The Centre for Work, Organisation and Wellbeing invites you to a seminar

When partnerships don’t match up: A reconsideration of management-labour ‘parity agreements’

Where: N54_2.06 (Nathan Campus)
When: Tuesday 24th June 2008 – 10.30am

Under the Labour Governments of Tony Blair, management-labour partnership became the “new orthodoxy” of British industrial relations. Many trade unions put their faith in partnerships with employers, hoping that this would lead to a revitalisation of the labour movement. But union membership has continued to decline and workers rarely share in any “mutual gains” that might arise from partnership. As most partnership agreements are what John Kelly describes as “employer dominated” agreements, this is hardly surprising. But evidence from “labour parity” agreements suggest that even under more favourable circumstances employees are unlikely to benefit from a partnership approach with their employer. Two very prominent (parity) partnership agreements are reviewed in this paper to demonstrate why partnerships are unlikely to deliver in a liberal market economy such as the UK. Unions need to consider whether a strategy based on militancy, rather than moderation, will deliver more members and greater benefits for their existing membership.

Professor Peter Turnbull

Peter Turnbull is Professor of Human Resource Management & Labour Relations at Cardiff Business School, Cardiff University (1997-to date) and a Distinguished Fellow at the Institute Advanced Studies, La Trobe University, Australia (January-June 2008). He previously held posts the London School of Economics (1984-85), University of Warwick (1985-88), University of Wa College of Cardiff (1988-93) and University of Leeds (1993-97). He was Visiting Professor, Queen University (Belfast) (2000-04), an Australian Bicentennial Fellow at the University of Melbourne (1994), and an ESRC Senior Management Research Fellow (1996-99). Professor Turnbull currently a member of the ACAS Arbitration Panel and is working on a range of projects for International Labour Organisation (Geneva), International Transport Workers’ Federation (London), European Transport Workers’ Federation (Brussels) and European Cockpit Association (Brussels).

He has published more than 50 refereed journal articles and edited several books including Dock Strike: Conflict and Restructuring in Britain’s Ports (with Charles Woolfson and John Kelly) Reassessing Human Resource Management (with Paul Blyton) and The Dynamics of Employee Relations (also with Paul Blyton).

RSVP

RSVP to Toni Walkinshaw (wow@griffith.edu.au) by Monday June 30th to assist with catering arrangements.