich, and with voters – should we fix public services by taxing the wealthy more?

In the last blog, it was promised ‘We need more of say’ will be continued over the next week or so, linked to other current issues, taxing the rich to fund public services being the next.

And in today’s Guardian we have

Starmer and Reeves should consider wealth tax,

says former shadow chancellor

https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2025/jul/31/chancellor-should-consider-a-wealth-tax-says-former-minister-anneliese-dodds?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other

Labour in the UK have been relying on growth to provide greater tax income so they can improve services without raising taxes. But they don’t run the economy, the business class does, and that method is out of their control and not happening. So they are losing voter support and members because of not improving public services enough, and even cutting them.

But with the ridiculous amounts of money the super-rich and some of the rest of us have, the wealth is there already. We need to have it out in public debate, led by the Labour party, about raising the desperately-needed money by taxing them more fairly.

These are the likely reasons - we rely upon the wealthy, the business class, to invest in and run the economy. Would taxing them more make them not do that, so we’d better not? If it’s not true, do it. If it is true, let’s condemn them for not being the patriots they claim to be and not be vicious towards Labour for not improving public services enough. Let’s blame the real culprits.

The other main reason is that if we agree we could tax them more without damaging the economy, the Conservative media would still work, with some success, at convincing voters, particularly the better-off, otherwise, and Labour would lose enough voters to lose the next election. So the progressive movement, of which the Labour Party is the biggest element, need to have that debate with voters and become a lot more effective at getting across to voters than they are.

This should underpin this debate – most of what the wealthy have is not rightly theirs in the first place. This is spelled out in ‘Us, Politics and The System’ in two places in – ‘It’s your money not theirs’ in The Summary Charts, page 4, at https://www.uspoliticsandthesystem.org/files/ugd/e8d212_f8e8549319a54c32993ae1c3abe285a2.pdf and at page 279 of the main work at https://www.uspoliticsandthesystem.org/files/ugd/e8d212_b4c119a749af49a28286fcc7648f5cbb.pdf.

No room to discuss here the overall theme of ‘We need more of a say.’ Next blog, probably.

Standard Footer - Comments are not being offered in this blog right now. Reader’s reflections are best spread outwards, to somebody else the reader knows, as written about in ‘How To Talk Politics With Each Other’ at https://www.uspoliticsandthesystem.org/files/ugd/e8d212_1f348918923e4f33bac1b09b314affbb.pdf

Posted FRIDAY 8-8-25

Standard Header - In these blogs, current political events are illuminated by reference to the basic relationships explained in ‘Us, Politics and The System.’ To give readers an idea when to look for a new post, the initial plan is to do a new one at least once a week, on Fridays.

Blog 8 - We need more of a say (4).

I’ve spoken about what little say we have, even in countries said to be democracies, on the issues we vigorously go on about on social media. In the UK at present there’s Gaza, there’s raising the tax income that’s needed for the public spending needed to satisfy people’s expectations from government, and many more issues, where people feel utterly frustrated and alienated from politics by their lack of influence.

There’s a lot of ways we could get more of a say, from making MP’s more accountable, to Proportional Representation, citizen’s assemblies, things like ‘town halls’ in the US, referendums and more. But before all that, let’s confront why we get so little say. In the UK, there’s an often-stated argument that we can’t be trusted with any more democracy and we can only have representative democracy – where we just get to elect people who then make up their own mind on everything, on our behalf.

Some always quote bringing back hanging as something unwelcome that people would probably want doing if they had more of a say. Right now, there's people, not interested in tackling those who run the country, the business class, and the big issues that come from their dominance, who are very agitated about a relatively small issue, migration and asylum. Then there was Brexit.

The answer has to be, well we're not happy with what our representatives are doing and we do want more of a say. You can't be having referendums on every issue so what we need is ways of getting the representatives to actually represent us more faithfully. More on those methods in future 'We need more of a say' blogs.

But to deal with the overarching argument that people can't be trusted - along with more of a say, we need to develop better-directed, more civilised political views amongst ourselves. To do that, to address, vigorously, our whole understanding of the system and the basics. And to talk each other more on that basis. As argued in '*Us, Politics and The System*', to get a shared basis for our various views by recognising the existence and dominance of the business class as the main problem, as summarised in '*The Essential Us and The System*' at

https://www.uspoliticsandthesystem.org/files/ugd/e8d212_7a38c84e326f41508a42fc351d94c66f.pdf

Standard Footer - Comments are not being offered in this blog right now. Reader's reflections are best spread outwards, to somebody else the reader knows, as written about in 'How To Talk Politics With Each Other' at https://www.uspoliticsandthesystem.org/files/ugd/e8d212_1f348918923e4f33bac1b09b314affbb.pdf

For Friday 15 August 2025

Blog 9 – Sort Nationalism With Classism

Standard Header - In these blogs, current political events are illuminated by reference to the basic relationships explained in '*Us, Politics and The System*.' To give readers an idea when to look for a new post, the initial plan is to do a new one at least once a week, on Fridays.

I will continue the 'We need more of a say' blogs, probably starting with how to get our views from these screens into the actual decision-making process of politics through our elected representatives.

But, to keep topical, I'm picking up on what I said in Blog 7 'Right now, there's people, not interested in tackling those who run the country, the business class, and the big issues that come from their dominance, who are very agitated about a relatively small issue, migration and asylum.' And linking it to the central issue - how we talk to each other as voters and get people to base their views on the system and how to get our needs met in it.

So how do we respond, on social media and in person, to those who treat immigration and asylum seekers as the big issue, and, because of that, vote for conservative parties? (That includes Reform, in the UK.)

We should argue that there are 101 bigger issues affecting our well-being, mostly involving how 'we' and 'us', the 'host' population, behave towards each other, especially the wealthy and the business class. Even naming the business class is a hugely

important step. They are hidden from view by the apparently unassailable argument about the 'freedom' everybody has to start and run a business. That is thoroughly covered in 'The Essential Us, Politics and The System' at https://www.uspoliticsandthesystem.org/files/ugd/e8d212_7a38c84e326f41508a42fc351d94c66f.pdf

But, going back to the immigration issue, a useful insight is to see, and say, how immigrants create jobs. It's because they too have needs for all the usual things and create demand that provides work for everybody. It's like importing an overseas market, with no transport costs to price you out of the market. But instead of debating migrants too much, ask also 'what do the conservatives and people who go on about 'whites' being neglected have in mind for how they would relate to and treat each other if there weren't these minorities? What do the likes of Farage and Trump, and ordinary nationalist (not 'far right', that's not descriptive enough) activists, plan to do about those 101 issues? About health services, housing, and the rest?' And the business class's minority power over the rest?'

The whole issue is covered in 'Nationalism and Classism, a fifteen-minute read, at https://www.uspoliticsandthesystem.org/files/ugd/e8d212_5af29c0781464baca2f3440ed48aa47d.pdf

Standard Footer - Comments are not being offered in this blog right now. Reader's reflections are best spread outwards, to somebody else the reader knows, as written about in 'How To Talk Politics With Each Other' at https://www.uspoliticsandthesystem.org/files/ugd/e8d212_1f348918923e4f33bac1b09b314affbb.pdf

Blog 10 – We need more of a say.. (4)

Standard Header - In these blogs, current political events are illuminated by reference to the basic relationships explained in 'Us, Politics and The System.' To give readers an idea when to look for a new post, the initial plan is to do a new one at least once a week, on Fridays.

Check Blogs 5, 6 and 8 for earlier 'We need more of a say.'

Progressives love a good demo but walking the streets for a few hours as an amorphous crowd is nothing when there's all those many solidly established institutions exercising actual decision-making power – businesses, the law courts, parliaments, congresses, banks, councils, government departments, and so on - daily.

Future blogs will say more about how we can get access to such real power. But first, some general points. Though spitting feathers as an individual on social media can spread opinion, things really get done by people organised, in organisations. Conservatives boost the idea of the individual but it's a diversion, they themselves exercise power organised as businesses, conservative media and parties.

And organising requires more than just expressing your pet views. This writer has done a lot in unions and progressive parties and it's surprising sometimes how your stonking, undisputable opinion comes up against other people's differing views. In organising, you have to accommodate them and work with them. It's through structured, organised, respectful debate, so that's

alright. As when one of my shop steward students said to me ‘Eddie, with all due respect, you’re talking crap.’

You have to put in some time and effort. It all has to be resolved in meetings, debates and votes. In the UK Labour Party the NEC (National Executive Committee) is the most decisive body and I get a vote for who goes on it. I just took part in a policy consultation with them on major policy issues.

Many people won’t do all this because it’s not so much fun. But it means you are acting with full adulthood, trying to sort out society, in a proper way, with others.

The ruling class, the Business class, don’t mind all this. They organise first of all to run their businesses. And then they’ve got something to protect, which they usually do through their conservative parties. Because of them taking the trouble, there’s a sense in which they deserve their power – but not as much as they get and they should be more civilised about how they use it - and we deserve our lack of it. The hard fact of the matter is that, to make them do that, we need to match their organisation.

As ordinary citizens, there’s no everyday, accessible democratic processes in place. You can write to representatives like MP’s, but others might be writing differently. We need some decision-making processes to mandate them. We shouldn’t have votes without proper debate – we need to talk to each other about how our decisions affect each other. So maybe Citizens Assemblies followed by constituency votes (referenda).

There’s a thorough discussion of democracy, comparing parliamentary and union democracy, in the full ‘Us, Politics and the System’ at https://www.uspoliticsandthesystem.org/files/ugd/e8d212_b4c119a749af49a28286fcc7648f5cbb.pdf from page 230-275. And more about Citizen’s Assemblies at pages 296-297.

MP’s reply on Citizen’s Assemblies. I recognise the importance of maintaining effective dialogue that reflects the full range of views across civil society. Citizens’ assemblies and other participatory methods can be a valuable part of a wider toolkit for policy development and public engagement. However, while citizens’ assemblies might be a useful way to complement to our representative democracy, they are not intended to replace it, and the government do not plan to introduce them at this time.

Blog 11

29 August 2025

Chickenshit politics

Did you read the piece ‘Nationalism and Classism’, linked from Blog 9? And here again -

https://www.uspoliticsandthesystem.org/files/ugd/e8d212_5af29c0781464baca2f3440ed48aa47d.pdf

It argues to tackle nationalist politics, which relies upon an ‘insider’ identity, by urging people not to look at ‘outsiders’ but at the ‘insiders’ and how they behave towards each other. Particularly how the wealthy behave towards their fellow-country(w)men.

So, with the current wave of anti-outsider activity in the UK, isn't it time to use this view to show up how it's not only nasty but ridiculous? Time to say to people 'C'mon, this is chickenshit politics. Asylum seekers and migrants aren't the people who run the country and any problems they cause are trivial compared to what the insiders who do run it do. That's the business class and the main reason Labour can't do enough for you is their resistance'.

Ask people who mention the migrant/asylum issue 'What do you think of how the conservatives in the House of Lords are trying to wreck the much-needed and long-awaited Employment Rights Bill?'

The crucial thing is simply to *name* the business class. They get away with running the country invisibly because we don't do that. They are the ruling class.

They are organised, in businesses and conservative parties.

Asylum seekers and migrants are the weakest people in the country. Unlike the business class and their conservative parties, they aren't even an organised 'they'. They haven't even established the right to be here. It's chickenshit to target the weakest when you don't have a go at the strongest.

Identifying by nationality and colour – in most countries – is lining up with and backing those who care least about you, have most of the power, and cause most of your problems – conservatives like Farage. And against people like yourself who are different but in insignificant ways.

Blog 12

Unionise, Unionise, Unionise...

I'd continue on the anti-outsider nonsense but we shouldn't let conservative diversions like that make us totally neglect our own priorities. One is to boost the right to unionise. Most of what gets done in this world is by people who organise with others. By far the best at that are business people. Their organisation is *as* businesses - many of them vast organisations, with thousands, hundreds of thousands and millions of us working under their direction across the globe. Our biggest problem is that while they are organised, in the central process of producing wealth and wages, we are mostly not.

Partly that's because we allow unionisation to be unmentioned in daily life. A TV programme this week showed how some footballers lost their retirement money by letting dodgy financial operators handle it. And they have the tax people bankrupting them for unpaid tax on the dodgy schemes.

They were foolish and greedy of course. But they were rightly pleased to have come together at last to help each other fight the case. But why didn't they and the programme talk about them not having done this first, way back? Then, they were already organised, in the player's union, the Professional Footballer's Association. Couldn't they have asked the PFA for advice then? The PFA are a strong organisation and help their members in many ways. Though they might keep away from operating as financial advisers themselves, they might do what my union, Unite, did when I recently asked for, and got, a recommendation for a trusted financial adviser.

The need for organising, unionising, for mutual info and support, was neglected not only by the players but by the programme makers. You see it often in TV dramas where someone gets disciplined or sacked, in an industry where you know they'll be

unionised, and you don't see them being represented by a union rep, and managers just acting as if all-powerful.

It was the same with the postmasters. They were each told for years by the *organisation* they worked under, the Royal Mail, that they were the only one mis-handling cash. They resisted individually, in ignorance of their shared plight. Some got bankrupted and some killed themselves. They did at last come together and win. But nowhere in the coverage is this point – it wouldn't have happened if they had maintained strong union links.

Back to the issue of recent weeks in the UK – the collective meaning people attach to the 'us' of national identity. All the footballers were British, many of them white. The financial business people who mis-treated them were also British and white.

P.S. Angela Reyner supports the super-important Employment Rights Bill that conservatives are trying wreck, on behalf of their class, the business class. Let the MP's sort out any minor wrong-doing, we need people like her on the much bigger issues of our rights and public services.

Blog 13

The Business Class, the Business Class - exploding the insider promise.

Progressives in the UK are having to tackle the support the alternative conservative party, Reform, are getting from targetting asylum seekers and migrants - outsiders. Progressives have the same problem with conservatives doing that in other countries, like in the USA.

It's easy to tackle. Recognise that people flying the national flags and all that aren't getting what they need or feel entitled to. They are given a big promise from being 'British' or 'American' or whatever nativist identity, that as 'insiders', citizens, 'the country' will see them right. We need to ask them, to deal with that, to look away from the 'outsiders' – they are pretty weak, they don't run the country - and ask 'How does the *insider* promise stack up?' We just need to identify and name those who do run the country and betray the promise. Give people a clear direction to who they are. It's the business class. We need to get into the habit of recognising that, using the term, and referring to them in political debate.

To expand - we let people think political parties 'run the country' – they do claim to – and so people blame our progressive parties as well as outsiders. We need to point out how political parties and government don't really run the country. But when pointing out the others who do, we don't clearly identify and name them. We only talk,

vaguely, of 'the wealthy', 'the rich and powerful', 'capitalism' or 'the ruling class' (without actually naming that class.)

It's easy to name them properly and how they are clearly a class. Talk about not just their wealth how they *get* wealthy: How it's from them owning and organising and running most of the production of goods and services: How it's from business and work relationships with the rest of us in the everyday work process: and how that means they dominate everybody else, and get huge wealth, in that process, that they resist being taxed and used for their fellow-nationals. How they are clearly driven by self-interest - their conservative defenders declare that to be the basic human condition - not by fulfilling the promise to 'insider' fellow-nationals.

They are the Business class. That includes together the financiers, the venture capitalists, the private equity, 'the bond markets', the property developers, but also all productive businesses. They are, altogether, clearly a class, the dominant class and the base for conservative parties, including Reform. They mistreat fellow-national, often fellow-white 'insiders', at work, and resist progressive parties who try to use government to improve things for the rest.

Having identified and named them, we need to put relationships with them, and negotiations on tax, investment, regulation, employment rights and the rest, at the centre of political debate, not asylum seekers or migrant workers.

Identifying and naming them, and referencing them in all political debate, enables us to say to people turning to nationalism and Reform - don't think political parties are everything - see how they come from the system – and how in it you are neglected or done in the fellow-insider, fellow-national business class, not the powerless 'outsider' asylum seekers and migrants. Don't support their conservative parties (Reform is one). Support progressive parties. If they aren't good enough, let's deal with that, but not by turning to something worse.

Blog 14

Standard Header - In these blogs, current political events are illuminated by reference to the basic relationships explained in 'Us, Politics and The System.' To give readers an idea when to look for a new post, the initial plan is to do a new one at least once a week, on Fridays.

Still with the anti-outsider nastiness - we need to say – 'Yes, your expectation that 'being British' means 'the country' will see you right is correct. That's the promise of politics. But then say 'Surely that means tackling why it's not happening, independently of the immigration issue, and supporting centrist or even socialist politics?' And 'You need to make the expectation a practical thing, not just assume it. Because some fellow-nationals and fellow-whites oppose and obstruct it. Conservatives – which includes Reform – just don't believe in it. Their core belief and practice is that everyone's out for themselves, it's all about self-interest. And for them, it is. And they oppose public services because they do OK without them'.

And we need to say 'Look past the political parties and government and look at the system below that - at the people who run most of production, work, and the generation and distribution of wealth – the business class. They and their conservative parties oppose the nationalist expectation of government looking after the people, against public services and support.'

But the actual flag-flying isn't based on this practical view. It's based on a simple, unthought-out identity, of 'Britishness' or whiteness, that takes no account of the actual behaviour of fellow-nationals towards each other. We need to question and challenge this identity and argue the practical view.

The unthought-out identity has as a base a wider platform of less nasty national identification, where almost everybody identifies with people and things simply from them being fellow-citizens, ignoring their real actions and politics. In everyday life and debate, we need to challenge the validity of this platform. Start with the business class, but also ask people generally 'what sense is there in identifying automatically with anyone or anything 'British' or 'American' or wherever, in sport, products, and a whole range of things and people? We don't know them. They could be conservatives or otherwise nasty and opposed to your interests. If they are Ok people, fine. If not, don't support them'.

The absolute key thing is to name the business class. Try it, in your head, then in the next conversation where it fits. Get used to using it. Because it names the people really responsible for the flag-wavers, and the rest of us, not getting what we need. Rather than just labelling them 'the rich and powerful' or 'the billionaires', it opens up the observable production, work and wage relationships that make that true.

And let's take the flag-waving personally – it's not only the hitting on innocent people, let's start thinking of the people doing it as letting the rest of us down, and themselves, because we're trying to sort out their problems and ours properly, by tackling conservatives and the business class, and they are siding with them.

For more – Nationalism and Classism,

https://www.uspoliticsandthesystem.org/files/ugd/e8d212_5af29c0781464baca2f3440ed48aa47d.pdf

And 'The Essential Us, Politics and the System',

https://www.uspoliticsandthesystem.org/files/ugd/e8d212_e2ab52bdc6fd4e9fa8d383e9b20ec6c7.pdf

Blog 15 for Friday 26 September

The rich. The rich and powerful. The wealthy. The elites. The wealthy elites. Wealthy interests. The billionaires. The billionaire class. The 1%. These are all too vague, shapeless, don't identify any actual people well enough to hold them to account.

And just referring to their wealth keeps hidden and unexamined how they *get* rich and wealthy. And that lets them present their wealth as just being there, *theirs*, which it isn't, for most of them. It comes from what the rest of us do.

'Business', business interests, 'the business 'community'' still don't identify any actual people or group. 'Capitalism' just presents an image of a disembodied thing outside human agency. Capitalists or the capitalist class at least speaks of actual people. But nobody really has a vision of who *they* are.

These vague terms leave these people invisible in political thinking and debate. Instead, everybody blames 'politicians', including ours, who have to try to improve things for the majority while not having much power over these people. Naming them will help.

And we need to identify how they get wealthy. It's from the source of all wealth - the work process. It can be stored and transferred in money and property, but it all comes from work, production. We need to identify who has the central role in production, work, trade and wealth generation, the key activity in society.

Again, 'Capitalism' and 'capitalists' is the nearest people come to identifying them. But that only refers to a phase in business where surplus money is re-invested. More important by far is the everyday work, production and trading process, where income that covers costs, profits, wages and wealth, and generates capital, is generated.

The people who organise and manage all this mostly do it by running businesses. Included in that are the financial businesses and 'bond markets' and suchlike. Businesses are, together, pretty much 'the economy.' We need to name them and put their activity at the centre of political debate. They are clearly a class and the best name for them is the business class.

Try noticing them as a class. When you are out and about, look at all the lorries and factories and offices and construction companies and the rest and ask 'Who owns them?' Try noticing their role in everything. Try calling them the business class. Just to yourself. Then try saying it. It comes with practice. It works well when talking with people if you start by saying 'Production, trade and work are the most important processes in society and a small number of people organise them. They are the business class.'

They aren't all hateful but they are the political bloc that gets business people's rights widely accepted. They protect them with the image of all being plucky self-made small business people. That image gives important political cover to them all, excusing the power of the bigger, middle-sized businesses, all the way to the corporations.

It's ridiculous how we don't have a name for them. Identifying them and bringing their role into political debate enables sureness in understanding why the majority are badly-treated. And it explains who conservatives, the Republicans and Trump represent and are working for.

A thorough exposure of the business class is at pages 113-127 of the full *Us, Politics and the System* at https://www.uspoliticsandthesystem.org/files/ugd/e8d212_adf27dc02c7d4ef3a62e88b12c19ae27.pdf

Blog 16

Tax Them And Spend

The UK Chancellor is producing a budget soon. Key to it is how to raise the money to tackle people's discontent, some mis-directed into nasty, dangerous nationalism and even support for the conservative parties, and the business class they represent, who are responsible for them not getting what they are promised and expect.

There's enough wealth in the UK and many countries to provide what people are demanding, but there's monstrous inequality in who gets it. That's because of the unfairness of our trade deal with the business class, enabled by conservative parties. (There's a lot said about trade deals, but only those involving the business class. What about our trade deal with them?)

The business class claim they deserve the wealth they get for organising most of the production, work and wealth creation, and need it as an incentive to do that. Here is our base argument when looking at that - 'It's our money in the first place, not theirs'. See that argument in full in The Three Summary Charts, page 3, at the link below.

We can start to correct the inequality at source, in the work process, The Summary Chart page 3 explains how that is an unfair trade deal from which they get most of the wealth they claim is theirs. See the other link below for the full explanation in the full work 'Us, Politics and The System', pages 73-113. Following from that, we need widespread unionisation so we can bargain with the business class fairly.

When government taxes them in the work process, like the recent rise in National Insurance in the UK, they argue that hinders them in keeping the business running. OK, maybe - businesses can't always be sure of balancing the books or making a reasonable return on investment until the accounts are done. So maybe allow them a bit of leeway there.

But then the business class as a whole do end up cornering huge wealth from it all, and the rest of the population not getting what they are promised and expect. So get some of it back by taxing them fairly too.

Overall - we have a deal with them, at work and through taxes. Make the best deal we can, that they will wear and not refuse to invest. Then do our best with public money we can raise.

And if that's not enough, and they still take huge amounts – keep saying it's our money not theirs, and direct criticism away from our progressive governments to where it belongs, with the business class and conservatives. Blame them, publicly, continually. Ridicule their claim to patriotism. Shun them in public life.

Link to The Summary Charts, see page 3.

https://www.uspoliticsandthesystem.org/_files/ugd/e8d212_f8e8549319a54c32993ae1c3abe285a2.pdf

Link to the full 'Us, Politics and The System' see pages 73-113
https://www.uspoliticsandthesystem.org/_files/ugd/e8d212_adf27dc02c7d4ef3a62e88b12c19ae27.pdf

Blog17 – The Micro-Summary

The Micro-summary – Politics is all messed up and people in a state about it, even in the wealthy west where things could really be right for everyone.

The starting problem is that everyone thinks political parties and governments 'run the country'. But they don't. They don't run the economy, the relationships in business and work where we make our living. (And some get wealthy). They are left to run as free markets, mostly. And the whole point of free markets is that governments don't control them. The most important free-market relationship is in the work process.

What people say about politics is confused because it isn't based on these core workings of society – 'the system'. We need to make it so that it is.

In free-markets, in the business system, in making goods and providing services, mass production (industrialism) is more efficient. So it constantly drives out small-producers. So most production becomes done in a relatively few large operations. And this leads to a minority of people, business people, the business class, running most of the economy, not governments. Through organising as businesses, the business class get power over everyone else at work, and great wealth. In politics, they use that to promote politics that favours them, conservative politics.

Their conservative parties say them having this power is fair, because everybody is free to trade as individuals and start and run a business. But with mass production, even with smaller businesses, business people take wealth from the system not as individuals but, with those large operations, with many staff, as companies, collectively. They get wealthy

more from the work everyone else does for them than from what they themselves do.

The false view that this is all about individual rights gives political cover to business freedoms that conceals how they actually work collectively.

The key mechanism is that with large, industrialised operations they have large workforces. That means they can keep production going without any one particular worker. That means they can bargain harshly with workers one at a time and get wealthy from charging more for our work than they pay us.

Again - they are a class, the business class - the clearest example of a class. Because they run most production, they are the economy. That means they have inherent political power even outside party politics. And then, on top of that, they – business people of all sizes of business -organise conservative parties and media. Through that they protect their power over everybody else in the work process by making business freedom in free markets the dominant political view, one that severely constrains progressive parties.

So, contrary to how people talk, the political parties don't simply 'run the country.' the parties come from people in the system organising to protect their role and interests in it. And the majority don't get what they want from work or politics because the business class put more into that than most workers put into organising as workers at work, and into progressive politics.

For a foundation for people getting what they need, we need a clear view of these basic political and trading relationships – the system. The works that make up 'Us, Politics, The System And Class' provide it. Then we need to put our relationships with the business class – at work, and in taxation and provision of public services – at the centre of political debate. Only then discuss the political parties and politicians.

Make sure to at least read 'The Essential Us, Politics and The System', a short read in large text for smartphones.

https://www.uspoliticsandthesystem.org/files/ugd/e8d212_e2ab52bdc6fd4e9fa8d383e9b20ec6c7.pdf

Blog 18 - Class now in the title

No festive references spring to mind so straight to business - literally. This work is now titled 'Us, Politics, The System And **Class**' (was Us, Politics and The System). The work has had many titles but it's not been including the key conclusion of examining us, politics and the system – that class is central. Class defined, of course, by role in the production process, not simplistically by income or culture. Starting with recognising the existence and role of the business class, the most organised and powerful group in society, far better organised, conscious of their rights and interests and capable of promoting them than the rest – the working/worker/employed class.

So class needs to be in the title and now is, from v. 2025.20.

But you don't get that in most discussion. For example, in the huge number of social media posts people in America make about Trump, most of it is about him and his attack on democracy or his nuttiness. That, and him, is the immediate problem, but it's about much more than him. People make some mention of billionaires, the Heritage Foundation and the like, as well. Maybe of the Republicans, of conservative politicians. But never the base problem – the mass conservative movement including millions of ordinary business people and individualistic workers pushing business rights and wealth and how it co-opts many people into supporting the people who are the main cause of their problems. It's the same with Farage and Reform in the UK – deeper than their racism, they are a conservative party, a business class party, and that's what we need to be saying about them.

Instead, with all the hostility to outsiders like migrants and asylum seekers - and the encouraging defence of them – and with all the talk of the Budget and taxes, and public services - no mention of real class, starting with the business class. Instead, a lot of people disregarding that and just saying all politicians are the same, as if Starmer, even with his faults, can be just replaced by 'trying' Farage and Reform. A mistake many Americans made about replacing Biden with Trump.

The working class – again, properly defined by role in the production process - don't see the business class, and mostly don't know themselves either as the working class.

In a forthcoming blog I will explore conservative ideas about how society should work, and how conservatives get mass support for them, that explain how the business class induce many people – prominently Trump and Farage supporters - to support them and put their parties in government despite them being hostile to their interests. It will probably be called 'The American D...elusion'.

So - please note the title change to 'Us, Politics, The System And Class.'

And also note - the new web address www.uspol.org. It's easier to remember and pass on to other people and takes you to the existing website – still www.uspoliticsandthesystem.org.

Blog 19 -

***Its not about Trump –
Its about The American D...elusion
In this document at page 82.***

Blog 20

What Is There To Being White?

We are rightly worried about people who base their politics on being white, about the racism that comes from it, and about how it gives us Trump and the threat of such extreme conservatism all over.

Thankfully, many people confront the racism. But turn it round and weigh up the white identity it is based on. We give the idea too much respect. Everyone's experience of other people's everyday behaviour shows it doesn't stand up.

Like, white people who say racist things know what you mean when you ask if they get any problems with fellow-whites. Of course they do. Ask 'What comes from someone being white that makes them of any use to you?' So they can agree 'There's good and bad in all' and that you can't be positive about white people just from their being white.

And say that this goes for people of colour too. Nobody claims they are all great, just because of colour. Some can be conservatives, the worst of all people (taking account of numbers and power). In the UK recently, leading Conservative politicians have been almost majority of Asian origin or Black. Then there's Kanye West. And Judge Clarence Thomas on the US Supreme Court. And more. We just say 'Judge people of colour, and all people, by their actions, not their colour'.

And ask about politics based on white identity 'Apart from being hostile to people of colour, what policies have they got?' If they got an all-white society, how would they have it run? What would they do about people's problems and needs in getting good jobs, housing, health services, and the rest?'

And the key tool in tackling the idea of white identity, and everything else, is to raise the existence of the business class. First, identify their role – how, by owning and organising most production and services, they run the country. Then get used to naming them.

Then, when people talk of 'the white working class', ask 'What about the (mainly) white business class? Whose most basic belief is that their self-interest and wealth overwhelms the needs of fellow-whites? In the work relationship and in politics, where they resist paying taxes towards the public services their less well-off fellow-whites need? Who are represented by the conservative movement, including Trump, the Republicans, Farage and Reform?

Say to 'white workers' taken in by conservatives - 'The people who really defend you are other white workers, progressive people and parties, who organise together, and with workers of colour, against the business class and conservative parties. It's hard enough to do as it is. If some, instead, side with the people most responsible for their own and other workers' problems, they let themselves down, and undermine the whole working class's ability to stand up to them.

These arguments are developed more thoroughly in the small piece

'Nationalism and Classism' at

https://www.uspol.org/files/uqd/e8d212_d9f2783f7a464ba399be65ab94fb22c6.pdf

Follow-up to Blog 20

Conservative media and people on internet forums post stories about how some outsider (usually of colour) has done some wrong. We say 'Of course non-white people do wrong. People are neither bad nor good by colour.' Like some whites, some non-whites can be bad. in the UK recently, leading Conservative politicians have been almost majority of Asian origin or Black. The conservative movement, always provoking white workers to be hostile to non-whites, say nothing about this. That's OK, but shows how they really think people's actual actions and politics are more important than colour.

Blog 21

Most of you reading this will have a critical view of the economic system. You probably call it capitalism. It's super-important for us to have a clear and widespread view of the economic system and calling it capitalism obstructs that.

Arguing that in just words can be difficult. And saying 'The Business System' instead of 'Capitalism' doesn't come easy, somehow. But the more we do, the easier it will become.

Bar-chart type graphics help make the point.

Here is a link to a new file on the website 'The Business System Not Capitalism', that shows how it makes sense

https://9945a8ca-5ec8-4cc3-90a4-2e676d906269.filesusr.com/ugd/e8d212_91361b1a54e94f5e9b3d75b5ba64aec9.pdf

Blog 22

What To Say to Reform Voters

...and to all voters – our trading relationships and transactions in wealth and wages should be the biggest issue in politics. Yet in the UK, amongst all the opinionating about how people are treated, and the fear of a Reform government, they are never mentioned. Its all about the personal prospects of a few politicians and minor issues like 'small boats'.

If we are to get people to stop people supporting Reform because they blame innocent out-groups for their poor conditions, we need to be able to point them at those really responsible.

But we haven't even got a name to give them. To get a name, first we need a useable name for the system of trading relationships. So it is disappointing that there have been few views of the graphic of the Business System Not Capitalism in my last Blog, 21. Because its from using that clear term for *the system*, that makes it visible and communicable, that we get a name for *the people* to blame, to point people at - the Business Class. To be able to say to working class people who say 'Let's give Reform a chance' 'Why? They are a conservative business class party who believe in those who can get rich being allowed to do so and to have no care for those who can't. Why give

them a chance to do you in deliberately? You are on one side and them on the other. Don't vote against your own interests and the interests of the rest of the working class.'

Naming the business class also enables us to show people why Labour don't do enough - because there is this class and they own and organise most of the economic activity and have the power to award themselves the wealth that should be spent on better treatment of the working class. And, to go back to the top of this Blog, our trading relationships and transactions with them are the most important issue. And then our relationships with them in the political system. So we need to persuade and back Labour to be firmer with them. And if they won't, a party that will, like the Greens.

Naming and blaming the business class is not declaring class war. It's just getting clarity on the biggest issue and pointing at negotiation with the business class being the absolute priority for discussion and action, and not giving them a pass by turning on innocent out-groups.

So here is the link to The Business System Not Capitalism again -

[https://www.uspol.org/ files/ugd/e8d212_91361b1a54e94f5e9b3d75b5ba64aec9.pdf](https://www.uspol.org/files/ugd/e8d212_91361b1a54e94f5e9b3d75b5ba64aec9.pdf)

And a link to the full work Us, Politics, The System And Class, where the existence of the Business Class is explained between pages 117 and 131 -

[https://www.uspol.org/ files/ugd/e8d212_babc1ad79f964d6382b0a4ba10f51ea3.pdf](https://www.uspol.org/files/ugd/e8d212_babc1ad79f964d6382b0a4ba10f51ea3.pdf)

' Blog 23

There's lots of things I'd like to talk about but I feel I have to keep on about the business class. Because all I hear about in political debate is other people – mainly political leaders, and their personal characteristics, prospects and failings. Or whichever out-group is being blamed for people not getting what they feel they are entitled to. But never the business class.

Yet it's easy to show how business people are the most powerful people in society and that they are a class. Progressives will say 'it's capitalists' or 'the billionaires' or 'the multi-nationals' or 'the corporations' but those terms are about sub-divisions of the business class. They narrow it down to people who are difficult to pinpoint and leave us with nobody to really talk about and regulate.

We need to name and blame the business class as a whole. It's the running of businesses that is the basis of the economy and we need to recognise, name and talk about, as a class, all those who do it. We can talk about sub-divisions and variations - one being to say they aren't all bad people - but only after and while talking of them as a whole class. Because its them, as a class, including the smallest, who are the bedrock of the defence of business rights through conservative politics that stops us getting at the big operators and the many bad small operators. Once we kit ourselves up to talk about them often and normally as a whole class who run the economy, then we can also talk about sub-groups like the corporations. But first, identify and name them as a class.

Did you look at the chart 'The Business System Not Capitalism'

https://www.uspol.org/files/ugd/e8d212_91361b1a54e94f5e9b3d75b5ba64aec9.pdf

and pages 117 to 131 defining the business class in the full Us, Politics, The System

And

Class?

https://www.uspol.org/files/ugd/e8d212_babc1ad79f964d6382b0a4ba10f51ea3.pdf

But I've not found it easy myself to get the term 'business class' into my everyday speech. It helps to look round your house at products and services and say - the business class organise that. Look at the company names on goods lorries out on the road - aah, that's one of the business class. At construction sites. At factories, warehouses and offices. At the adverts on TV.

*Still not all that easy. So let's try simple repetition - the business class, the business class...
the business class, the business class... the business class, the business class... the business class,
the business class... the business class, the business class... the business class, the business
class... the business class, the business class... the business class, the business class... the
business class, the business class... the business class, the business class... the business class, the
business class... the business class, the business class... the business class, the business class...
the business class, the business class... the business class, the business class... the business class,
the business class...*

Then move onto us, the rest, workers – look at pages XXXXX of the full work.

Blog XXXX

Us.... Not Starmer etc business class – taking on is the big issue. Hardly mentioned.

Blog XXXXX

The Rights of The Collective

WE hear a lot from conservatives about the rights of the individual (in operating in the free market economy.- work, jobs, consuming stuff - not so much in personal liberty/rights).

It's a smokescreen. They operate collectively, as business people. AS COMPANIES and CORPORATIONS. They aren't individuals. In the economy – in trading relationships – it gives them strength against the rest of us, where they insist we sell ourselves to them as individuals, opposing us when we attempt to unionise. They have the right to operate collectively, even as far as having immunity from being responsible for their failures, by being limited companies and able to go bankrupt. So let's raise this as a political issue – The Rights of The Collective. www.theighttounionise.com

Cut from 16.

And don't blame innocent outsiders who come here not as an organised 'them' (as the business class are) but as just ordinary individuals. We need their labour, they produce as well as consume so are not a drain, and they don't leech off us.

(I'm Ok with migrants as long as they're not conservatives. We've got too many of them as it is.)

Future	Blog	It's	US.
People, commentators, Not	Starmer,	Labour,	dems,
corbyn campaign - change -	lp just follows		

Unfair Dismissal – Representation

Budget – 40% of economy – not.

Pensions, welfare, bond interest – transfer of wealth

Military or NHS drug companies or construction or highways – public planned spending but not part of GDSP – Optegra – whole point privatisation.

Employment - work done – prob gives closest measure. About 20/80%

Empl

Cut from 16.

And don't blame innocent outsiders who come here not as an organised 'them' (as the business class are) but as just ordinary individuals. We need their labour, they produce as well as consume so are not a drain, and they don't leech off us.

(I'm Ok with migrants as long as they're not conservatives. We've got too many of them as it is.)

Future Blog

It's .People, commentators, Not Starmer, Labour, dems, corbyn campaign - change - lp just follows

Unfair Dismissal – Right To be accompanied/Representation

Budget – 40-% of economy – not.

Pensions, welfare, bond interest – transfer of wealth

Military or NHS drug companies or construction or highways – public planned spending but not part of GDSP – Optegra – whole point privatisation.

Employment - work done – prob gives closest measure. About 20/80%

Employment Rights