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Budd, John. *Labor Relations: Striking a Balance*. New York: McGraw-Hill/Irwin, 2004. 568 pp. \$113.78 (hardcover).

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John Budd's recently published textbook, *Labor Relations: Striking a Balance*, takes a refreshing, original and analytical approach to the study of union-management relations in the United States. Organized around the concepts of achieving *efficiency* (raising the purchasing power of workers and reducing troublesome strikes), *equity* (attaining fair standards and protections against exploitation), and *voice* (providing democracy in the workplace) in the employment relationship, the text analyzes how unionization and the presence of unions affects the attainment of these three objectives. The monograph, written in a clear, lively, and interesting style, presents and integrates an impressive range of scholarly literature, related and applicable to labor relations while analyzing various union and management strategies for achieving the above-stated goals.

Part one contains three chapters and provides an intellectual foundation for the presentation of *material found in the remaining three sections of the text*. After providing definitions and brief discussions of the concepts of efficiency, equity, and voice in the workplace, the first chapter provides a background concerning the current state of U.S. labor relations while concluding with a concise discussion on why labor relations is still an important and relevant area of study, for both unionized and nonunion workplaces, in the first decade of the twenty-first century.

In the second chapter, entitled “Labor Unions: Good or Bad?” Budd points out that labor union representation is one way of structuring the employment relationship in order to attain a balance of efficiency, equity, and voice. However, he points out that there are alternative ways to configure the employment relationship without the presence of a union. Thus, how one ultimately interprets whether unions are primarily positive or negative within the context of the employment relationship ultimately depends on how one believes that labor markets and the employment relationship work. In order to understand the intellectual underpinnings of these concepts, Budd discusses four schools of thought—the Neoclassical Economics School, the Human Resource Management School, the Industrial Relations School, and the Critical Industrial Relations School—for dealing with what has historically been referred to as “the labor problem” when considering the alternatives for workplace governance.

While Budd correctly points out that the core principle of the Industrial Relations School (that unions are necessary in order to oppose corporate bargaining power, as well as to provide employees with industrial democracy) reflects the ideology of U.S. labor legislation, he does present the other schools of thought in an objective manner, including the Critical Industrial Relations School, which is also referred to as “Marxist industrial relations.” This refreshing perspective acknowledges that a radical approach exists for structuring the labor-relations process. Even though any discussion of this school of thought is missing from the vast majority of U.S. labor-relations textbooks and is supported by, at best, a small minority of U.S. industrial relations scholars, such a perspective does have a generally higher level of acceptance among European scholars of employment issues.

In the third chapter, Budd does a highly competent job of outlining the major factors that impact the labor-relations environment, as well as the key elements that affect how choices are made among the relevant individual actors—employees, managers, shareholders, and union officials—in the labor-relations process. However, the most interesting and unique part of the chapter is the author’s discussion of business ethics within the context of individual decision making within the labor-relations process. Budd does not just provide a general and cursory discussion of ethics but presents six ethical frameworks while discussing in some detail the ideas of major philosophers including Aristotle, Kant, and Rawls.

The second part of the book covers the U.S. New Deal industrial relations system in detail with individual chapters dealing with labor history, labor law, the structure, goals, strategies, and rights of labor and management, union organizing, collective bargaining, impasse resolution procedures (involving the use of third-party neutrals, as well as strike and lockout), and contract administration. These chapters are clearly and crisply written, integrating much useful information in a highly understandable manner.

There are several highlights in this portion of the book. The last section of Chapter 6 (“Labor and Management: Goals, Structure and Rights”) entitled “Are Labor Rights Human Rights?” provides an excellent discussion and back-

ground of the historical development of the three generations of human rights, including a wonderful presentation of a "Human Rights Timeline," spanning from 1500 B.C. to 1999 (Box 6.11). After establishing that "labor rights can be considered human rights," (p. 210), Budd concludes that labor rights

... should not be accorded secondary status relative to efficiency-enhancing property rights. Rather, labor relations must balance the competing claims of labor rights and property rights. In other words, both property rights and labor rights are accepted human rights. As such, they should not be ranked or ordered; they should be balanced. (p. 210)

Another highlight occurs in Chapter 7's ("Union Organizing") final section. In "The Certification Election Process: Help or Hindrance?" Budd acknowledges that unions and union activists may be correct in their criticisms of the union-certification election process being inherently advantageous to management as currently constituted under the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA). Within this context, he discusses various successful attempts by unions to organize workers, mentioning the Justice for Janitors campaigns as well as tactics used by the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees union and Cesar Chavez's United Farm Workers, outside of the established NLRA certification procedure.

Part three provides a comprehensive treatment of three crucial issues confronting unions in the twenty-first century, namely U.S. employers' drive to increase workplace flexibility and employee involvement (Chapter 11) and globalization (Chapter 12). Budd begins the eleventh chapter by discussing scientific management (or Taylorism), the dominant ideology guiding the organization of work in the twentieth century, in some detail before outlining four types of flexibility (employment, wage, functional, and procedural) that employers are seeking to implement in order to develop the nimble and boundaryless organizations of the twenty-first century. He then points out how the Taylorist practices of employers in the twentieth century led to the development of job control unionism with the negotiation of detailed work rules in the post-World War II period. With employers seeking flexibility, Budd argues that such unionism has come increasingly under attack in the first decade of the twenty-first century.

The second part of the chapter deals with the historical development of employee participation in the United States, as well as the implementation of high-performance work systems, lean production, and self-directed work teams. Budd then analyzes employee participation in unionized and nonunion workplaces and provides a fairly extensive treatment of the effect of the National Labor Relations Board's 1992 landmark *Electromation* decision for employee participation.

The first half of the chapter on globalization, which is a unique addition among labor relations textbooks, provides a thorough background on the four dimensions of globalization—international trade, foreign direct investment,

international investment portfolios, and immigration—which have put increasing pressure on the New Deal industrial relations system in the twenty-first century. The second half of the chapter begins with discussions of the role of the International Labor Organization in promoting minimum labor standards in countries throughout the world, the North American Free Trade Agreement, and the treaty's side agreement dealing with labor issues (the North American Agreement on Labor Cooperation) and the European Union. Because of globalization and increased corporate activity across national borders, Budd devotes a segment of this chapter to the growing importance of transnational collective bargaining, covering the role of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) in promoting transnational union solidarity while also briefly mentioning the existence of the ICFTU's rival, the World Federation of Trade Unions.

Part four, the last part of the book contains two chapters—one on comparative labor relations (Chapter 13) and a concluding chapter entitled “What Should Labor Relations Do?” (Chapter 14). The comparative chapter provides detailed coverage of labor relations in North American countries (Canada and Mexico), the western and northern European industrial democracies (Great Britain, Ireland, France, Germany, and Sweden), Eastern Europe, Japan, the Asian developing countries, and Australia and New Zealand. In the concluding chapter, Budd outlines six alternative strategies that unions may pursue in their drive to attain efficiency, equity, and voice for their members while also considering options that corporations and U.S. labor policy might adopt in balancing efficiency, equity, and voice in the twenty-first century workplace.

The comprehensive and well-written nature, combined with the lucid prose, of each chapter is not the only reason for recommending this text. The book's supplementary material, including numerous boxes, case studies, and at the end of each chapter, reflection questions and Internet explorations, provides much pedagogical food for thought for labor relations students. Many of the boxes, which help to illustrate the major ideas of each chapter, are highly original and are small jewels. I learned new things from a number of these boxes and a few of my favorites include “Who Was the Most-Favored Strikebreaker?” (Box 4.15), “Intraorganizational Bargaining at Hormel” (Box 8.8), “Public Sector Labor Relations: The Bargaining Environment” (Box 8.13), and “The Battle in Seattle” (Box 12.6).

In summary, *Labor Relations: Striking a Balance* is a top-notch labor-relations textbook for the twenty-first century that is highly recommended for use in both introductory undergraduate and graduate labor-relations courses. The book does an excellent job of integrating a wide range of scholarly literature in the field (and related fields) and distills the important industrial relations concepts in a clear, understandable, and analytical manner. While presenting the multiple sides of each labor-relations topic in an objective manner, Budd acknowledges that each perspective is wedded to a specific school of thought. However, regardless of the particular theoretical and/or ideological orientation of the instructor and the students, the book presents each topic in a stimulating

manner that is sure to lead to vibrant class discussions. Because of the many positive qualities of this textbook, it is sure to make a critical and significant contribution to the study of U.S. labor relations.

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