

Why does the Wisconsin “anti-union” bill matter to middle class working families here in Canada & to AUPE?

The anti-union bill proposed by Governor Scott Walker of Wisconsin caused much alarm in May of this year. However this alarm was not enough to stop the bill from being passed and put into effect June 29 as reported by The Wall Street Journal on June 15, 2011. Some may think that this bill has nothing to do with Alberta or AUPE but in reality these ideas could in fact ripple into Alberta’s legislative assembly. There is a common trend for American bills and ideals to be used as examples for many Canadian bills partly because Canadian officials and citizens are so closely tied to our American neighbours. This anti-union bill idea is a huge concern because it is not just isolated to the state of Wisconsin. The same Wall Street Journal Article mentioned above titled *Wisconsin Supreme Court Upholds Antiunion Law* informs the public that this kind of thinking has appeared and succeeded in Tennessee, Idaho and Ohio with much revelation. It seems as though this is not an isolated thought making it more than likely to cross more minds as a possible deficit relief mechanism. But is it really a beneficial relief mechanism or just poor reverse of history?

One perspective of this bill is that it is truly reversing time. Unions were created around the time of the Industrial Revolution for a defined purpose: to protect the employee from the employer. It seems as though Governor Scott Walker and his colleagues have not learned from history. Without unions employees can be easily forced into difficult situations and have little to no defense against their employers. It is hard to believe that these bureaucrats think it would be a good idea to take away a right like collective bargaining which allows employees and employers to negotiate to an appropriate and fair half way point between conflicting demands. To deny workers bargaining rights takes away their voice in the workplace. For the middle class citizen this is equivalent to losing the right for freedom of speech. How can workers be heard and protected from big corporations without unions like AUPE? It does not seem fair to take deficit problems out on the middle class citizen whom already funds a large percentage of government programs. The rich and profitable companies throughout the country who can afford a slight increase in tax should be targeted. The government or large corporations should not continue to weight down the backs of working Canadians and Americans. If the government desires to decrease their deficit capital should be more equally pulled from a percentage of income or profit from everyone not just a large group of individuals like middle class civilians.

Governor Scott Walker’s bill would obviously not have a positive impact on already existing and functioning unions. It looks as if he did not fully think through the effects this bill would have on many union employee jobs. To enforce an anti-union bill would lead to job losses throughout all unions and their represented areas of work. There would have to be a plan for what happens to all these workers that are now not needed. To fire and lay-off these employees is in no way helping decline government deficit or improve the already weak economy. If these individuals cannot find work the government will end up spending more on mis-placed persons because they will have to rely on unemployment pay outs. The situation may not become as drastic as described above however the overall point is that more people not working will lead to a weaker economy and less tax inflow; the complete reverse of what was intended.

Hopefully middle class citizens in Canada will see what is happening in several of the states in the U.S. and become more aware and prepare towards an anti-union bill which could appear here in our country. An event such as the passing of an anti-union bill like this optimistically will create more action, knowledge and upheaval within Canadian citizens so that it will not even be considered here on our home soil. With any luck the events relating to these anti-union bills will be used as an example to illustrate what we should not be doing to our own hard working middle classed citizens.