

## More Worker Bashing From Diane Francis at the National Post

by Stephen Elliott-Buckley - Saturday, October 30, 2010

<http://politicsrespun.org/2010/10/more-worker-bashing-from-diane-francis-at-the-national-post/>

In her tired piece on Thursday, Diane Francis employed a sad collection of worker bashing, loose rhetoric and diction to undermine one of the core elements of authentic worker rights in the world: a closed shop.

She is spinning worker rights by simply redefining it as workers having a right to not belong to a union, a classic union busting tactic. This stands in opposition to hard-fought worker rights to legally be able to build solidarity to negotiate benefits and rights for all through the power of solidarity and the threat of a strike, without which, the workers have no real rights.

Really, what rights can workers hope to gain if they need to confront employers on their own.

In her piece, she profiles Jocelyn Dumais:

Jocelyn Dumais is a Gatineau contractor and for years he has championed **workers' rights** against the powerful labour union, the Commission de la construction du Quebec, and Quebec's closed-shop laws. ...Dumais took the **abuse of workers** to the Supreme Court.

via [Tilting at unions in Quebec](#). [all emphasis is mine.]

Championing workers' rights against unions is solidly surreal. Positing it as an abuse of workers to have generations-long legally, politically and socially sanctioned closed shop laws is simple class warfare.

Ironically as well, since Francis is being creative with diction to respin reality, the print edition of the piece had the apostrophe after "rights" instead of "workers" in the online version. It's quite symbolic of the fragile syntax in the piece. A non-unionized copy editor might be summarily fired for this kind of error.

Later, in quoting Dumais, she allows a sloppy characterization that unions go around arresting people--the union thug stereotype:

"Here's a **union that has arrested so many people** for not joining it and yet when you do and need their pension they will ignore you."

And while the article includes several valid questions about whether pension funds are ensuring former workers entitled to pensions receive them, she continues to allow Dumais' grossly inaccurate expressions of unions' ability to incarcerate people:

"For years, the union, and labour officials, have been chasing people for working and **putting them in jail** for not belonging to the union."

Rhetorical flourish? Yes. But it is also part of a pattern among neoliberals to posit organized labour as the enemy to rights: another tool in the worker bashing toolkit.