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"We hope to provide the labour movement with the information and history needed to develop an alternative and more equitable framework of labour law. British working people have suffered for too long from some of the worst terms and conditions, and fewer rights and freedoms at work, in the world. By providing comparative information and details of internationally accepted standards we hope to help improve this situation."

JOHN HENDY QC

"As an academic and a legal practitioner I find the work of IER authoritative, informative, accessible and, most of all, timely. The Institute's publications and seminars never fail to offer a refreshingly alternative analysis to the main employment law issues of the day."

PROFESSOR AILEEN MCCOLGAN

"The Institute of Employment Rights has become established as the most influential and authoritative think tank on labour law. This is due in no small part to the unique blend of trade union, legal and academic contributions to its work. The dynamic and innovative approach of the Institute serves to ensure that the trade union perspective on legal questions will always be at the forefront of the debates in this area."

PROFESSOR KEITH EWING

"The T&G has placed trade union rights at the top of its agenda. We are recruiting and organising new members and fighting back against exploitation at work. But as Gate Gourmet has shown, the law is stacked up against us. That is why we appreciate and applaud the dedicated work of the Institute in arguing for a new framework of trade union freedoms and workers' rights. Together we can win."

TONY WOODLEY  
UNITE - TGWU

## The Institute of Employment Rights

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## What is the Institute?

The Institute of Employment Rights was established in 1989. It is an independent organisation acting as a focal point for the spread of new ideas in the field of labour law. In 1994 the Institute became a registered charity.

Members of the Institute include the general secretaries of most British trade unions, many of the leading labour law academics and legal practitioners and a number of highly distinguished experts from other fields. Members meet once a year to give direction to the work of the Institute. The day to day affairs are managed by an Executive Committee which is elected by the members.

The Institute is funded by trade unions, by individual donations and by subscription fees.

The Institute itself is a small organisation. The work is commissioned on a voluntary basis and publications reflect the views of the authors. The Institute organises conferences and seminars, undertakes commissioned research, provides short articles, free from legal jargon for trade union journals and other popular publications, provides speakers for member organisations and publishes a minimum of eight books a year. Our aim is to provide high quality publications which will stimulate debate and analysis about

employment law policies and legal developments in industrial relations.

## The need for an Institute

In Britain, individual employment rights were weakened during years of Conservative rule. Conditions workers considered to be a right were classified as a 'burden on business' and removed. Collective rights were severely undermined by a series of Acts of Parliament and judicial decisions.

Much of the thinking behind the Conservative onslaught originated from bodies like the Centre for Policy Studies, the Institute of Economic Affairs, and the Adam Smith Institute. Think-tanks like these have been waging ideological war against unions for many years.

Progress has been made by the Labour government, but workers' rights still remain weak and trade union rights fall far short of international obligations.

## A labour law think-tank

The Institute of Employment Rights seeks to develop an alternative approach to labour law and industrial relations. We aim to make a constructive contribution to the debate on the future of trade union freedom in the UK.

We can provide the research, ideas and detailed legal arguments necessary to support working

people and their unions. To this end we can call upon the wealth of experience and knowledge available through our unique network of experts in an effort to provide the information needed to develop an alternative agenda which is supportive of employee rights and trade unionism.

This information includes historical analysis, international comparisons and consideration of the economic and social implications of present and future policies. These ideas are made available to as wide an audience as possible through our publications, seminars and conferences.

The Institute of Employment Rights is not a campaigning organisation. Nor do we simply respond to the policies of the government. Our aim is to provide and promote ideas. Some of the ideas contained in our publications may not be acceptable to everyone. We seek not to produce a 'consensus' view but to develop new thoughts, new ideas and a new approach to meet the demands of our times.

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