

*‘The System’ Explained
And How We Should Organise Society*

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Introductory Text

If you've just read the Introductory Text on the website you can skip to 'More about The System Explained' at page 3 of this document.

‘It's the system’ - what shopfloor workers always said to this writer when he worked in industry and argued against the wealth and power of employers, business people and the rich.

*‘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)*

It's ridiculous, the state we are in. It's because people look too much to politics (or, vaguely, ‘metropolitan elites’ or ‘the swamp’) as the cause of our problems instead of the whole system, and only to politicians for the answers. But it's futile to discuss politics – from what politicians do to the views of the ordinary person you are talking to – without referring to the wider system, and their place in it. Because everything doesn't come from politics and politicians. They don't govern all society's relationships and practices, particularly those in our economic activity.

It's the other way round – politics emerges from overall society, from the many long-established relationships where we produce, buy and sell by making deals in business and work, and, maybe, crucially, organise, to make our living or make money – the system.

Political rights to influence this system are important. But with so many relationships in the whole system, and political rights being (at best) amorphous and insufficient, they also keep us at a distance from it.

What also does this is how the system is mystified as 'capitalism', 'economics', 'the economy' and 'free markets'.

Everyone thinks there are big things wrong with the system but with no clear view of it and its rights and wrongs, can't think and act clearly. (For instance – the huge disparity in wealth -people accept the rich's case that they earn their wealth from their own efforts because they don't understand the process that enables them to take it from workers.)

When you have the system clear in your head it's easier to cope with politics. And life too. It's because we don't have a clear view of the system as a common reference point that some, to find meaning in the world, resort to culture wars and crazy conspiracy theories.

These works explain all this, not with academic talk of various "-isms" but simply by showing how we interact ordinarily as fellow-citizens. They show how humanity can relate fairly and build a secure, sustainable global society.

More about 'The System' Explained

Most people take the system for granted. They take how we all interact in business, work, trade, and politics too, as just how things are. Few raise it in political debate, explain the basics, explore what's wrong with it or say what we can do about it.

This work does explain it, what's wrong with it and what we can do. It explores the wrongs and the rights (in two senses); the protections and obligations; the rewards; and sanctions in the key roles and relationships.

It shows how organisation and lack of organisation determines power. It shows how the majority of people organising in their role as workers would make the system more equitable and fair.

We call the system 'capitalism'. But that just evokes a remote process where some unidentifiable people somehow accumulate money and power. People say 'It's all beyond me'. But it doesn't need to be.

'Capitalism' doesn't identify or explain capitalism's key relationships and mechanisms. It doesn't admit that they are rooted in and observable in everyday life.

Crucially, it masks how capital is made by workers, in the work process.

And a key trade in capitalist free markets, essential to the work process, goes unexamined – the trade in people, where citizens buy other citizens and citizens sell themselves to other citizens.

It ignores just how employers buy labour and workers sell it, that determines the unequal bargain between business people and workers, that is the root cause of the huge imbalance of wealth and power, economic and political.

It is, in brief - in industrial economies, each employer has so many staff they can easily mistreat and do without any one. Each worker is of only marginal utility. Not so for a worker - they need a job far more than the employer needs them. It's employer and worker having a different 'ratio of need' - a calculation you have to make when considering the claimed fairness of free markets

Capitalism is a poor name for the system. The core activity is business. It is where capital is created. We see business, take part in it in everyday, and speak about it. So call it 'the business system'. That locates it in our normal experience and enables us to deal with it.

To solve humanity's problems we need to build the above observations into everyday political debate, to get it widely understood -

... that most things in the economy, work, income and jobs don't come from what politicians and governments do.

... that we work most of it out in the long-established relationships of the business system.

... that politics comes from this system, not the other way round.

... that, aside from direct government services, politics is a ride-on-top process through which you might get what you want changed in the everyday system where citizens interact outside of politics.

... that politicians can regulate the unfairness in it but won't or don't. Conservatives exist to leave it unregulated, because they represent business people, who benefit hugely over workers with the system as it is.

And ...

We need to spread awareness that business people run the world more than politicians do...

... because they organise most of the everyday essential activities: the buying and selling of goods, services and people - production – work, jobs and trade

... that this makes them 'the economy' (most of)

... that being the economy gives them political power, without acting directly in politics, under any government.

To act directly in politics some amongst them run the conservative media...

... and some organise the conservative parties.

We need to spread this understanding of the system and the rights and wrongs of it ...

... especially just exactly how business people, and public employers, get unfair power over workers in jobs ...

*... how to make it more balanced and fair.
... show this explanation is true because drawn
from everyone's directly observable, everyday
everyday life experiences (and not just a
matter of opinion)
... spread this view widely, globally.*

*The big issue in politics is the balance between
individual liberty and action, and collective action,
obligation and support.*

(With particular reference to the USA)

*Conservatives always speak of the individual,
of freedom, of 'liberty'. OK, in its place, like
human rights. But it's facile nonsense to apply
it as the core principle of the economic system
in this corporate, industrialised, marketized,
financialized, hyper-connected, globalized society.
It is intensely collective, whether you like it or not.*

*Whether we have individual liberty in the economic
system is to be tested against how free markets
operate. They tend to industrialism, so the many
must work for the few. They enable business people
to dominate the majority, who are mostly workers.*

*And business people don't operate as individuals.
Each and every day, they organise and act together,
collectively, as businesses, as companies, as
corporations.*

*In taking the trouble to do that they earn their power.
It's up to the rest of us, who mostly don't, to do
the same and take the trouble to organise and*

act collectively.

Business people are a class - the business class.

They are a small minority of citizens who manipulate and exploit the great majority.

Most of that great majority of citizens are workers.

They too are a class - the worker class.

But they represent their (our) interests weakly, compared to the business class.

We let business people dominate us at work; in political debate in the media; and in politics itself.

We are so weak we don't even see them as a class, or ourselves...and ...

we don't organise and act together like they do.

We need the majority of citizens to organise, like business people do in their companies and corporations, in unions in the meaningful roles they are active in every day, being workers.

... from being organised, represent themselves in public life as mature citizens speaking through credible institutions, joining business people as 'players' in the system.

... with collective strength, to stand up to the business class and public sector managers at work... and ...

... to match up to conservative media and parties in politics, do as they do and act politically organised in their economic roles...

... organise in mass political forces, and progressive

*parties, with other progressive groups ...
... and run progressive media to counter
the conservative media's business class bias.*

*Since the majority of citizens are workers, they
are, in their unions, central to these progressive
political forces and parties.*

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

*Dense, widespread organisation will enable the
transmission, top-down, bottom-up and laterally,
of progressive insights, attitudes and policies,
and counter conservative malevolence in the media.*

*Social media is not ideal for all this. It is influential
but it is not people acting together in substantive
social organisations. It is mostly people mouthing
off to each other as atomised individuals.*

*It is because we aren't clear about all these basics
that many:*

*... find politics confusing and, disastrously for
themselves and for all of us, allow the conservative
business class minority, who care only about
themselves, to be the government ...*

*... instead, group themselves and others
by mostly shallow 'identities' based on
low-relevance, passive attributes.*

*We need to persuade fellow-citizens not to identify
themselves and others by appearance, locality or*

personal preferences but by class role; to base their political stance on that and on how people actually behave, on how they act and interact, in the practical reality of business, jobs, the economy and politics.

To persuade the worker majority, in particular, to find their main identity in being, with most other citizens, a worker, a member of the working or worker class. Blue-collar, white-collar and whatever colour or gender.

When we share a clear understanding of the system such as put here and in the full book 'The System' Explained, it'll be easier to make sense of political issues, discuss them widely, and organise to get society working fairly for all.

The System Explained -

- explains the system clearly,*
- relates it to daily experience*
- uses everyday language.*