

A Note from the Incoming Division Chair

First, I would like to thank those of you who participated in the election and am appreciative of your support. I hope that my efforts can match what Kendra has done during her tenure. At last year's meeting we were informed that membership in the Labor Studies Division substantially declined. Indeed, the division is in danger of dissolution. I suspect that recent events will reverse this trend more so than my charismatic leadership.

The anti-worker bills in Wisconsin, Ohio, Indiana, Idaho, Iowa, Michigan and pending bills in other states such as Florida have captured the headlines making this an interesting time to be a student of labor. As researchers it is important that we use these events as an opportunity to get involved rather than simply a topic for the next journal submission. But sitting at my computer in southeast Georgia I feel like I am a million miles away from the action. What can those of us not on the front lines

do to help? What can we do to help maintain this momentum over the long haul? I do not have the answer but welcome any ideas from members that we can compile and share.

In addition to being involved in the various state legislative struggles we cannot ignore additional actions that threaten to limit workers' rights. For example: "House Transportation Chairman John Mica (R-Fla.) has introduced a provision in to the Federal Aviation Administration reauthorization bill that states if an eligible voter fails to vote for union representation, he or she will be tallied as an active vote against representation"

(See http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/03/03/congress-unionization-faa-reauthorization_n_830862.html for the full article).

What seemed to be a slow death for organized labor in the US may

be accelerated thanks to the efforts of Governors Walker, Daniels, and Kasich. Of course, my wish is that the workers in the trenches are able to persevere. I want to remain a sociologist studying labor not a labor historian. This chapter of labor history remains to be written and the large crowds standing up for their rights give me hope.

~Ted M. Brimeyer,
Georgia Southern University

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Buried Provision In House GOP Bill Would Cut Off Food Stamps To Entire Families If One Member Strikes

by Zaid Jilani

All around the country, right-wing legislators are asking middle class Americans to pay for budget deficits caused mainly by a recession caused by Wall Street; they are attacking workers' collective bargaining rights, which has provoked a huge Main Street Movement to fight back.

Now, a group of House Republicans is launching a new stealth attack against union workers. GOP Reps. Jim Jordan (OH), Tim Scott (SC), Scott Garrett (NJ), Dan Burton (IN), and Louie Gohmert (TX) have introduced H.R. 1135, which states that it is designed to “provide information on total spending on means-tested welfare programs, to provide additional work requirements, and to provide an overall spending limit on means-tested welfare programs.”

Much of the bill is based upon verifying that those who receive food stamps benefits are meeting the federal requirements for doing so. However, one section buried deep within the bill adds a startling new requirement. The bill, if passed, would actually cut off all food stamp benefits to any family where one adult member is engaging in a strike against an employer:

“(3) STRIKING WORKERS INELIGIBLE.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no member of a family unit shall participate in the food stamp program at any time that any able-bodied work eligible adult member of such household is on strike as defined in the Labor Management Relations Act, 1947 (29 U.S.C. 142(2)), because of a labor dispute (other than a lockout) as defined in section 2(9) of the National Labor Relations Act (29 U.S.C.

The bill also includes a provision that would exempt households from losing eligibility, “if the household was eligible immediately prior to such strike, however, such family unit shall not receive an increased allotment as the result of a decrease in the income of the striking member or members of the household.”

Yet removing entire families from eligibility while a single adult family member is striking would have a chilling effect on workers who are considering going on strike for better wages, benefits, or working conditions — something that is especially alarming in light of the fact that unions are one of the fundamental building blocks of the middle class that allow people to earn wages that keep them off food stamps.

With a record 42 million Americans on food stamps during these poor economic times, it appears that the right is simply looking for more ways to hurt working class Americans.

WISCONSIN PETITION

Dear colleagues,

We hope that you will consider signing onto this letter. To add your name, go to: <http://www.PetitionOnline.com/taa2010/petition.html>. Please also consider forwarding this message to other colleagues who might be interested in signing as well.

Open Letter in Support of University of Wisconsin Students, Faculty and StaffAs scholars, teachers and citizens, we recognize that the right to form unions and bargain collectively has been essential to the establishment and enrichment of democracy in Wisconsin, in the United States and around the world. The International Labor Organization, which the United States joined in 1934, states that “the right of workers and employers to form and join organizations of their own choosing is an integral part of a free and open society” and includes collective bargaining rights among the “fundamental principles and rights at work.” The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which the United States endorsed in 1948, states that all workers have the “right to form and to join trade unions for the protection” of their interests. Since 1935, it has been federal policy in the United States to “encourage collective bargaining” as a tool for avoiding labor conflict and improving wages and working conditions in private industry. The state of Wisconsin led the way in extending those principles to the public sector, adopting a 1959 law stating that public employees, elected officials and the public itself all have an interest in “industrial peace, regular and adequate income for the employee, and uninterrupted production of goods and services.” Toward that end, the law affirmed that “an employee has the right, if the employee desires, to associate with others in organizing and bargaining collectively through representatives of the employee’s own choosing, without intimidation or coercion from any source.” In 1968, African American sanitation workers in Memphis, Tennessee went on strike for the right to join a union and engage in collective bargaining as city employees. Dr. Martin Luther King Junior was in Memphis to support this effort when he was assassinated on April 4. The demands of the Memphis workers pointed out that basic labor rights are a fundamental civil and human right for all workers whether they be employed by the government or the private sector. Those workers ended up joining the union AFSCME - a union that was founded in Wisconsin in 1932. We are opposed to the recent legislation passed in Wisconsin that will severely restrict the right to bargain collectively in Wisconsin. Some unions will only be allowed to bargain over wages. The legislation goes even further, completely banning the right to collective bargaining for certain public workers. Under the new law the University of Wisconsin-Madison Teaching Assistants’ Association, home health care and child care workers, and workers at the UW Hospitals will not be able to collectively bargain. As faculty members at universities and colleges across the U.S., we oppose this legislation. We believe the restriction of the right to collective bargaining and freedom of association is a serious attack on the rights not only of public sector workers and university workers, but all workers. Furthermore, we see this legislation as part of a Governor Walker’s larger agenda to cut social programs that are also vital for a healthy society. These policies attempt to balance the budget on the backs of workers, seniors, children and the poor instead of making corporations pay their fair share. We stand in support of the graduate student, faculty and staff unions who are working to overturn this legislation. We believe that freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining are fundamental principles for any democracy, and, as such, necessary for the effective functioning of educational institutions. We support students, faculty and staff in whatever efforts they choose to employ in order to overturn this unjust legislation and stop drastic program cuts throughout the state. This includes all means sanctioned by the widely adopted principles established by the International Labor Organization, such as the right to public protest and the right to strike.

ON THE NEED FOR AN EXPLICIT SOCIAL SCIENTIFIC FOUNDATION IN PUBLIC STATEMENTS & RESOLUTIONS

A statement of the social science basis of our position is absolutely necessary for our public statements or resolutions on public policy. On the issue of public employee unionism we should point out the following:

1. Opponents of public employee unions argue that public employees should have no more influence on their wages and working conditions than "ANY OTHER INTEREST GROUP." But anyone who studies the place of work in people's lives knows that employers control employees lives eight hours a day, as well as setting the wages which support them and their families. That gives public employees have a "special interest" in their conditions of work more significant than that of "interest groups" in general.
2. Every employee is subject to managerial decisions. Where the managers are public bureaucrats, employees need collective representation as much as where the managers are representatives of owners or shareholders, for protection against unilateral decisions imposing heavy costs or unjust discipline on employees.
3. Ultimately the public through its elected representatives has to balance employee rights and interests against the interests of the society as a whole, but to do this they need to hear the voices of their employees. Unions and a collective bargaining process are indispensable to express these voices.

Any resolution made by professional social scientists through a professional society should base its arguments on our expertise, not just on our opinions as citizens. We have a body of research based evidence to back up our opinions, and should be prepared to present it loud and clear to the public and its elected officials. We have a responsibility to speak out on this basis in every public forum, critically enlightening rather than simply loudening public debate.

Allen Barton, Visiting Scholar, University of North Carolina,
former Director of the Bureau of Applied Research, Columbia University

Any resolution made by professional social scientists through a professional society should base its arguments on expertise

IDEAS TO SHARE

I have some thoughts to share with those in the Division who may be in touch with the movements in these and other states.

I would welcome your ideas about this brief analysis:

"The problem in Madison, as I see it, is that the movement is trying to wait out the bosses, but has little ability to do so. It needs to hit them where it hurts. The most straightforward way to do

this--but very difficult in practice--is to extend the strike to other sectors. The Labor Council in Madison has made noises about a general strike, but nothing has come from that yet.

Another possibility would be to use some of the methods movements have applied in South America like road blockages. In the US context, this might be difficult. But it can be done. The trick is to do it in a way that hurts em-

ployers but not the working class (called the middle class by some). Getting support from the unemployed can be of considerable use in this."

Sam Friedman
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A Note on Resolutions

Dear Friends ...

The deadline for resolutions are July 1 and they go to our VP, Carolynn Perrucci - perrucci@purdue.edu <<mailto:perrucci@purdue.edu>>.

Also, if you go to our website (sssp1.org <<http://sssp1.org>>), you'll find a picture of me at the rally for Wisconsin workers. If you click on the photo you can read the signs better in the background. What we're thinking of doing is creating a page on this issue that folks can click on. I'm willing to write something up, but I think it would be ideal if the division took the lead on this (and I'd work with you, in part because I'm a member of the division too). The page

could include a statement by the division, photos, links to articles, etc. ... Whatever ideas you have.

For the resolution, make sure you go to our website and click on annual meeting and then on 2011 meeting and then on Call for resolutions. The instructions are there, and also some suggestions. You can look at resolutions from prior years to help you draft one. Whatever action the resolution proposes, the division must be prepared to do or help to do.

~Hector Delgado

**SSSP is
accepting officer
nominations. The
Deadline for SSSP
Nominations is
June 15, 2011**

SSSP NOMINATIONS

Please note that SSSP is now accepting nominations for President Elect, Vice - President Elect, Board of Directors (including graduate student nominees), Committee on Committees, Budget, Finance and Audit Committee, Editorial and Publications, Membership (we need both regular and graduate student members). Self-nominations or nominations of others are welcome. Interested parties should complete the online nomination form by June 15, 2011 at <http://www.sssp1.org/index.cfm/pageid/1082/>



Wisconsin Protests

Call for papers

Labor in the Global South: A Search for Solutions

A global, interdisciplinary graduate student research conference

May 27-28, 2011

University of California Los Angeles

It is critical to reexamine the position of labor in the global South, in the context of momentous changes underway in the global economic and political order. Our goal in this conference is to take stock of the state of work and workers in the global South, and to share best practices and critiques of strategies to upgrade jobs and empower workers. *This conference will bring together graduate students from the United States and around the world to bring their own research to bear on these issues.* The goal is not just to exchange information, but to advance discussions about strategies and solutions. To this end, graduate student presentations, which will make up the bulk of conference content, will be supplemented by innovative labor-related practitioners from the South, in addition to senior academics from the United States. Also, to this end, we ask that paper submissions look toward solutions as well as analyzing current and historical conditions. We welcome submissions that look at a full range of issues involving labor, work, and employment, including formal employment, informal employment, and household and other uncompensated work. Submissions are welcome from graduate students in a variety of disciplines, including but not limited to: sociology, political science, history, geography, anthropology, economics, area studies, ethnic and gender studies, public policy, social welfare, and urban planning.

A limited number of travel scholarships (airplane fare only) are available to graduate students outside the United States. Participants from outside Los Angeles will be housed with UCLA graduate students and faculty at no cost.

Proposals (1 page) are due April 8, 2011. Include your name, institutional affiliation (including graduate program name), and country. Please indicate whether you wish to be considered for a travel scholarship. Send to laborintheglobalsouth@gmail.com

Post-Doctoral Fellowship, Labor Rights in a Global Economy Project

Penn State, Department of Labor Studies & Employment Relations, University Park, PA

The Department of Labor Studies and Employment Relations at Penn State University invites applications for the position of **Post-Doctoral Fellow**, Labor Rights in a Global Economy Project. This is a one year position which would begin August 15, 2011.

The Labor Rights in a Global Economy Project is a new initiative that will promote scholarly research on labor rights around the world. It will have a broad focus that will include, but not be limited to, sweatshops, child labor, forced labor, labor standards, international labor and employment law, and the role of governmental and non-governmental organizations in addressing these problems. The Post-Doctoral Fellowship Program is designed to provide opportunities for a new generation of scholars engaged in research related to labor rights in a global economy to establish a program of research upon completion of a doctoral program.

Candidates should possess a Ph.D. in a relevant discipline, or a J.D., earned in the last three years, as well as evidence of an emerging research program relevant to the Project's interests. Fellows will receive a salary, benefits, and a research/travel fund to support their work. They will be expected to teach in the Department's residential and/or online program and to actively participate in all Department activities.

The Department of Labor Studies and Employment Relations is a multidisciplinary department with a large undergraduate program, a strong residential Masters of Science in HRER program, and a fully-online Masters of Professional Studies in HRER. The Department has existing strengths in employment relations, human resources, and international human resources and employment relations.

Electronic submission of applications is strongly preferred. Send applications consisting of a letter of application, curriculum vitae, and three reference letters to pfc2@psu.edu. If unable to send electronically, applications can be mailed to Paul Clark, Professor and Head, Department of Labor Studies and Employment Relations, The Pennsylvania State University, 133 Willard Bldg, Box POST, University Park, PA 16802. Applications received by May 1, 2011, will be assured of consideration; however, all applications will be considered until the position is filled.

Penn State is committed to affirmative action, equal opportunity and the diversity of its workforce.

Message from the Outgoing Chair

I would like to welcome Ted Brimeyer as the Chair of the Labor Studies Division. Ted and I will be working closely this summer to make this transition smooth while ensuring the voices of labor are heard at the special division's and executive board meetings in Las Vegas. We welcome any feedback you have about the direction our division should go and what issues we need to address. Thank you.

~Kendra Jason

Labor Studies Division Statement

The Labor Studies Division is comprised of members who are advocates, scholars, activists and laborers interested workplace and workforce issues that shape, and are shaped by, economic and political forces. We see all workers - standard to contingent, paid to unpaid, and core to marginal- as equal contributors of a global network connected by labor. We believe that no person should be subject to discrimination, ill-treatment, or unwarranted subordination based on any social status or ideological hierarchy. We promote a society that recognizes all members of a diverse workforce with equality and democracy through fairness in wages, opportunities and respect. We aim to expose and oppose the malfeasance of any corporate and government sanctions that deny workers' rights as basic human rights. With great urgency, we work to elevate workers, empower unions, build labor movement inertia, reveal exploitation by corporations and big business, and understand what's new in the New Economy to prepare this and the next generation of labor activists.

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