

Jessica Gomes

October 14th/2010

History makes Unions Important today

Throughout history unions allowed for change and power, they still do in today's society and that is why they are important. When there weren't unions, life was hard for the average worker; it went a little something like this. The time 1920-1930, the problem. Well, a man walks into work one day low class, lucky enough to have a job. He works for little to nothing, in horrible conditions and has 12 hour days. He looks into the window at the meat, cheese and other food shops and sees all the food he can't afford to buy. Continues to walk, sees a garbage bin and digs in he's lucky enough to find a stale piece of bread which he devours. Then he goes home to bed and wakes up to do the same thing again the next day. *Now, yes this was the early 20th century, which was a long time ago. Nevertheless, if we don't look at our past and history and see the mistakes we have made doesn't that mean we possess the possibility of repeating those mistakes? The answer is YES.* Unions are important and relevant so that workers have the power to make a difference and protect themselves from harm, a solution for those mistakes we have seen throughout history.

Change and history, this is why Unions are significant in today's society. They still play the same roles that they did when they came in the early 20th century, **to protect the workers and their rights**. It's allows workers to feel secure in their work environment. That they will be put out of harms ways. It's similar to the trust parents put into schools and the protection of their children. Unions also allow people to say when they are upset about a problem in the work place and let **change to occur**. The biggest thing about unions is that they allow for the fight for **change without fear**. Fear of being fired, demoted, or even docked pay. They let there be a peaceful and reasonable relationship between employee and employer. Unions take care of the employees looking after their pensions, health insurance, severance pay and everyday work environment

Over the years, unions have also helped fight discrimination, oppression, and have had the legal means to bring employers before the law. Our family is a very good example about how strong unions are at benefitting their workers. My father back in 2000/2001 spent ten and a half months on the a picket line strike/lockout against Buhler (Versatile). Were it not for the power of the union able to take action against Buhler at the labour board, my father and 240 other workers would have got nothing from this employer. With 27 years on the payroll my father would have never received his severance, back pay awarded from the labour board and pension with interest.

My family's story is just one of the many stories of people that unions have helped. They protect the worker and their families and allow them to fight for what's right. Allowing workers to protect themselves, their rights, and allow them to make **change**. Unions are important because they still represent the **power of the worker**, taking a look at our history proves it.