

Section One: Introduction to USAS



SO, WHAT IS

UNITED STUDENTS AGAINST SWEATSHOPS

ANYWAY???

Information and frequently asked questions about USAS Summer 2005 Edition!

What is USAS?

United Students Against Sweatshops (USAS) is part of a national movement of student groups and individual students fighting in solidarity with workers for sweatshop-free labor conditions and workers' rights. We define "sweatshop" broadly and recognize that it is not limited to the apparel industry. Members of USAS use their power as students to help organize international solidarity campaigns and support U.S. workers in living wage fights, farm labor organizing, immigrant rights campaigns, and other struggles for justice. While USAS literally made its name fighting sweatshops in the apparel industry, we are unambiguously committed to fighting labor exploitation of all kinds.

USAS' three cornerstone campaigns are the **Sweat-Free Campus Campaign**, the **Ethical Contracting Campaign**, and the **Campus Living Wage Campaign**. In addition to these campaigns, USAS was also heavily involved in the Immigrant Worker Freedom Ride of the fall of 2003, and in the implementation of the New American Freedom Summer in 2004, registering immigrant voters throughout Arizona and Florida. USAS also launched a civic participation program in the spring, summer, and fall, of 2004, focusing on non-partisan get out the vote work on college campuses. USAS coordinates an international summer internship program, sending students to intern with worker support organizations around the world, and holds a number of international delegations each year. In the summer of 2004, USAS send 12 interns to 9 countries to conduct research on wages and working conditions in the collegiate apparel industry, and to support ongoing organizing campaigns. USAS affiliates maintain local autonomy, and are able to strategize nationally and internationally in order to bring about concrete change on many levels.

What is the Sweat-Free Campus Campaign?

USAS began building student power in solidarity with workers worldwide by focusing on collegiate apparel -- the \$4 billion market of clothes made with our schools' logos. Our school administrations give companies like Nike and Jansport permission to produce apparel with the school name emblazoned on it. Students and workers together are demanding that our schools use their leverage to ensure living wages, decent working conditions, and the right to organize. USAS fights to ensure that our universities adopt ethically and legally strong codes of conduct, full public disclosure of company information, and support independent monitoring by the Worker Rights Consortium (WRC), to ensure that workers can have a voice at work. We use our power as students to affect the larger industry that thrives in secrecy, exploitation, and the power relations of a flawed system.

What is the National Campus Living Wage Campaign?

Many USAS affiliates have long worked to support workers on campus and in the surrounding community. As a result of this work, USAS initiated an exciting effort to bring together campus living wage and campus worker solidarity campaigns across the country in a coordinated effort to force our schools to ensure living wages, decent working conditions, and the right to organize on our campuses. For USAS, a campus "living wage" campaign is defined as any struggle to ensure that workers on campus do not receive poverty wages, whatever the mechanism to remedy the exploitation — be it an organizing drive, a contract campaign, an effort to kick an egregious subcontractor off campus, or a campaign to win a wage floor that adjusts to the cost of living.

Dozens of schools have been forced to adopt living wage policies after successful student and worker organizing; and dozens of other campaigns are currently underway.

What is the Ethical Contracting Campaign?

Because of USAS' success with the Sweat-Free Campus campaign, students' decided that it wasn't enough to only hold their schools accountable for their licensing contracts, but that other purchasing and contractual relationship also bring with them a responsibility towards the people making these products and performing these services. Ethical contracting campaigns work to ensure that all products purchased by our educational institutions are manufactured under conditions that respect the basic rights of workers. This includes everything from computers and vending machines to food products and furniture and has used many tactics; some USAS affiliates have pressured their administrations to adopt ethical contracting guidelines (similar to the codes of conduct originally adopted under the Sweat-Free Campus Campaign), while other schools have chosen to target specific companies (such as Coca-Cola in response to violent union busting in Colombia, and Taco Bell due to the egregious violation of the rights of its agricultural workers in Immokalee, Florida). The latter campaigns most often include demanding that schools stop doing business with these abusive employers. USAS students across the country are currently working hard to flesh out national and local strategies in order to make this campaign more successful.

How do I (or we) become a member of USAS?

Students and young people can hook into the national network of student-labor activists that is USAS, and join in the local, national, or international work they are doing whether or not they are affiliated with USAS. However, USAS encourages student-labor solidarity groups to "affiliate" to USAS because as we build our network, we build our power...and thus our ability to do good work. Affiliates may vote and run in elections, and their campus contacts will receive resources from the national office. In order to affiliate, groups simply discuss the Principles of Unity (see page 13) and agree as a group to work to uphold them. A group then emails or calls the national office with the group's contact information (202 NO SWEAT or organize@usasnet.org), or registers on our website (www.studentsagainstsweatshops.org). It's that simple!

Gee, all this sounds great. How do I take action now?

As with just about everything else these days, the world of student labor solidarity is increasingly fast-paced. USAS often hears about worker rights abuses occurring in factories, in fields, in our communities, or in our educational institutions that require immediate responses. The best way to find out about these situations quickly and respond rapidly is by being part of our e-mail action alert system. By signing up, you will receive e-mails whenever an urgent situation arises, and will be able to send e-mails and faxes to the egregious employer immediately. To sign up, visit our website at <http://www.studentsagainstsweatshops.org>, and enter your e-mail address under the "Join the USAS Network" section.

While E-Activism is great, and is becoming increasingly common, it is on-the-ground worker organizing that results in victories for justice, and it is students' job to educate, agitate, and organize around these issues. Joining your local USAS chapter, or forming a new one, is the best way to begin your involvement with these issues. Donating to USAS (which can also be done through our website) also furthers the struggle for worker justice, as every penny raised helps USAS continue its work.

How is USAS structured and what are all those acronyms?

Regions and Regional Organizers (RO):

USAS is divided into eight regions: Southeast, Southwest, Rockies, Northwest, California, Midwest, Northeast, and Mid-Atlantic. There are 1-2 regional organizers for each of the regions, chosen through an application process by their peers and paid a stipend. Regional organizers facilitate connections between students regionally to coordinate and support campaigns. They also act as a resource for new campus activists, and as a quick connection to the national office.

The Coordinating Committee (CC):

The Coordinating Committee is a 13-member elected decision-making body of USAS. The CC acts as a governing board, and is responsible for both staff oversight and the day-to-day decision making of the organization. Four of the members are representatives of USAS' identity caucuses (see below), four are committee representatives (International Solidarity Committee, Farmworker Solidarity/Ethical Contracting Committee, Campus Community Solidarity Committee, and the WRC Affiliation Committee), two are regional organizers, one is a WRC governing board representative, and two of the seats are at-large positions.

Caucuses:

Four identity caucuses exist within USAS structure: a womyn/genderqueer caucus, a people of color caucus, a queer caucus, and a working class caucus. These caucuses attempt to offer a safe institutional space and structure for traditionally underrepresented groups to meet and discuss issues regarding the inclusiveness and direction of USAS, and work to further USAS' commitment to anti-oppression and identity work. Each caucus has an email list-serv, and some have standing conference calls.

As of February 2005, caucus reps are:

- ★ Brandon King, Hampton University, People of Color caucus: redking360@yahoo.com
- ★ Mia Stephenson, Santa Clara University, Womyn/Genderqueer caucus: mjstephenson@scu.edu
- ★ Bridget Newman, Duke University, Working Class caucus: bhn@duke.edu
- ★ Nick Williams, Lake Forest College, Queer caucus: willind@lfc.edu

Standing Committees:

There are five standing committees open to all members of USAS with a commitment to building our movement. They are:

Alliance-Building Committee (ABC): The ABC strives to help USAS avoid falling into the patterns of privilege; to ensure representation of all students in USAS in the leadership; to educate; to facilitate effective caucuses; and to collect/distribute literature on racism, sexism, homophobia, heterosexism, classism, and being an ally. Email organize@usasnet.org for more information.

International Solidarity Committee (ISC): The ISC is dedicated to communicating and acting in solidarity with workers around the world. It acts as a vehicle for student-worker communication, and directs major USAS solidarity campaigns with our international allies. The current rep for ISC is Melanie Stratton: melanie@usasnet.org

Campus/Community Solidarity Committee (CCSC): The CCSC is a network for students and workers campaigning in their campuses and communities. It assists in the coordination and planning of student/worker solidarity campaigns. The current rep for ISC is Emma Blöse: eblose@oberlin.edu

Farmworker Solidarity/Ethical Contracting Committee (FSC/ESC): The FSC helps build strong relationships between students and farmworkers. It seeks to assist in coordination and planning of farmworker solidarity campaigns. Email organize@usasnet.org for more information.

WRC Affiliation Committee: The WRC affiliation committee helps USAS chapters affiliate with the Worker Rights Consortium, and seeks to foster both local and national strategy. The current rep for the WRC affiliation committee is Miranda Nelson, mbn@uchicago.edu

Besides these standing committees, ad-hoc working groups often organize around particular campaigns. For example, a New Era working group formed when USAS students supported striking workers at the New Era Cap Company during the 2001-2002 school year.

Worker Rights Consortium (WRC) Board Representatives:

Five representatives elected by our membership represent USAS on the WRC Governing Board. They also help coordinate students across the country who are running WRC affiliation campaigns. For more information about the WRC, check out www.workersrights.org.

Staff:

USAS has national offices in Washington DC and New York City, and currently has four full-time staff members. Allie Robbins serves as the National Organizer for Development, Camilo Romero serves as the National Organizer for Outreach, Jessica Rutter serves as the National Organizer for Program, and Max Toth serves as the National Organizer for Campus and Community Solidarity. All of the staff are available to answer student questions and provide campaign support. You may contact any of the national staff via email at organize@usasnet.org or call them at 202/NO-SWEAT. The staff is accountable to the Coordinating Committee, and has the principal role of working with students to carry out USAS' core campaigns and other student initiatives.

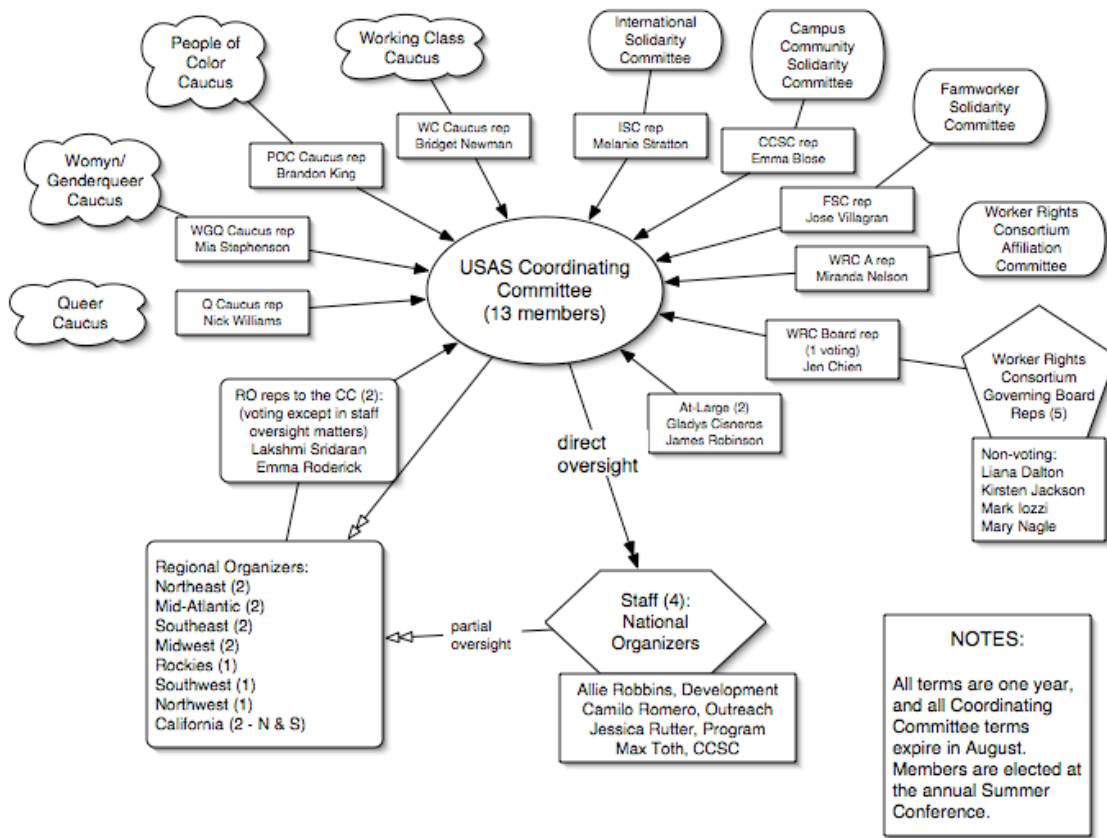
How can we (or I) get more involved in USAS, locally and/or nationally?

There are lots of ways to get involved with USAS work. One important first step is to simply join the national email list-serve, where you'll hear about upcoming actions, campaigns, and other events. To subscribe, simply send a blank email message to usas-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Other ways to begin your involvement include talking to current coordinating committee members, regional organizers, and staff. They can hook you up with students in your area and the work they are doing, help you get on regional list-serves, and tell you when group events or conference calls are scheduled. You can also just call the national office (202 NO SWEAT) and ask them to direct you to students who are doing USAS work in your part of the country, or ask them to discuss starting a group, running a campaign, or resolving difficult issues that might arise in your organizing work. Our network exists so that students can support each other and build the power of all involved.

How to Contact United Students Against Sweatshops:

United Students Against Sweatshops
 1150 17th St NW Suite 300
 Washington, DC 20036
 202 NO SWEAT // fax: 202.293.5308
www.studentsagainstsweatshops.org // organize@usasnet.org



United Students Against Sweatshops Principles of Unity

The principles of unity below have been drafted as an assessment of the spirit and of the issues that bring students on campuses across North America together to create a united youth front against sweatshops.

Hopefully, these principles touch on the underlying consciousness we are all developing, within ourselves as individuals and within our collectives, whether they be local, regional, national, or international.

The abuse of sweatshop labor is among the most blatant examples of the excesses and exploitation of the global economy. We recognize, however, that the term “sweatshop” is not limited to the apparel industry as traditionally conceived; sweatshop conditions exist in the fields, in the prisons, on our campuses, in the power relations of a flawed system.

Thus, we consider all struggles against the systemic problems of the global economy to be directly or by analogy a struggle against sweatshops. Whether a campus group focuses its energies on the apparel industry or on another form of sweatshop, agreement with the principles below will be used as the sole requisite for working under the name of United Students Against Sweatshops.

The Principles:

1. We work in solidarity with working people’s struggles. In order to best accomplish this and in recognition of the interconnections between local and global struggles, we strive to build relationships with other progressive movements and cooperate in coalition with other groups struggling for justice within all communities: campus, local, regional, and international.
2. We struggle against racism, sexism, homophobia, heterosexism, classism, and other forms of oppression within our society, within our organizations, and within ourselves. Not only are we collectively confronting these prejudices as inherent defects of the global economy which creates sweatshops, but we also recognize the need for individuals to confront the prejudices they have internalized as the result of living and learning in a flawed and oppressive society.
3. We are working in coalition to build a grassroots student movement that challenges corporate power and that fights for economic justice. This coalition is loosely defined, thus we strive to act in coordination with one another to mobilize resources and build a national network while also reserving the autonomy of individuals and campuses. We do not impose a single ideological position, practice, or approach; rather, we aim to support one another in a spirit of respect for difference, shared purpose, and hope.
4. We strive to act democratically. With the understanding that we live and learn in a state of imperfect government, we attempt to achieve truer democracy in making decisions which affect our collective work. Furthermore, we strive to empower one another as individuals and as a collective through trust, patience, and an open spirit.

Notes: Of course, there is no way to monitor how the name of United Students Against Sweatshops is used. We can only hope that folks who fight the fight would agree with these basic tenets and strive toward fulfilling them in every facet of their work.

These principles are not an original creation – many pieces are borrowed from other organizations as well as from mission statements of some local groups who work with USAS. (Our thanks!)

Some USAS History (1997-2005)

USAS has an incredible history of organizing and mobilizing in solidarity with workers' struggles around the world, and we are only seven years old!

Students have been drawing attention to sweatshop labor abuses since 1996, when major athletic companies began signing exclusive licensing contracts with universities' athletic departments. Students quickly began raising awareness about the new connections between their universities and the exploitation of sweatshop labor. The following summer, students from five universities constructed the "Sweat Free Campus Campaign," pressuring universities to adopt codes of conduct for their licensees in order to develop contractual leverage over the \$3 billion collegiate apparel industry. It was around this campaign that **United Students Against Sweatshops was officially formed in July 1998** at a meeting of less than forty students in New York City.

Because of student pressure the following year, major universities were forced to disregard corporate threats to break their licensing contacts and concede to student demands that they write codes of conduct that included, among other things:

- ★ public disclosure of the names and locations of factories that produce collegiate apparel;
- ★ a clause requiring companies to pay workers a living wage that meets their basic needs;
- ★ specific women's rights provisions, including no forced pregnancy testing for female workers seeking employment, and provisions for healthcare.

The **industry buckled when faced with the prospect of losing collegiate sales**, and in October of 1999 Nike and other companies announced that they would comply with the requirement to publicly disclose their factory locations. After years of pressure by anti-sweatshop groups, this was **the first time that any company in the garment industry had conceded to this basic demand**. Various organizations in the anti-sweatshop movement regularly compile this information and distribute it to partners in producing regions throughout the world, a step toward holding companies accountable, by increasing coordination between organizations in the U.S. and the global South.

Students understood that codes of conduct were only a tool to work in partnership with unions and worker-allied NGOs in creating a space for empowerment in an industry where the threat of capital flight and the decentralized production networks of powerful corporations continuously impede successful worker organizing. Moreover, USAS understood that without an effective compliance mechanism, campus codes of conduct were worth little more than the paper they were written on and would do little to advance coordinated North-South efforts to organize the garment industry. For that reason, USAS **convened a discussion within the anti-sweatshop movement following the victories of the 1998-99 academic year to create a model for investigation of factory compliance with the codes**. The public release of the **Worker Rights Consortium (WRC)** in October 1999 was the result of months of meetings and consultation with our partners throughout North America and the global South on how independent monitoring could be used as a tool to assist worker empowerment and public accountability in the industry by, among other things:

- ★ Prioritizing long-term relationships between local human rights, religious, women's, and labor organizations and workers in communities where factories exist so that workers have a confidential mechanism to discuss issues in their workplace;
- ★ Making information about factory conditions available to the public to afford a greater level of accountability to the industry;
- ★ Supporting grassroots efforts by workers to organize themselves so they can monitor conditions and resolve grievances within their own workplaces; and,
- ★ Building global communication networks to more effectively understand changes in the industry and craft strategies for change.

Because the WRC is the anti-sweatshop movement's most coordinated response to the corporate models of monitoring that the industry has used to whitewash their abuses for years, companies strongly resisted university affiliation with the WRC. So, after months of campus education, enlisting community support, and negotiating through administrative channels, protests and direct action spread across the student movement for a second successive year. Building occupations and tent cities happened at more than 20 universities across the country, with street theater, public debates, protests, and other means of public pressure at dozens more.

As the WRC's founding conference approached in April of 2000, university membership in the WRC climbed from 4 to 50 thanks to coordinated student action. **Students' successes quickly pushed the WRC into national debate** when Nike CEO Phil Knight pulled a promised \$30 million donation to the University of Oregon and pulled out of negotiations for a \$22 million exclusive licensing contract with the University of Michigan after they joined the WRC. Essentially, university administrators were faced with a very real example of the industry critique students had been pushing all along—in his reaction to Knight's decision, University of Michigan President Lee Bollinger issued an unprecedented statement: "Nike has chosen again to strike out at universities committed to finding appropriate ways to safeguard and respect human rights."

Despite Nike's bullying tactics, **USAS expanded the WRC's membership to over 80 universities and colleges in just one year. On top of these successes, student codes of conduct and the student-supported WRC faced their first real tests** through two student-supported worker organizing struggles—at the KukDong International factory (a Nike/Reebok production facility) in Atlixco de Puebla, Mexico, and the New Era factory in Derby, NY.

Students organized in coordination with KukDong factory workers since the WRC released its delegation-based fact-finding report on the situation in February 2001. **Early on, student pressure in the KukDong campaign -- fueled by the WRC's harshly critical report of illegal firings of worker organizers -- forced administrators at schools with hefty licensing contracts to admit that the clause for freedom of association in their codes of conduct had been breached.** Continued student pressure throughout the spring forced Nike, Reebok, and KukDong management to engineer the reinstatement of every worker, including the originally-fired leaders of the unionization drive. This mass-reinstatement was the first such act in over 20 years in Mexico, and thus marked a notable shift in power for independent organizing drives in the maquila industry. **USAS's success in pressuring Nike and Reebok to intercede at the KukDong factory is a testament to the strength of the code of conduct and WRC victories students have won with the Sweat-Free Campus Campaign.**

Prompted by a USAS-led delegation in March of 2001 to the New Era factory, which produces caps for many colleges and universities, the WRC began its second full-scale factory investigation in the summer of 2001. The New Era campaign's goal was to pressure the baseball cap company, New Era, into meeting the demands of its striking factory workers in Derby, New York. Students pressured New Era into meeting these worker demands by having their colleges and universities discontinue or postpone their contracts with New Era after an investigation was done by the WRC. THIRTEEN schools discontinued or postponed their New Era contracts! After a nearly year-long campaign, New Era gave in to worker demands in Derby, New York. The outcome of this campaign is highly significant for USAS. The campaign tangibly demonstrates the power students have in the apparel industry, no matter where the factory is located. By threatening a large piece of a company's market, students are able to advocate for and improve workers rights.

USAS can count numerous important victories in the years since these first investigations, including campaigns that helped workers end the blacklisting of union members in El Salvador at the Tainan and Primo factories; helped workers win the first union in a Free Trade Zone in the Caribbean basin in five years, at the BJ&B factory in the Dominican Republic; and helped bring about worker victories in Indonesia, Sri Lanka, and elsewhere. Each of these was a major victory that affected thousands of workers and broke new ground for the freedom of association in the region. From the New York Times: "When workers first tried unionizing the BJ & B hat factory, the streets [of Villa Altigracia] were abuzz with rumors that the factory would rather close down than negotiate. Two years later, not only is the factory still around, but there also is a union, and it

recently negotiated a labor contract that provides raises, scholarships, and other benefits that are unheard of among the country's 500 foreign-owned plants. The pact, signed last week, was the latest victory for a once unlikely coalition of United States college students, labor activists, and brands." (NYT 4/4/03). BJ & B was an incredible victory for workers in the Dominican Republic and of course for USAS!

In the next phase of its Sweat-Free Campus Campaign, USAS recently launched a major new initiative that is seeking to raise wages globally for apparel workers and, in the process, challenge the premises of the corporate-driven "free trade" agenda that brings attacks on workers rights, wages, and working conditions. USAS students have begun demanding that their universities obtain wage disclosure information from their licensees, and commit their licensees to not cut and run from factories where workers are organizing. Additionally, USAS' international summer internship program sends interns to countries throughout the world in order to conduct research on the wages and working conditions of garment workers. It is our hope that by uncovering how much collegiate apparel workers are making worldwide, and by making real personal connections with these workers in order to learn how much families need to adequately support themselves, we can begin to "raise the floor" globally and demand living wages industry-wide.

USAS has also launched a National Campus Living Wage Campaign, organizing and mobilizing students across the country to fight for living wages on their campuses. USAS's Campus Community Solidarity Committee defines the term "living wage campaign" broadly as any campaign that seeks to improve wages for campus workers, be it a contract negotiation fight, an organizing drive, a living wage campaign, or some other student-worker campaign. The National Campus Living Wage Campaign serves to build both personal relationships and power, as it unites students and workers as an unstoppable force within the campus community. Students have won major living wage victories at colleges and universities across the country, from American University to the University of California-Riverside, and from Johns Hopkins University to the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Students at dozens of other campuses including the University of Tennessee-Knoxville, Oberlin College, George Washington University, the University of Maryland-College Park, the University of Minnesota, Georgetown University, and Yale University, have won tremendous victories for campus workers in the form of fair collective bargaining agreements, union recognition, and comprehensive healthcare benefits packages. USAS' campus community solidarity work uses the power of students to improve the lives of workers on their very own campuses.

USAS' most recent coordinated national campaign Ethical Purchasing Campaign. This campaign would seek to extend the strategy of the Sweat-Free Campus Campaign to other items purchased by educational institutions. This includes everything from computers and vending machines to food products and furniture. Students at the University of Michigan successfully forced their university to adopt Ethical Purchasing Guidelines in the fall of 2003. Also during the 2003-2004 academic year, students at the UCLA and Cal State San Bernardino kicked Taco Bell off campus as a result of their violation of the rights of farmworkers in Immokalee, Florida, and the USAS group at Oberlin was instrumental in kicking Coca-Cola off campus in response to its violent union busting in Colombia. USAS students across the country are working to flesh out national and local strategies in order to make this campaign successful.

Recent accomplishments

In September of 2004, the Farm Labor Organizing Committee announced the end of the Mt. Olive Pickle Boycott. USAS students at Duke University, UNC-Chapel Hill, Florida State University and Michigan State University all contributed to this victory through student initiated solidarity campaigns to get campuses to boycott Mt. Olive. Because of continuing community and student pressure, 8,000 farm workers in North Carolina have now won recognition of the first guest farm worker union in our nation's history. This is a ground-breaking victory for farm workers and their allies!

USAS continued to work in coalition with other student organizations through the National Youth and Student Peace Coalition under the "Books not Bombs" platform. We were instrumental in

organizing a Youth Convergence in NY during the Republican National Convention (August 2004). Students and young people from around the country came together to strategize about building youth power, opposing militarism, and increasing civic participation.

This summer, USAS sent 16 interns to 13 different countries including Mexico, Haiti, India, Kenya, South Africa, Cambodia, Philippines, Korea, Hong Kong, China, Turkey, Nicaragua, and El Salvador. The international interns will be giving presentations at our summer retreat- where 150 students are registered to gather in Chicago and strategize around our three major campaigns (Ethical Contracting, Sweatfree Campus, Campus/Community Solidarity). Students also engaged in anti-oppression exercises and discussions as well as skill building sessions around media, fundraising, organizing, and building coalitions.

We've had many retreats this year – for International Solidarity, a second People of Color retreat in Atlanta, and our first-ever Alliance Building Committee strategy retreat in May at NYU.

On September 30, 2003, USAS, along with the Comité de Apoyo al Trabajador of Mexico and the Maquila Solidarity Network of Canada, filed a complaint with the National Administrative Office (NAO) of the U.S. and Canada. The NAO is the sector of the Department of Labor that fields complaints regarding violations of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Based on the work of USAS members who participated in our international internship program in Mexico, our complaint outlined labor violations in two apparel factories – Matamoros Garment S.A. de C.V. and Tarrant Mexico S.R. de C.V., both in the state of Puebla. Following the acceptance of the complaint in February 2003 and a hearing in the U.S. in March 2003, the NAO released its findings on August 3, 2004. The report, which affirmed many of USAS' allegations, is soon to be the subject of ministerial consultations between the governments of the United States and Mexico.

Coke contracts were cut across the US in response to Coca-Cola's human rights violations in Colombia. During the summer, students walked out of a University of California Commission that was going to include Coca-Cola in an "independent investigation" of their own abuses. The walkout caused Coke to backpedal and step down from the commission! With victories at Oberlin, Rutgers, NYU, Smith University, and more on the way, this looks to be a vital year for supporting workers and communities impacted by Coca-Cola's gross violations.

This Spring, Students at Georgetown University held a nine-day hunger strike that resulted in a major victory for a three-year struggle for living wages at their campus! Demands for wage parity regardless of employer (whether subcontracted employees or workers directly hired by the university), and a wage level adjusted annually for inflation, their policy is setting new standards for campus-community solidarity. The Georgetown Solidarity Committee has gone on to form the Living Wage Action Coalition, and they'll be touring campuses with living wage campaigns across the country for the next semester, and possibly beyond! See the CCSC section of this manual for information about how to bring them to your campus. Other CCSC victories for the semester include Swarthmore University (concluding a four-year campaign), Washington University in St. Louis (with an 11-day sit-in), Mary Washington University (who successfully sat-in for a wage increase).

With a history rooted in concrete actions for local and global justice, supporting the right of workers to organize around the world, USAS students are moving forward to bring more justice for workers in 2005.

Parts of this history were written by Rachel Edelman, Liza Featherstone, Laura McGann, Becca Garoznik, Lenore Palladino, and Allie Robbins. Many thanks.



USAS affiliates!

updated january 2005

California

1. California Polytechnic San Luis Obispo
2. California State University Chico
3. Chaffney College
4. Chapman University
5. Claremont Graduate University
6. Claremont McKenna College
7. Claremont School of Theology
8. Harvey Mudd
9. Loyola Marymount University
10. Occidental College
11. Pitzer College
12. Pomona College
13. San Diego State University
14. San Francisco University High School
15. San Francisco State University
16. San Jose State University
17. Santa Clara University
18. Santa Monica College
19. Scripps College
20. University of California Berkeley
21. University of California Santa Cruz
22. University of California Santa Barbara
23. University of California Los Angeles
24. University of California Riverside
25. University of San Francisco
26. University of Southern California

Mid-Atlantic

1. American University
2. Carnegie Mellon
3. College of William and Mary
4. Drew University

5. Franklin & Marshall College
6. George Washington University
7. Georgetown University
8. Hampton University
9. Haverford College
10. Indiana University of Pennsylvania
11. James Madison U
12. Johns Hopkins U
13. Kutztown University
14. Lafayette College
15. Lehigh University
16. Livingston High School
17. Lock Haven University of Pennsylvania
18. Moravian University
19. Pennsylvania State University
20. Rutgers University
21. Swarthmore College
22. University of Delaware
23. University of Pennsylvania
24. University of Pittsburgh
25. University of Virginia
26. Virginia Commonwealth University
27. Villanova University
28. Virginia Tech
29. West Virginia University
30. Wheeling Jesuit U

Midwest

1. Alma College
2. Antioch College
3. Baldwin Wallace College
4. Beloit College
5. Case Western Reserve University

6. Central Michigan University
7. College of St. Benedict
8. DePaul
9. Grand Rapids Community College
10. Grand Valley State University
11. Grinnell College
12. Illinois State University
13. Indiana University
14. Iowa State University
15. John Carroll University
16. Kenyon College
17. Lake Forest College
18. Lawrence University
19. Lewis - Clark State College
20. Loyola University Chicago
21. Miami University of Ohio
22. Michigan State University
23. Northern Illinois University
24. Northwestern U
25. Notre Dame, University of
26. Ohio State University
27. Ohio Wesleyan University
28. Purdue Calumet
29. Purdue University
30. Saint Louis University
31. St. John's University (Minnesota)
32. St. Olaf College
33. University of Akron
34. University of Chicago
35. University of Cincinnati
36. University of Dayton
37. University of Iowa
38. University of Illinois Chicago
39. University of Illinois Springfield
40. University of Michigan
41. University of Minnesota
42. University of Northern Iowa

43. University of Oklahoma
44. University of Wisconsin Madison
45. University of Wisconsin Milwaukee
46. Western Michigan University

Northeast

1. Bard College
2. Bates College
3. Boston College
4. Boston University
5. Brandeis University
6. Brookline High School
7. Brown University
8. Central Connecticut State University
9. Clark University
10. Columbia University
11. Cornell University
12. Emerson College
13. Fordham Lincoln Center
14. Fordham Rose Hill
15. Harvard University
16. Holy Cross, College of the
17. Keene State College
18. Middlebury College
19. MIT
20. Mount Holyoke College
21. New York University
22. Northeastern University
23. Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
24. Simmons College
25. Smith College
26. Syracuse University
27. Trinity College (Hartford, CT)
28. University of Buffalo
29. University of Connecticut
30. University of Maine, Orono
31. University of Southern Maine
32. Vassar College

33. Ward Melville High School
34. Wesleyan University
35. Yale University

Southeast

1. Berea College
2. Duke University
3. Florida State University
4. Georgia State University
5. Louisiana State University
6. New College of Florida
7. North Carolina State University
8. Tulane University
9. University of Kentucky
10. University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill
11. University of the South
12. University of South Florida
13. University of Tennessee Knoxville
14. University of Texas at Austin
15. Valdosta State University
16. Vanderbilt

West/Southwest

1. Arizona State U
2. Colorado College
3. Gonzaga University

4. Metropolitan State College of Denver Auraria
5. New Mexico State University
6. Northern Arizona University
7. Portland State University
8. Reed College
9. Richland Community College
10. Seattle Central Community College
11. Seattle University
12. Trinity University (San Antonio)
13. TVI Community College
14. University of Arizona
15. University of Colorado at Boulder
16. University of Montana
17. University of Oregon
18. Western Oregon University
19. University of Texas A&M International
20. University of Texas - Austin

Canada/International

1. Jahangirnagar University, Dhaka
2. Knox Community College, Jamaica
3. Univ. Interamericana
4. University of Ontario Institute of Technology

some USAS highlights from 2005 spring semester

International Anti-Sweatshop Solidarity

Students played a vital role in winning international solidarity campaign this semester. Our continuing campaign for schools to join the Worker Rights Consortium met with more success this spring, Pomona College, University of Buffalo, Brandeis, Kenyon College, University of Maryland – College Park, Michigan State, Ryerson College, University of Chicago, CU-Boulder, Washington University, Wayne State, University of Maine! Once again, students helped translate our international solidarity into serious progress for worker rights. After six USAS schools threatened to cut contracts with Gildan because of their cut-and-run factory closure in El Progreso in Honduras in response to organizing and investigations there. Gildan opened a new factory nearby, agreed to give first-hire opportunities to former El Progreso workers, publicly advertise these opportunities, and provide free transportation to former El Progreso workers commuting to its other factories in the region. UNC-Chapel Hill, Michigan, UC-Berkeley, UW-Madison, Indiana and Georgetown threatened Gildan to shape up or get out of the industry. Columbia University, UW-Madison, Western Michigan University and Duke University all told licensees that they could not shift production to countries that do not respect the right to organize, in the wake of the textile quota phase-out. The entire UC system mandated that licensees disclose the wages paid to workers who produce their collegiate apparel.



Student-Labor Campus Solidarity

This Spring, Students at Georgetown University held a nine-day hunger strike that resulted in a major victory for a three-year struggle for living wages at their campus! Demands for wage parity regardless of employer (whether subcontracted employees or workers directly hired by the university), and a wage level adjusted annually for inflation, their policy is setting new standards for campus-community solidarity. The Georgetown Solidarity Committee has gone on to form the Living Wage Action Coalition, and they'll be touring campuses with living wage campaigns across the country for the next semester, and possibly beyond! See the CCSC section of this manual for information about how to bring them to your campus. Other CCSC victories for the semester include Swarthmore University (concluding a four-year campaign), Washington University in St. Louis (with an 11-day sit-in), Mary Washington University (who successfully sat-in for a wage increase).

Ethical Contracting

Students successfully work to kick Coca-Cola off campus for the egregious violations of worker rights, including murder, at their bottling plants in Colombia. Rutgers, NYU, and Smith succeeded in kicking Coke off this fall! The Coalition of Immokalee Workers and their Boot the Bell Campaign had a HUGE victory – all of their demands were met! USAS students will be attending a Student-Farmworker Alliance Encuentro to find out what's in store for the Coalition now that they're victorious over Taco Bell.

National Events

USAS held a successful National Winter Conference in Austin, Texas during which over 200 students met and strategized. Regional conferences and trainings happened in the Mid-Atlantic, the Northeast, Midwest, and the Southeast. Over 70 USAS students and allies came to the International Solidarity Retreat to strategize about disclosure and solidarity in the wake of MFA phase-out. In Spring, The Alliance Building Committee held its first strategy retreat at NYU.

Section Two: Organizing



Making your campaign happen on campus - Organize!

Where do I start?

So, you want to kick off your campaign to get your university or college to stop supporting sweatshops. It's going to take a grassroots student movement to do it. Here are some suggestions on getting started.



Outreach – Building the movement one student at a time.

You may be forming a USAS chapter, a subcommittee of an already existing labor solidarity or human rights group, or a coalition. Use existing campus networks to draw more students into the campaign. Put out some initial information over email listservs or progressive groups. Plan an information session or a mini teach-in.

Personal contact is the most basic and probably the best way to recruit people to a movement. Nothing replaces meeting someone, answering their questions, and spending time personally investing them in the campaign. When new students show interest, for example, by attending a meeting, call them afterward to see where they're at, why they're interested, and what they want to do to help the campaign. You can give them ideas of what they can do as well.

Contact USAS at (202) NO-SWEAT, or email organize@usasnet.org, to see if anyone else near your campus has expressed interest in the sweatshop campaign or labor rights in general.

Don't forget to:

1. Listen to the people you are trying to organize, let them tell you what they're interests are, and how you can interest them in this campaign. There's a different hook for each person who get involved, so relate.
2. Be persistent, some people who aren't interested or are "too busy" will become active if you keep talking to them (but stop short of the level of harassment that just pisses people off.)
3. Getting commitments from people to actually do things, either while you talk to them or soon after, gets them involved and hopefully interested in the campaign. It also gives them some sense that it's their thing too, and gives you a good reason to talk to them again as follow-up. Meet people where they're at and where their schedule's at as well.

Grassroots education and publicity – the keys for recruitment and building your campaign.

1. *Visibility*: people should know about your campaign even if they're completely oblivious to everything else happening on campus. Keep your message short and simple.
2. *Language*: avoid jargon.
3. *Positivity*: Do not just emphasize the horrors of sweatshops. Tell students what can and is being done about them.
4. *Creativity*: Colorful, visual, interactive, eye-catching publicity is more effective as long as it doesn't obscure your message.
5. *Repetition*: Use multiple means multiple times.
6. *Reputation*: Don't forget to include your organization's name on all your material and contact information.

7. *Pride*: To appeal to a broader student base, use school pride and spirit. (“The university should be a leader on and off the field.”)
8. *Focus*: Keep your message focused on your campaign target. If you are beyond the general education part of the campaign, stay focused on your school’s administration and their power/obligation to stop sweatshops.

Post flyers, set up information tables, leaflet in high-traffic areas, write guest editorials letters to the editor, op-eds, or put ads in your campus newspaper. Don’t forget to include the meeting times of your groups in the campus calendar.

Check out local radio stations for call-in shows. You can also do “midnight redecorating,” late night or early morning, where you can use disapproved-of methods for education (spraypaint, wheatpasting, pervasive stickers/labels). Wear symbols of support like armbands, ribbons, or buttons, and distribute them to people so they can show their support.

Coalitions – Building support for the anti-sweatshop campaign.

Involving groups through coalitions is key to building the grassroots movement necessary to get university administrators and corporations to agree to the demands of the campaign. Here are three models of coalitions:

The paper tiger model: a list of endorsers is built to lend credibility and breadth to the campaign. The endorsing groups may do little beyond adding their names to the list of supporters. You may ask them to help turn out people to events.

The associate model: Groups and leaders are encouraged to play an active role in the campaign (collecting signatures, letters, etc.) but decision-making still rests with the anti-sweat group.

The partner model: All groups share in decision-making and active participation.

Think about what model works best for your campus. If you are going to build a coalition based on the associate or partner model, member groups should be involved at the earliest stages of the campaign (i.e. the strategy to kick off the campaign and approach the administration).

The earlier you involve people and the more power is shared, the more folks will feel invested in the campaign’s success.

When approaching other groups for support, here are some things to think about:

1. *Why should the group care?*
Sweatshops are an issue that are caused from a number of interrelating issues. In asking for support, approach the issue from any of these perspectives to make it relevant to the group.
2. *What can the group do?*
Depending on where you are with the campaign, and what sort of coalition you’re forming, you can ask the group to sign on to a letter or write their own to the administration (in support of disclosure for example). You could prepare a resolution and ask people to endorse the campaign by passing the resolution. The content of the resolution can serve as an educational tool as well. The contact is also a chance to expand your core membership. Encourage anyone interested to come to your meetings and get more involved. You could also ask the group if they would appoint a representative or liaison to you campaign.
3. *What can you do for the group?*
Standing in solidarity doesn’t just apply to workers – often, there are groups of students based on identities – race/ethnicity, gender, etc. addressing and resisting oppression faced throughout life and on the campus. Building solid, diverse coalitions requires building trust and a sense of solidarity between campus groups. While this can be a long process, especially if there are pre-existing issues between groups. But there’s never a bad time to start building that solidarity. Concrete ways to support groups include turning folks out and advertising each others’ actions, sharing press lists and mutual skill-building, checking

to ensure that actions or events don't overlap, and if they do, strategizing about how to promote each event and action mutually throughout the day.

Making the move – groups, individuals, and organizations to approach include:

1. **Women's and feminist organizations**
Be sure to contact these groups early (as with ethnic organizations), there's an obvious link here to the mostly female sweatshop workforce.
2. **Queer student organizations**
Include all identity-based student organizations in your strategy and planning. Students in LGBT groups as well as feminist and ethnic organizations can become strong and powerful allies and create powerful campus coalitions.
3. **People of Color/Ethnicity-specific organizations**
It's especially important to contact these groups early, both as a matter of consideration and experience (at some campuses they already may be the group raising the sweatshop issue), and because their membership includes people in many of the other groups you'll want to approach. Latino and Asian organizations (the ethnic groups most employed in US and offshore garment factories), African-American, Jewish, and Native America organizations are important agents and allies in the campaign.
4. **Religious organizations**
These groups can provide moral arguments and high ground and are especially important at Catholic and other religious schools. Talk to clergy about mentioning the issue at a sermon. Put leaflets at the exit of mass and services. Make announcements at services.
5. **Community service organizations**
Many organizations can offer volunteer support for events and actions, key links to other community related groups, and ideas on recruitment and volunteer retention.
6. **Alumni, individuals and groups**
Alumni often have more power than the current students because of the money they can give. Try drawing on alumni of progressive student groups on campus. Look through old yearbooks. Famous alum supporters are especially valuable.
7. **Fraternities/sororities**
The Greeks, in their community service mode, can be helpful allies with plenty of resources, including philanthropy departments. On occasion they can help turn people out to events and actions. Ethnically based Greek groups may be the most approachable.
8. **PIRGs (Public Interest Research Groups)**
PIRGs are especially important for statewide efforts, especially in state school systems. They can be a resource on organizing strategies, recruitment ideas, etc.
9. **Resident Assistants**
RAs can provide slots for people to present the campaign at hall meetings. They sometimes have access to funds from a Resident Hall Association.
10. **Athletic Teams and Athletes**
The students most directly connected to licensing issues would be very important and influential allies, especially as teams or star players. There is a lot working against you though: athletic scholarships and other perks as well as coaches influence (who often have lucrative contracts with Nike or others). Take on the challenge! High-profile athlete involvement could take your campaign to a whole new level.
11. **Student Government**
Resolutions passed by student government have important symbolic value, can bring press attention, and boost the profile of your campaign. A good source of resources in many cases, but be forewarned, many student governments are populist and will only support your campaign after you gain a lot of support from other campus groups.
12. **Graduate student unions**
Teaching assistants' unions are quite engaged with university policy already, and are

generally progressive. Many of them are organizing and winning some very powerful campaigns throughout the country; it is imperative that we work with them.

13. Faculty and staff unions

Faculty unions, like teaching assistants' union, can be very helpful.

Faculty who supported the 1980s anti-apartheid divestment campaigns, and anti-war movement veterans, and veterans from other past campus political struggles – are natural allies in many ways.

The American Studies, Area Studies, Ethnic Studies, Labor Studies, Sociology, Religion, Women's Studies, Political Science, Environmental Studies and Urban Studies departments often harbor potential supporters. But, don't doubt other departments, either.

Faculty supporters can give you an opportunity to speak at a class, allow you to do campaign research for credit, co-sponsor speakers or screenings, require or promote attendance at events, make public statements of support and add legitimacy to your arguments, give you tips on who to talk to in the administration, sponsor a support resolution in Faculty Council (or equivalent faculty organization), and help you strategize on how to achieve your campaign goals – for those that have organizing experience.

14. Service workers unions and associations

Alliances with service workers on campus are important to building the sweatshop campaign and making the local connection, (e.g. living wage at home and abroad).

15. Chaplains and campus ministries

These folks can be very helpful. They can provide moral support and high ground, avenues into the administrations, and are especially important at Catholic and other religious/faith-based schools.

16. Union locals and Central Labor Councils

Local worker's unions are an excellent coalition-builder. They need support just as you do, so make sure to offer that their support for you will build their constituency as well. Given that the anti-sweat campaign is fundamentally based in institutionalizing improvements for workers, it is essential you support and work with your local unions as much as possible.

Stepping up the pressure!

The power of the pen: Sign-on letters and petitions are a good basic tool. Mass emailing is also effective. Students on some campuses have set up computers in a central area and had students passing by send emails on the spot to their university president or prominent sweatshop abuser. This idea can work with cell phones and calling the university president on the spot as well.

Events and direct action: Both events and direct action can be used to build support for your campaign and educate the public. Direct actions differ from standard events in that they creatively disrupt public space. They are often technically illegal and sometimes confrontational.

Examples of events:

- ★ Benefit concert
- ★ Panel or forum with workers, community leaders, anti-sweatshop activists/experts, labor history professors, etc.
- ★ Candlelight vigils or homilies

Direct Action: Sit-ins to knit-ins and beyond!

From the Montgomery Bus Boycott to the Guerilla Girls, direct action and social change go hand in hand. Think creatively about your action. How will you get people's attention? Direct action signifies an escalation of your campaign so think about the timing, your demand, and the level of support you have on campus. There is a lot of planning that goes into a successful direct action.

Some questions to consider:

1. Who is your target?
2. What do you hope to accomplish?
3. Can you turn out the number of people needed to make the event a success? (You can leaflet with three people, but don't have a rally with less than several dozen!)
4. Do you have energetic speakers or an interesting performance planned?
5. Do you have something for people who attend to do to engage themselves in the campaign?
6. Is your message clear and simple?
7. Have you notified the press?
8. Is the timing and location of the event good to reach a lot of people?
9. Do you have all your facts straight?

Surveying some tactics – fun, creative actions.

1. *Pickets*
Pickets can be used as a one-time show of protest or can be weekly events to build the campaign. At the University of North Carolina, students began weekly pickets outside the administrative building demanding to know where their clothes were made. The pickets grew in size and volume. Use instruments like drums and prepare a chant sheet.
2. *Clothesline*
You can hang up school apparel or clothes made in other countries – attach pictures of conditions in countries where they are made, statistics about wages, or scrawl abuses garment workers commonly suffer on the apparel. For a more dramatic effect, you can splatter a blood-like substance on the clothes. Place in a prominent, hard-to-reach location.
3. *Guerrilla or street theater*
Design hangtags and put them on clothes in the bookstore or another retailer you are protesting. The hangtags can have pictures of the workers who make the clothes, or a quotation about working in a sweatshop. You can make a similar leaflet and put them in the pockets of the clothes.
4. *Student Strikes*
This isn't a common tactic in the US (anymore) but has been used in Europe, Indonesia, and Mexico recently. It really only has positive effects when it is campus-wide; the idea is to shut down the campus with a student strike.
5. *Sweatshop Fashion Show*
A mock fashion show has worked well on campus across the country to educate and interest students. The event is a great visual and can be very funny despite its serious theme. It does not take many people to pull this off: 4-5 models and 1-2 announcers. You can have an announcer describing the clothes and another announcing the workers' working conditions as a model walks the "runway." Do this in a central part of campus, and don't forget to call the media.

Strategy versus tactics: there's a big difference!

This comes from a small part of the Midwest Academy's Organizing for Social Change manual and the Grassroots Organizing Weekend (GROW) trainings that are available for you to bring to your campus (call (202) 347-USSA or email training@usstudents.org).

Administrators do not make decisions based on how moral or well-researched you are on the subject of sweatshops. This is important, but when we've been articulating the same arguments over and over, for years, the only route to go is organizing.

Administrators make decisions based on their power and self-interest. They will put you off until you all exercise enough power over them where it is in their self-interest (for fundraising for the

school, PR, or the future of their career) to do what was previously not in their self-interest. In short, you need to scare them.

Colleges and universities are really very undemocratic, despite appearances. Alone, we are relatively powerless, because the president of the university is not accountable to an individual. Fundamentally, students should have more governing power at their institutions, but that's another whole issue in itself.

You are aware that we win victories when we organize effectively and gain power over our targets. So how do we most effectively build power?

Too often, activists think in terms of tactics, and not strategy. Tactics should be tools that are grounded in your overall strategy for building power over your target. They are nothing more than figuring out the most effective and creative way to carry out that strategy.

There are various sorts of power we have as students. Understanding how the power of students and workers in the university relates to that of the administration is one of the most essential facets of winning campaigns. You can try to impact the fundraising ability of the president, public embarrassment, interfering with the careers of administrators, or creating situations where the administration loses their normal level of control over the campus and isn't able to function normally. This is all based on whatever strategy you decide to use. There can be more than one strategy in a campaign and, in fact, many effective campaigns use more than one.

Tactics are most effective when they are outside the experience of the target and within the experience of the students involved in your campaign. At some places, a letter-writing campaign could be enough. At others, where there are four rallies a week on campus, you won't be noticed without a large base of public support.

Every campaign doesn't have to end with a sit-in, although many have and need to get to that point. There are thousands of other ways to exercise power. Tactics are many and varied: from low-level like the presentation of thousands of petition signatures, or editorials in the student newspaper, to high-level tactics like sit-ins, or lock outs.

One tactic is never enough. That's why you need to start thinking about strategy first.

To start thinking strategically, consider who your target is. Who will give you what you want? Who is close to him or her? Who has more influence over his or her decisions than you do, and how can you influence them to say what you want?

Consider your constituents and allies. Your constituents are the people you're trying to organize to build power. Allies can be found in unlikely places, for instance, at San Francisco State University, students said some of their strongest allies were in the Department of Fashion and Design. Think of all of the groups mentioned above and what kind of support they could provide.

We also need to be conscious of our opponents – so think ahead! Don't let opponents distract you, just be aware of what they're doing and if needed, organize responses to their strikes at your campaign.

Think about your resources. Do you have a gathering place, an office, or a budget? Do you have contacts in the press? How about phone lists? Phones to phone-bank? Thinking about this will give you a greater sense of what you need to do and what you need to do it.

Finally, note that your victory is never final. Student pressure needs to be continual – especially if we're going to enforce our manufacturing Codes of Conduct and the Worker Rights Consortium's power to make change in garment factories. We need to make sure our student groups continue to exist after we're gone.



Midwest Academy - GROW Strategy Chart

After choosing an issue, fill in this chart as a guide to developing a strategy. Be specific. List all the possibilities.

Goals	Organizational Considerations	Constituents, Allies and Opponents	Targets	Tactics
<p>What are the long term goals of your campaign?</p> <p>What is the intermediate goal for the campaign?</p> <p>What specifically will constitute a victory?</p> <p>What short term or partial victories can you win as steps toward your intermediate goal?</p>	<p>Have: In specific numbers, list the resources your organization brings to the campaign.</p> <p>Want: In the same terms, list the ways in which you want this campaign to strengthen your organization.</p> <p>Problems: List any internal organizational problems.</p>	<p>Constituents: Who cares about this issue enough to join in the campaign? Into what already existing groups are they organized?</p> <p>Allies: Which individuals will be willing and able to help your campaign but are not directly affected by the issue or cannot join your organization?</p> <p>Opponents: Who will actively organize against you?</p>	<p>Who has the power to give you what you want?</p> <p>** Remember, a target is always a person or persons**</p> <p>Is there a secondary target, or someone who has the power over your primary target? What power do you have over them?</p>	<p>POWER: Must be directed at a specific target and demonstrate a specific form of power.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Direct actions with target - Public hearings - Voter registration, education and turnout - Strikes - Letter writing <p>Organizational/ Education: Must build your organization and membership while raising awareness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Flyers/ chalking - Film screenings - Sign up sheets - Class announcements - Editorials

Strategy, USSA/ Midwest Academy
Revised 3/28/02 c Midwest Academy 2002

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Midwest Academy - GROW Strategy Chart

After choosing your issue, fill in this chart as a guide to developing a strategy. Be specific. List all the possibilities.

Goals	Organizational Considerations	Constituents, Allies and Opponents	Targets	Tactics
<p>Long Term:</p> <p>Have:</p>	<p>Constituents:</p>	<p>Organizational/ Education:</p>	<p>Primary target(s):</p>	
<p>Intermediate:</p>	<p>Want:</p>	<p>Allies:</p>	<p>Secondary target(s):</p>	
<p>Short Term:</p>	<p>Problems:</p>	<p>Opponents:</p>		<p>Power:</p>

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Relations of power and the tactics of campus administrations

Institutions reflect the interests of those who hold power. In most places, because of this, government and the economy become games for elites, and barring significant organizing and struggle, the voices of ordinary folks get left out. Our college campuses aren't very different. Universities are supposed to be based upon the pretense of cultivating "democracy," in the weakest sense of the word, of producing a generation of future leaders who can debate issues and, consequently, make well-informed decisions. However, in practice our universities are hardly democratic.

Of course, they look democratic. There are student governments, faculty senates, academic staff assemblies (rarely, you may notice, are classified staff – janitors, food service workers, secretaries – included in the governance processes of the university), and committees upon committees who can debate issues for years on end. But how much influence do students and workers on campus have within these structures? The answer is, generally, very little.

The folks who really make final decisions about university policy are the college president, his or her administration, and the board of trustees. When was the last time students and campus workers elected anyone to these positions? Despite all of their attempts to create the appearance of campus democracy, in day-to-day decision-making they are hardly ever truly accountable to the will of the campus community. And it is those to whom they are really accountable and those who have more access to them – increasingly corporations and individual donors who subsidize university profit – are the ones who get the most influence over how those decisions are made.

So, the decisions of our universities become a function of who holds power. And when we don't organize, we don't have any. This brings us to a fundamental point of direct action organizing:

Decision-makers always act in their self-interest. By organizing, we can change what that self-interest is, by making the costs of making a decision against the will of the campus community greater than they usually are. By challenging this, we begin to change the balance of power on campus. In order to do this, however, we've got to organize where we have power. The private sphere is where administrators hold their greatest power. The public sphere is where we do.

The campus runs more smoothly when we don't question what is going on and try to organize to have our interests heard. It is in the interest of the campus administration to try to keep the student body off of their backs, to not be swayed by our conviction, to maintain business as usual. And, believe it or not, administrators have tactics for dealing with troublemakers like you. We've compiled a list of expected moves by the administration when you begin to develop momentum on campus based on our own practical experiences, along with some suggestions for overcoming them. Read carefully, study, and struggle!

1. Try to ride the protest out and hope the students go away.

1. They refuse to meet with your group.
2. They circulate students among low-level administrators.
3. They refuse to give a definitive answer or date by which they will make a decision.
4. They give small, meaningless concessions
5. They send the issue to a committee dominated by administrative interests, study the issue to death, and drown it in a complicated bureaucracy.
6. If you can stall long enough, maybe students will lose interest in the issue. Maybe they will graduate. Company representatives have said it, in response to this movement, that if they wait it out, we'll go away and they can move on to business as usual.
7. Perhaps the most standard administrative response to the demands of the campus communities in this campaign has been to set up a committee or a task force to study the issue and, at some faraway date, come back to the president with a recommendation. This

sidesteps the real issue – that the administration should be accountable to the university community as a whole – and it takes student organizing from the public sphere, where we hold power, to the private boardroom discussions, on their turf. As mentioned before, these committees are almost always set up to be more accountable to the interests of the administration than the campus community. and often they are filled with decision-makers who have little background on the issues.

Some tips:

1. Make your demands clear and public, and if the administration doesn't respond to you, bring the issue to them. Direct action is making the administration respond to students' demands and be held publicly accountable for their response.
2. In meetings, demand a date by which the administration will give you a clear decision. If they don't set a date, don't be afraid to set one for them. Make sure the public is aware of that deadline.
3. Be very clear about your demands and what administrative decisions constitute meeting those demands. Be clear within your group about how much you are willing to compromise, and evaluate administrative concessions with your group on the basis of those demands.
4. Never, never stop organizing in public, no matter if there is a committee or not. If you have a committee, demand that it not discuss the issue to death, demand that it have clear deadlines by which to come to a recommendation. If the committee is controlled by administrative appointments, make sure that information is public. And remember that a committee recommendation constitutes only one part of the administration's decision. Continue to press the committee to make the correct recommendation, but don't make it the only part of your strategy. In the end, the decision is still your president's.

2. Bully students with the administration's supposed academic superiority.

- ★ They say student demands are impossible to meet.
- ★ They try to de-legitimize student arguments.
- ★ In a meeting, they talk about anything but the issue you are bringing to their attention or confuse the issue with a series of unrelated matters.

If we've learned anything, it is that the student movement has a far better understanding of this issue than any of the administrators who are making decisions. We have developed our demands on the basis of actually meeting with workers, talking with them about what they face, and strategizing with them about the best ways to support their struggles.

So, what do they say on the other side? Well, the Wall Street Journal accuses us of not taking Economics 101 or we would really understand that corporate power actually helps peoples' lives.

Similarly, they'll say that what we're demanding is impossible. Nike and other corporations spent so much time saying that publicly disclosing their factory locations would be letting go of their trade secrets, that they would sooner pull out of the collegiate licensing business than do such a thing. They dismissed all counterarguments, but after students organized to pressure their universities to make selling their garments contingent upon public disclosure, Nike has begun releasing their collegiate factory locations and ran this advertisement in five college newspapers: "As a school that carries officially licensed Nike merchandise on campus, you, more than anyone else, have a right to know where those products are made."

Some tips:

1. Know your arguments. Even though we don't win campaigns on this basis, they do give us legitimacy and ground our allies in the fight.
2. Bring professors and other allies who can help give legitimacy to your arguments.

3. Stay on message! If you are in meetings and sense that administrators are going to take the argument off into an irrelevant direction, be firm and consistently bring it back to its fundamental message.

3. Divide and conquer the student movement.

Administrators like to divide and conquer the student movement. They can do this in many ways – by isolating the “leaders” from the rest of the group, or by creating a phantom opposition, their “silent majority.”

Some tips:

1. If you work to have diverse representation in the public sphere, it’s much harder for the administration to go for the leader, especially when you are all leaders of the movement.
2. Make the administration provide proof of their phantom dissenters. Are they really from the university community, or are they from companies?
3. Communicate and keep everyone in your group on the same page. If new issues come up, or people in the group think there should be a switch in strategy, address those concerns, go over the various alternatives and the big picture, and try to build common understanding.

4. Convince students that, really, we’re all on the same side.

The headline of an article that ran on USAS in the Boston Globe a few years ago read “Sweatshop Concerns United Two Sides: Students, administrators agree on protests.” Administrators have responded to this movement publicly by saying how excited that they are that students are taking over buildings demanding respect for workers rights, that it is a wonderful switch from their traditionally inactive student bodies. They know that they can’t look like they are in favor of the university exploiting sweatshop labor, and they know that they can’t attack the students for our demands, so they’ll just say that really, we have the same ends, just different methods for getting there.

Action means more than words. The worker-friendly rhetoric that is pushed by the administration is meant to drown out the student movement, and much more is needed in terms of increasing and sustaining this movement.

Some tips:

- I. Clarify the differences, and make sure that your target, your group, your allies, the media, and the public understand them.
- II. Make sure that the public focus remains on how much they care about the issue.

4. Other thoughts on combating administrative methods:

- | | |
|--|---|
| ★ Put administrators on the spot | ★ Have demands, fallback, etc., set out ahead of time |
| ★ Take them outside of their experience | ★ Know people’s roles in the meeting |
| ★ Bring clear proposals, demand timelines and accountability | ★ Rehearse, rehearse, and rehearse! |
| ★ Have students watching | ★ Go public! Take action! |
| ★ Challenge their authority, directly | |

In the end, it’s not that any of your administrators are bad people (though some may be) who want to watch workers suffer. It’s that they are not accountable to you. When we organize, we challenge the way things work, the way day to day decisions are made. That’s more the inconvenience; it’s a threat to the status quo. You are demanding that not only will companies be publicly accountable

but also that university decisions be made out in the open with accountability, not behind closed doors. This practice of fundamentally challenging the way in which decisions are made, reshaping the balance of power in the decision-making process, and sustaining the grip on holding decision makers accountable will not only help us win more campaigns, but in the end, be one of the longest lasting impacts of your efforts.

Research Your University’s Licensing and Purchasing Structures

Research is an essential tool for activists. Research can expose what’s happening behind closed doors, provide us with information to arm ourselves with useful facts, and speak authoritatively about how we can change this system that upholds sweatshop labor. Research for the Sweat-Free Campus Campaign is very targeted and is different at each school. For example, students at a large school that makes a tremendous amount of money by licensing their name and logo to huge, well-known manufacturers will direct their research very differently from those at a small school that doesn’t even license its name and purchases just enough merchandise to stock the shelves of its bookstore. In any case, it is helpful to understand the structure of the collegiate licensing and purchasing industry and to know how to direct your research about your particular school’s role in this industry.

How do I start researching a university’s licensing or procurement policy?

- I. Who to look for: The people who can best answer questions about licensing or purchasing systems and policies are the low/mid-level administrators who do the day-to-day work of licensing and buying apparel. These are, typically, the “licensing officer” or “licensing contact,” in charge of the school’s licensing program, or the “bookstore manager” at smaller schools that don’t license. These administrators are not easy to reach, sometimes they are hidden in the athletic department or the bookstore, but they can be tracked down. The first step is to find their names, phone numbers, email addresses, and other contact information.
- II. How to find them: The faculty/staff directory is a good source in general, and is probably the best place to start if you’re on campus or can get hold of one easily. The school website, however, may be more helpful and is easier to find when you are not at school. These websites often have pages devoted to the licensing operating of the school, often listing the Licensing Officer and Buyer’s names and phone number as well as providing policy overviews and sometimes lists of licensees.
- III. Where to look: Licensing is often done in a “licensing office,” which may be in any number of departments.

Try:

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| ★ Administrative Service | ★ Executive VPs office |
| ★ Bookstore | ★ General Council’s Office |
| ★ Business and Finance | ★ Procurement |
| ★ Campus Services | ★ Provost’s Office |
| ★ Chancellor’s Office | ★ Public Affairs |
| ★ Communications | ★ Purchasing |
| ★ Development | ★ Trademarks and Licensing |

These are all possibilities worth checking if you can’t find a “Licensing Office.” At schools where athletics are particularly important, licensing tends to be done through the athletic department, at small schools the bookstore is more likely.

What questions should I ask these folks?

If you are just beginning the Sweat-Free Campus Campaign, there is some basic information that would be helpful to know as you get started. The following questions will give you a good idea of who has the power over this stuff at your school and will help you figure out how to focus the energy of your campaigns. Keep in mind, that sometimes gathering this information will raise suspicion among administrators and you may want to invent some sort of cover story for this initial gathering of information. Business students doing research for a class, for example, invariably encounter more cooperation. However, as your campaign becomes public, cover stories are probably not the best strategy.

Questions regarding licensing policy:

1. Does the university license its name directly or does it go through an agent company?
2. Who at the university manages existing licensing deals and makes the day-to-day business decisions about new licensees, and new products? Do these decisions require approval by higher-level administrators, trustees, etc.?
3. How many licensees are there? How many are apparel companies? Who are they? What are the biggest licensees? Are the companies involved mainly in large national/international companies (Nike, Reebok?) or local operations?
4. Are retailers as well as manufacturers licensed? Does the university charge a royalty on retail sales? Does the university sell licensed goods directly (e.g. through university-owned campus store)?
5. How much money does the university earn from licensing its logo? Does this income go into a general fund or is it earmarked for a specific purpose (scholarships, athletic department, etc.)? How significant is this?
6. Is the university a member of the Collegiate Licensing Consortium (CLC) or the Fair Labor Association (FLA)?

Anti-Sweatshop Fashion Show Script

Written by the Progressive Student Union of The George Washington University for the National Student Labor Day of Action (April 4, 2002)

(MC of the action will introduce the fashion show)

Announcer: Hello and welcome to GW's first anti-sweatshop fashion show. Today we're going to model some of the fine products for sale at GW's very own Follett Bookstore. These clothes are on sale right across the street in the Marvin Center basement.

Announcer: That's all true, _____, but this isn't an advertisement for the bookstore. We're going to be focusing on the conditions under which the clothes were made, not where they are sold.

Announcer: Exactly, since the fall of 1999, members of the Progressive Student Union have been pressuring GW's administration to affiliate with the Worker Rights Consortium (WRC). The WRC is the only independent monitoring agency, which conducts factory investigations on behalf of affiliated colleges and universities.

Announcer: President Trachtenberg assures us that GW doesn't use sweatshops, but what we're about to see may put some doubt in your mind. We are going to have some speakers throughout the fashion show, who will help us learn more about GW's labor practices. And now, let's bring out our first model.

Sweatshirt made in Mexico:

Announcer: _____ is wearing a great sweatshirt made in Mexico. This sweatshirt was most likely made in Puebla, Mexico, which located south east of Mexico City. The average wage of a factory worker in this part of Mexico is \$4.50 a day, or between 25 and 50 US dollars a week. It has been determined that workers in Puebla would need at least \$69 per week to meet their basic needs.

Announcer: According to Mexican labor law, the daily maximum hours a person is allowed to work is 8, but workers in Mexico's factories report 10-12 hour days. Overtime pay is rare, and when it is granted, it is not at the premium rate. Forced overtime is extremely common in this area.

Announcer: Independent unions have traditionally been repressed in Mexico, and those factories that do have unions, often have company-controlled unions, which do little, if anything at all for their members. In large part because of this, most factories in this part of Mexico have poor health and safety practices. Additionally, sexual harassment and forced pregnancy testing, forced birth control, and forced abortions are common. Another problem that plagues this area is child labor. Despite Mexico's labor laws, conditions in Mexico's factories are deplorable.

Announcer: Thank you very much _____. Let's bring up our next model.

Windbreaker made by Gear for Sports in Malaysia:

Announcer: _____ is wearing a sporty windbreaker from Malaysia. This windbreaker was made by Gear for Sports, and reminds us that GW has been around since 1821.

According to the National Labor Committee, the average Malaysian factory worker makes only \$1.15 an hour.

Announcer: There isn't too much information available on textile factories in Malaysia. However, this country can be found listed along with its Asian neighbors as some of the worst sweatshop abusers in the world. In 1994 the World Bank wrote that the Malaysian government restructured its labor sector to suppress radical activity, in order to ensure political stability. The World Bank has said that the government abolished trade-based labor unions and promoted the creation of company-based unions.

Announcer: As we saw in earlier Mexico, company-based unions tend to have little positive affect on the lives of workers. They almost always allow horrible and unlawful practices to continue inside the workplace, which are detrimental to the health and well being of factory employees. Let's see who we've got next.

T-shirt from Mexico:

Announcer: Here comes _____, with a t-shirt made in Mexico. We were speaking earlier of company unions, and I would bet that _____'s t-shirt was made in a factory with a company union, if it had any union at all. What do you think _____?

Announcer: Well, you may be right _____. But, GW does use the Mexmode factory in Mexico, which has one of the first independent unions in all of Mexico's factories. The factory, which used to be known as Kukdong, was the site of the WRC's first investigation last year. The WRC investigation uncovered deplorable and unlawful working conditions, including rotten food, child labor, and physical and verbal abuse by managers.

Announcer: That's right, and because of the WRC investigation, and pressure put on the factory management by US students, administrators, and companies, the Mexmode factory has been cleaned up. Workers are no longer eating rotten food, and they were able to vote in their own independent union. It seems to me that the WRC is effective in what it does, and that it produces real positive change.

Announcer: Maybe the GW administration should reconsider affiliating with the Worker Rights Consortium, after all. Let's see what our next model is wearing.

Visor and Fleece from Taiwan:

Announcer: It looks like _____ is wearing both a GW fleece and a GW visor. Both items were made in Taiwan by Gear for Sports. Joshua Brown served as a factory inspector in Taiwan for some time, and he has published articles describing what he saw. Joshua's inspecting company was paid by major manufacturing companies, which are household names here in the U.S.

Announcer: Joshua described one factory that he visited as "a dark basement factory with poor ventilation and dangerous equipment." He went on to say that there was no first aid kit and the fire extinguishers had expired many years before. Workers that he interviewed told him that they were being paid half of the wage assigned to them in their contract. One worker expressed the desire to run away, but this boss kept all of his documentation in a safe. Essentially, he was trapped into working for that factory.

Announcer: That's horrible _____. It sounds like indentured servitude to me. In another factory Joshua uncovered dangerous metal-melting chemicals in large vats. Workers who were wearing flip-flops were mixing these chemicals, a clear danger to their health. At this same factory, workers were not being paid overtime at the legal rate, imported workers were denied access to their passports, and many workers were working 90-hours a week.

Announcer: It seems like Joshua saw a lot of terrible things while he was inspecting factories in Taiwan. Most of these violations did not reach the American public, however, because the companies, which support Joshua's monitoring agency, don't always make this information public. This is another reason why affiliating with an independent monitoring agency, like the WRC, is so important. Let's go to our next model.

Hooded Sweatshirt from Mexico

Announcer: Next up we've got _____, with a styling new GW hoodie. This sweatshirt, like many of the clothes we're modeling this afternoon, was made in Mexico. _____, you've got a story from a worker from Mexico, don't you?

Announcer: Yes, I've got testimony from a worker named Cristina who works in a factory in Mexico. She says, "I work at Vaqueros Navarra. I've worked there for 5 years. I earn 280 pesos a week (US\$35). I pay 72 pesos a week (US\$9) to get a ride to work. I'm never allowed to take a

vacation. Monday through Friday, I work from 8:15 in the morning to 8:15 or 8:30 at night. Sometimes I stay until 9:30 at night. I get one hour for lunch. Saturday I work from 8 a.m. to 4 or 5 p.m., with no break. I am very hungry by the time I leave work. I'm never paid anything extra if I work more hours."

Announcer: Wow, it sounds like Cristina is worked pretty hard. I don't know how I would survive if I had to work that many hours a week and especially on Saturdays working for 9 hours without a break. It's pretty horrific what some companies force their workers to do. Let's see what our next model has to show.

Sweatshirt made by Champion in Guatemala

Announcer: _____ is wearing a Champion GW sweatshirt made in Guatemala. Last year, the Progressive Student Union was able to receive public disclosure of the names and locations of the factories that produce for GW through the Collegiate Licensing Company. However, this disclosure info shows no Champion factories in Guatemala. The CLC has been proven wrong before. Numerous colleges and universities nationwide have found New Era Cap Company hats in their bookstores, which say "Made in China." Yet, the CLC's disclosure information contains no mention of any New Era factories in China. Our university sites the Collegiate Licensing Company's code of conduct as a reason not to create one of its own. But, if the CLC can't even be honest about where its clothes are made, how can we trust it to be honest about what conditions its clothing is made under?

Announcer: Two of the biggest problems in Guatemala's textile factories are sexual discrimination and child labor. According to Human Rights Watch, one woman worker, Sara Fernández reported that she was forced to go to a private laboratory and pay for a pregnancy exam in order to provide proof that she was not pregnant, before a factory would hire her. Another female factory worker, Miriam de Rosario, was fired from her job when she was 27 years old because she was pregnant. Managers told her that she would not work extra hours, could not be made to stand for long periods of time, and would not work as hard as others, because of her pregnancy.

Announcer: Many female workers in Guatemala's factories are discriminated against based on their reproductive status, that is, pregnancy and maternity status and access to reproductive health care. Indigenous female workers face discrimination based upon both sex and ethnicity. Many factories require women to prove their pregnancy status as a condition of employment, either through questions on job applications, in interviews, or through physical examinations. Additionally, many employers deny women their full maternity benefits as required by Guatemalan law, if they do become pregnant on the job.

Announcer: Guatemalan factories also regularly obstruct workers' access to the employee health care system, even though workers have a right to belong. They do this by either not enrolling employees or by denying them the necessary certificate and time off to visit a health facility. Additionally, women often start work when they are under the age of 18. Human Rights Watch estimates that 12% of workers in this industry in Guatemala are under the age of 16. Our next model is _____ let's see what we can find out about (his/her) clothing.

Sweatshirt made in Mexico and Hat made in China

Announcer: _____ is wearing a GW hat made in China and a GW sweatshirt from Mexico. We've talked a lot about Mexico today, but we haven't discussed why there are so many instances of poor working conditions in Mexico. The apparel industry in Mexico underwent tremendous growth during the 1990s. The signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which came into effect in 1994, was a major contributor to this growth.

Announcer: Another free trade agreement, which is currently being discussed, is the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). This agreement would essentially expand NAFTA to all of the countries in the Americas, excluding only Cuba. Free trade has allowed large US companies to enter Mexico and set up factories at an extremely low cost, thus taking away US jobs. Traditionally, these companies are deeply involved in the race to the bottom, and factories in free trade zones tend to exploit their workers and break local labor laws in order to keep costs down.

Announcer: The hat that _____ is wearing was probably not made under the very best conditions either. The National Labor Committee did a survey of 21 apparel factories in China and discovered 10-15 hour shifts per day, 60-90 hour work weeks, and 6 and 7 day work weeks. Workers generally receive below subsistence wages of 13-28 cents an hour with no benefits and forced, uncompensated overtime. Factories are usually an unsafe and unsanitary working environment, with workers being housed in crowded dormitories with 24 hour surveillance.

Announcer: The majority of factory workers in China are young, immigrant women from rural areas. Many of these workers are unaware of their legal rights. Many workers live in constant fear of being fired for protesting factory conditions or discussing them with outside reporters. Factory owners and managers repress workers' attempts to organize independently.

Hooded Sweatshirt made by MV Sport in Pakistan

Announcer: Our next model _____, is wearing a hooded sweatshirt made by MV Sport in Karachi, Pakistan. Workers in Pakistan's factories receive a salary of somewhere between 20 and 26 cents an hour. A typical Pakistani survives on less than \$5 per day, and traditionally, the earnings of one person go to feed many mouths. With inflation high, it is very difficult for a low-income population to survive.

Announcer: Pakistan has become a major production center for export to world markets. Unfortunately, however, this has not come without cost. The problem of child labor runs rampant throughout Pakistan, and the National Labor Committee estimates that 60% of Pakistani children under the age of 14 work to support their families. Children work instead of going to school. As an institute of higher education, GW should do everything possible to ensure that it does not support the labor of children over the education of children. Who do we have up next?

T-Shirt made in Mexico

Announcer: Our next model is _____, who is wearing a sweatshirt from northeastern Mexico. In this area, 4 out of 10 new jobs over the past few years have been textile factory jobs. Textile factories didn't arrive in this area until the 1980s, but since that time industry growth has been incredible. It should also be noted that since the imposition of NAFTA, union representation in this area has declined considerably and collective bargaining is rare.

Announcer: While company investment into northeastern Mexico may have increased, government spending on public services decreased by more than 50% between 1994 and 1999. Public transportation, education, health care, and urban infrastructure, are all in decline. Infrastructure for export transportation and investment has improved, however. Let's bring up our next model.

Long Sleeve T-Shirt by Jansport from US

Announcer: _____ is wearing a Jansport long sleeve t-shirt made right here in the USA. When most people hear the word sweatshop, they automatically think of workers somewhere in the global south. However, it is estimated that 50% of the garment factories in the US can be considered sweatshops as well. This is especially true in big cities such as New York and LA. Sweatshops hide in basements of buildings and often hire immigrants. Sweatshops are a huge problem all over the world, but too often we forget that there are people being exploited right in our own backyards.

Announcer: That's all very true, _____, but sweatshops in America don't always hide in big cities, and the typical sweatshop worker doesn't have to be an immigrant. In Derby, NY, a small town outside of Buffalo, workers at the New Era Cap factory have been on strike since July.

The WRC conducted an investigation of the plant last summer and found that the injury rate at this particular factory was 4 times the industry average. Additionally, the company's managers refused to negotiate a fair contract, and instead proposed a contract that would significantly lower the wages of the majority of workers. These are only a few of the abuses uncovered in a small town factory in New York. Fortunately, GW suspended its contract with the New Era Cap

Company, at the request of New Era employees, until the company negotiates fairly with its workers.

Sweatshirt made by Champion in Mexico

Announcer: _____ is modeling for us a lovely GW sweatshirt made by Champion in Mexico. It is quite possibly made in the northeastern region of Mexico where workers make between 16 and 32 US dollars per week. It is estimated that workers must make \$69 per week in order to meet their basic needs. Despite a legal maximum of 8 work hours per day, most workers work 9-12 hour days, with overtime not being rewarded at a premium rate, and forced overtime is common.

Announcer: While this area of Mexico is typically advertised as an area in which companies have the option of hiring either union or non-union labor, many instances of firings and black listings when workers attempt to form an independent union, have been reported. There are also numerous reports of sexual harassment in the workplace, and women undergo forced pregnancy tests upon hiring, and subsequently every 2 months. A high incident of accidents is common in this area due, in large part, to poor health and safety practices. Unjustified firing is another common practice in this area.

Hat and Hippo Toy made in China

Announcer: _____, our next model, is wearing a GW hat and holding a GW hippo stuffed animal. Both items were made in China. China's garment sector is made up primarily of rural workers who come to the city. They are forced to obtain a work permit before they are allowed to leave their villages, and must gain another work permit once they are employed in the city. Rural workers are not entitled to any benefits once they enter the city, and do not have the right to own property, to residency, or to bring their family into the city with them. Once a worker's contract is up, she is forced to return to her village.

Announcer: Many factories pay for some or all work permits when migrant workers are unable to afford it. Others require new workers to pay a deposit, which is only returned when their contract is finished. Other methods of bonding workers to a company are factories retaining part of workers monthly wages or keeping workers permits and identity papers. Workers are required to live in dormitories that are often crowded, dirty, and highly regulated.

Announcer: Health conditions in China's factories are deplorable as well. High rates of lung disease have been found among cotton textile workers in China, and exposure to toxic chemicals used in cloth processing and shoe production is also extremely dangerous. Repetitive motion injuries are also extremely common. Most workers in Chinese factories are young females. Women over the age of 35 are often fired simply because of their age, and have extreme difficulty finding work elsewhere.

Announcer: The cute hippo in _____'s hand was probably made by someone who is about the age of a typical GW student. The National Labor Committee recently came out with a report uncovering the truth behind China's toy factories. Most workers work mandatory 15-16 ½ hour shifts, with some reaching 20 hours. A typical workweek is 7 days, and workers work every day of the month for 12-14 cent wages. This brings their earnings to about \$8.42 for a 71 ¼ hour workweek. Factory temperatures often reach 104 degrees. Workers are working with chemicals they know nothing about, and which are extremely dangerous. Workers are constantly dizzy and nauseas, and many faint. Sick workers are fired. These are the appalling conditions under which 71% of the toys imported into the US are made.

T-Shirt from Mexico

Announcer: _____ is wearing a t-shirt, which was made in northeastern Mexico. Factory workers in this part of Mexico are supervised rigidly and must meet daily production quotas. One worker stated that, "They won't even give you a chance to stand up, turn your head, sigh or stretch, because otherwise you will not have enough time to make your quota."

Announcer: Working conditions in this sector of Mexico are extremely unhealthy. Migraines, allergies, skin problems, back problems, arthritis, asthma, and other lung diseases are quite common. Communities surrounding factories are negatively affected, as well. Environmental degradation, depletion of natural resources (especially water), health problems, family violence, and addictions are also common. Let's see what our next model is wearing.

Zip-Sweatshirt made by Gear for Sports in Pakistan and a T-shirt from Israel

Announcer: Our next model, _____, is wearing a stylish zip-sweatshirt made by Gear for Sports in Pakistan, and underneath, (she/he) has on a GW t-shirt made in Israel. We discussed earlier the large problem of child labor in Pakistan. Along with apparel, the US imports soccer balls from Pakistan. In fact, 80% of soccer balls imported into the US are produced in a small eastern region of Pakistan. The workers in this area typically fall between 5 and 14 years of age, according to the International Labor Rights Fund. They are sold into servitude and are forced to work 20 hour days, 7 days a week, often eating, sleeping, and working in the same small room.

Announcer: _____'s t-shirt was made in Jerusalem. Jerusalem is seen as a place of refuge for many people. However, many people working in the garment factories of Jerusalem would like to seek refuge from the city. Jerusalem, like most major cities worldwide, hides its garment factories, and the conditions under which clothing is made can only be speculated. However, many US consumers have traditionally accepted the "Made in Israel" label, as an assurance of safe, lawful, working conditions. Companies have, however, built factories in parts of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, which are not considered part of Israel proper. Yet, because of US trade law, factories in these areas can legally sew "Made in Israel" labels into their clothing.

Sweatshirt from Mexico

Announcer: Well, we've only got one model left, and we'd like to thank you for coming out to our sweatshop fashion show this afternoon. We encourage you to please stick around for some more speakers and chanting. Our last model is _____, and (he/she) is wearing a GW sweatshirt manufactured in Mexico.

Announcer: As our final model shows off (his/her) sweatshirt, I would like to read a story from Karina Sánchez, a 20 year old factory worker in Mexico. She says, "I go in at 3 in the afternoon, and leave at midnight. If I have to do overtime, I don't leave until 3 o'clock in the morning. We are only allowed to go the washrooms 3 times a day, for 2 minutes each time. We have 10 minutes to eat between 5 and 6 in the evening, and 15 minutes after 9 o'clock. Outside of that we cannot talk. We are treated somewhat like slaves. We can't talk, laugh, or anything. By the end of the day, you just want to get home and lie down."

Thank you very much for joining us, we hope you will urge President Trachtenberg to affiliate with the Worker Rights Consortium in order help end sweatshop labor.

Section Three: Sweat-Free Campus Campaigns



The Extended History of United Students Against Sweatshops (and the No Sweat Movement)



The Industrial Revolution – Captains of Industry create bold new ways to produce all kinds of things and to violate human rights.

The 1890s – Progressive bigwigs like Jane Addams and Florence Kelley organized legislative campaigns with Garment workers.

Early 1900s - 1910s - Ongoing organizing occurs in the garment industry. Major unions, the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (1900) and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America (1914) are created.

March 25, 1911 – Fire breaks out at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory. 146 workers, mostly teenage women are killed. Public outrage creates emboldens the movement. Over the following decades the unions won contracts that greatly improved wages and working conditions and set up health care, pension and housing programs.

1950 - The two unions and the Textile Workers Union of America (formed in 1939) represent nearly 1 million workers.

the 1960s - Apparel production began relocating from northern cities to the U.S. South and eventually to Central America, the Caribbean and Asia. The large share garment industry gradually shifts to developing nations over the next 20 years. On the activism side, labor is not a key issue.

the 1980s – Increased organizing occurs in nations of the global South.

The early 1990s – the global no-sweat movement picks up.

Spring 1994 – *Here comes student-labor in the 90s!* The first SLAC (Student Labor Action Coalition) forms at U-Wisconsin Madison, supporting workers at the A. E. Staley corn processing plant in Decatur, Illinois.

August 2, 1995 - A multi-agency task force raids an apartment complex in El Monte, California finding 72 workers in one of the most horrendous U.S. sweatshops in modern times. The workers had been held in virtual slavery behind fences tipped with razor wire and forced to sew in horrendous conditions.

1996 – Clinton administration creates the (Fair Labor Association) FLA (in principle). Fans of corporate scams love it. Anti-sweatshop activists raise fists in anger. For more information about the FLA ask for USAS' FLA critique.

Summer 1996 – Kathy Lee cries on national TV because she has to share a room with Charlie Kernigan.

Summer 1997 - Interns at UNITE! design the first organizing manual for the “Sweat-Free Campus” campaign and brought the idea to Union Summer participants and campus labor activists around the country.

July 1998 – At a conference of 30+ schools in the NYC USAS is officially founded!!

All through 1999 – Sit-ins and demonstrations for Universities to adopt codes of conduct. By the end of the year codes are standard at most universities.

July 1999 - Over 200 students gathered in Washington, DC for the second Sweat-Free Campus Conference. USAS hired its first staff organizer just before the conference and set up an office in DC. At the conference, we set up a governing structure for USAS to facilitate the continued success and expansion of this campaign. The conference body also decided to keep focusing on full public disclosure as a demand of the campaign and work to create an alternative to the FLA, which is now the Worker Rights Consortium.

October 1999 – Nike and other companies announced that they would comply with the requirement to publicly disclose their factory locations. USAS Victory! This had been a demand the anti-sweatshop movement had always made. You can view all of the factory disclosure information online at:

<http://www.workersrights.org/fdd.asp>

Spring semester 2000 – All across the nation students do sit-ins for schools to join the WRC. Purdue University does a hunger strike. Boiler up!

April 2000 – WRC holds founding meeting, nearly 50 schools are affiliated, including the entire University of California system.

January 2001 – Organizers at the Kukdong factory in Mexico are fired. Kukdong produced university licensed apparel for Nike and Reebok. Workers had been organizing due to poor conditions at the factory, which included rotten cafeteria food. At a worker-led protest against the treatment of the workers, riot police forcibly evict them.

March 2001 – USAS delegation to the New Era hat factory in Derby, NY (it's near Buffalo).

Spring Semester 2001 – Students engage in solidarity actions with the workers at Kukdong, simultaneously putting pressure on administrations and the brands involved. The organizing was ultimately successful...

September 2001 – SITEMEX (the Kukdong union) signs a collective bargaining contract with MexMode (new name of the factory)! SITEMEX is the first independent union in the Mexican garment sector in 20 years!

Fall Semester 2001 – After a WRC report on dangerous conditions in the Derby New Era factory [, New York. Students pressured New Era into meeting these worker demands by having their colleges and universities discontinue or postpone their contracts with New Era.. After a nearly year-long campaign, New Era gave in to worker demands! All told **thirteen** schools discontinued or postponed their New Era contracts!

January 2003 – Beginning of organizing around Primo, a factory in El Salvador that produces college and university logo goods for Lands' End. Seven schools eventually cut contracts with Land's End.

2003 – Following a campaign by USAS, workers at the BJ&B factory in the Dominican Republic establish the first union in a Free Trade Zone in the Caribbean basin in five years!

2004 - Just Garments is formed!

Summer '04 – Cut and Runs occur at both El Progreso and Dae Joo Leports. Students organize in solidarity with DJL workers, but ultimately the factory is closed and production is moved.

Fall '04 – Students organize around the closure at El Progreso and in response to the impending phase-out of the MFA. A number of schools require licensees to not source from Gildan. A resolution may occur relatively soon (see more information later on).

January 05 (and beyond...): Students meet in D.C. to strategize on a new campaign in university apparel. Afterwards they all organize so well that brands turn to butter and worker rights are actually respected in factories where colligate apparel is produced.

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

Here's some information about some of the current challenges and issues that USAS has been facing in the previous year. Getting into these examples will provide a good picture of what we need to accomplish.

The Multi-Fibre Arrangement

A long in the works change in trade rules has the power to undo the gains which workers and students have made in improving conditions in the collegiate apparel industry.



Background

The Multi Fiber Arrangement (MFA) was introduced in 1974 outside the bounds of the General Agreement on Trade and Tarrifs (GATT) as a protectionist measure. The MFA was the basis by which industrialized countries have been restricted imports on textile and garments from developing countries. Under the MFA nations would agree on quotas (restrictions on the quantities of specified items which can be traded between nations) for specific types of clothing or textiles on a year-by-year basis. The exporting nation would then allocate licenses to production firms to export a certain portion of each quota to the importing nation.

The MFA was brought in as a short-term measure to give industrialized countries some breathing space to adjust to competition from imports from developing countries. Special measures were deemed necessary for textiles and garments because the labor intensive nature of the industries meant that it was relatively easy for developing countries to enter and compete in the global market. For a little over 20 years the MFA governed world trade in textiles and garments.

The Agreement on Textiles and Clothing (ATC) was introduced at the end of the Uruguay round in 1995. The ATC is an agreement that gradually phased out the Multi Fiber Arrangement over a period of 10 years, the final quotas being lifted on Jan. 1st 2005. The aim is to bring trade in textiles and clothing into line with the rules of the newly established World Trade Organization. This agreement is seen as operating in the interests of developing countries, since it increases their access to the previously protected markets of industrialized countries. As is the case with the WTO little attention is paid to what the implications are for workers, even though there are likely to be massive changes in the very structure of the industry. It is important to look at what the ATC will mean in practice not only for different countries, but also for workers.

Effects

The MFA didn't do much for protecting the garment and textile sectors of the developed countries. A massive shift in the production of textiles and garments to developing countries still occurred throughout the 70s and 80s as Asia became the world's foremost t&g exporter. Initially production was concentrated in the East Asian countries like Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore and Taiwan. However, by the middle of the 80s other Asian countries became major producers as their infrastructure improved and trade rules began to favor them. Clothing exports from Thailand, for example increased five-fold between 1980 and 1989. While dramatic, the shift would have been greater without the continuous restrictions of the MFA. It is estimated that some developing countries have lost billions of dollars of foreign trade because of the MFA's restrictions.

Additionally, the MFA has had a great effect on the distribution of textile and garment production between different developing countries. Since quotas must be negotiated on a nation by nation basis they've been established at different levels in different places. This has helped certain countries' sectors to expand while it has limited others. For example, strict quotas generally operate on imports from more developed nations like Korea and Hong Kong, but the EU imposes no restrictions on textile and garment imports from a group of Least Developed Countries (LDCs). So, LDCs have a greater opportunity to sell to the large EU market, and thus expand. The rapid expansion of the garment industry in Bangladesh during the 1980s, for example, was in part

because it's status as LDC allowed it duty free exports to the EU unrestricted by the quota system. By mechanisms such as this the global textile and apparel industries are truly global in scope – as significant production occurs in over 100 countries.

When they operated the diversity of the quotas supplied a small amount of job security to garment workers worldwide, since the nation is more or less guaranteed to export some amount of textiles and garments, there's always demand for labor. It is projected, however, that with the phase-out of the MFA, garment production will shift from a large collection LDC's and become highly concentrated in a few of these countries (China and India; with others such as South Korea, Vietnam, Pakistan, Taiwan, Hong Kong also experiencing some type of boost). And as we'll see, the reasons for such concentration are particularly distressing.

Implications for workers

The initial impact of the phase-out will be highly disruptive to employment, particularly in the next two years. The location of apparel jobs will shift even more rapidly than we've seen in the past. For example, if factories in Indonesia are no longer competitive because of the costs of respecting workers' rights they can be closed overnight. We saw this with PT Dae Joo Leports (more info on that later). Millions of jobs are at stake, particularly for women who make up the majority of garment workers. Most workers have migrated from rural areas and it will be very difficult for them to return to their villages. On a large scale, the shift will shake up the structure of the industry and will impact the already volatile economies of developing nations. As an organizer from the Dominican Republic put it "the MFA has the power to decapitate economies". As it stands right now, the phase-out of the MFA will bring earth-shattering effects to nations and communities whose economies are based on textile and garment production.

The phase-out also carries negative implications for workers' rights. The increase in competition at a global, national and local level will result in downward pressure on working conditions. The MFA will only serve to speed up the race to the bottom and push the floor ever lower. With no quota restrictions, brands will be able to source entirely from countries with artificially low labor costs. China, one of the biggest projected winners from the MFA phase-out, bans freedom of association outright. So every factory in that nation is violating the fundamental right of workers to organize. It is important to be keenly aware of the implications of the MFA phase-out in these months since its expiration, so that we can ensure that 'higher/lower costs' are not simply a front for degrading labor standards and crushing worker organizing.

Further Reading

- ★ <http://repositories.cdlib.org/isber/cgs/05/>

Assessing the Impact of the Phasing-out of the Agreement on Textiles and Clothing on Apparel Exports on the Least Developed and Developing Countries. by Richard P. Applebaum

- ★ http://r0.unctad.org/trade_env/test1/meetings/genderDITC/nuriaHayashi2.pdf

Trade in Textiles and Clothing: Priority Issues for Women in the Post-ATC. by Michiko Hayashi

- ★ <http://www.sweatshopwatch.org/global/euconf.html>

Much shorter, but also interesting, with a good list of further materials to check out at the end

Older ideas on MFA policy on the University Level

These have been presented to students as point to bring up with administrators. Considering them can add to the proposals and help to give insight as to what kinds of demands we need to make in the new campaign to deal with the MFA phase-out.

1. **Prevent "cutting and running" as a way of avoiding compliance with the code of conduct:** the expiration of the MFA will make it much easier for licensees to shift production from factories where workers are attempting to exercise their rights or where improvements

have been made. Licensees must maintain relationships with factories where violations are uncovered and use their leverage to ensure that the code is enforced. This cut and run policy can be divided into two main categories:

- a) **Prevent licensees from terminating relationships with factories where workers have raised concerns about working conditions or while remediation efforts are in progress, unless this action is requested by the affected workers:** Workers will never be truly able to exercise their associational rights if they fear that licensees will shift orders and factories might shut down in retaliation. Similarly, once violations are documented by monitoring organizations, it is imperative that licensees remain in the factory in question to ensure that successful remediation occurs.
 - b) **Protect good factories:** there have been a number of factories where workers have seen significant, often unprecedented improvements in conditions as the result of efforts to enforce university codes of conduct. Due to slightly higher costs associated with respect for worker rights, these factories are particularly threatened at this time. It is imperative that *University X* licensees continue to source from these good factories, and in doing so, ensure that they stay open.
2. **Stop the shift of university production to countries that prohibit freedom of association:** it is an implicit violation of *University X's* code of conduct for a licensee to shift production from a country where workers have the legal right to organize and bargain collectively to a country where they do not simply to take advantage of somewhat lower costs. We can prevent this shift of *University X* production to places where enforcement of our code of conduct is impossible by taking a position that several other universities have taken recently to either prohibit or limit production in China and other countries where freedom of association is barred by law. Such a policy is critical to protecting the integrity of *University X's* code of conduct.

Questions to Think about:

- ★ What are the underlying problems with the apparel industry, how does the MFA exaggerate them? What can students do?
- ★ Greater mobility of production leads to greater challenges in worker organizing, how can we respond to this?

Cutting and Running



Cutting and running is simple and all too common. When workers at a particular factory start to organize, or successfully do so and achieve better conditions factory owners or brands either pull out of the factory outright, or gradually shift production away from the factory into non-organized ones. USAS is currently involved in a campaign to remedy one such cut and run with Gildan workers from a factory in El Progreso, Honduras. However, cutting and running isn't limited to one factory or campaign and []. First though, here's some information on a campaign that was waged (not fully successfully) over the summer, around PT Dae Joo Leports, in Indonesia.

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Dae Joo Leports

Background

In the '03 and '04, workers at Dae Joo Leports Indonesia (DJL), who make backpacks for Jansport, Eastpak, Adidas, REI and other well known brands dared to exercise their right to organize and collectively bargain, and met significant success. The union's efforts have resulted in huge improvements at the factory like health care and a union contract. For example, thousands of workers and their families now have the health care plan they are entitled to by law, which most factories in Indonesia never provide. There are now two independent unions at the facility and management has been negotiating with them in a major breakthrough for the right to freedom of association. Discussions with the unions led to significant improvements at the factory. Dae Joo was on it's way to becoming a [] model for []. The unfortunate outcome brings home what the effects of the MFA and cutting and running really mean.



For much more comprehensive Dae Joo Leports information check out the report at:

<http://www.workersrights.org/PT%20DAE%20JOO%20LEPORTS%208-26-03.pdf>

Events

Summer '04. It's brought to USAS' attention that DJL is schedule for imminent closure. Students begin to organize, and many send letters to and pressure Jansport and VF.

Mid-July In response to the refusal of Dae Joo to document its claims as to the reasons for the shutdown, adidas terminated its relationship with the company. Within days, top Dae Joo executives flew to the United States to meet with VF/Jansport, Agron, and the WRC. During the WRC's meeting with the Dae Joo executives, it became clear that the company was willing to consider keeping the factory open in order to win Adidas back as a customer. Unfortunately, it proved to be too late in the closure process to reverse the decision -- PT Dae Joo Leports had already ceased operations and all orders and cloth had been transferred to China.

On August 1, the PT Dae Joo Leports factory in Indonesia was permanently closed. All production orders have been shifted to China where the factory's parent company operates another facility. (Parent Company) Dae Joo shut down the factory down not because it was incapable of turning a profit, but because they didn't want to have to deal with organizing workers. These costs included the cost of health care for workers and their families, something that is required by Indonesian law but rarely provided, and the obligation to bargain in good faith with an independent union.

On a good note, university pressure did have an impact on the severance paid to the 1,300 workers who lost their jobs with the closure of the factory. Both VF and Jansport pushed Dae Joo hard on this issue, not only to pay the legal minimum severance but to pay substantially more (to make up for Dae Joo's mishandling of the closure process). Had it not been for the outside pressure, it is quite possible that the workers in Indonesia would have received nothing -- it is common in Indonesia for factories to close and simply to ignore their legal severance obligations. At best, workers would have received half of the legally mandated amount of severance, which is the most Dae Joo was prepared to pay until the pressure from the licensees became intense. In the end, thanks to this pressure, the union at the factory was able to get a severance agreement that called for the full legal amount of severance plus an additional three months' severance for every worker and a three month extension of family health insurance. This was the full package that the licensees had demanded and their efforts were central to achieving it.

Questions to ponder

Some things to think about after Dae Joo: VF's bargaining was not in good faith, ie. they sent mixed messages to [] (no, no don't really worry about [], just pay more severance and it'll be ok). How can we make sure that [brands] like VF actually [send a clear and powerful message]?



Gildan, El Progreso

Background:

El Progreso, a factory in Honduras, owned by Montreal-based Gildan Activewear, produces t-shirts and other apparel for a substantial number of collegiate licensees (a list is available if you'd like to check which of your school's licensees source from Gildan). The WRC (and FLA) conducted investigations of this factory and both have identified serious code of conduct violations. Once discussions were underway about remedying the violations Gildan suddenly announced that the factory would be closed in September and obviously, no real remediation would occur. For much more comprehensive El Progreso information check out the report at: http://www.workersrights.org/Gildan-El_Progreso_7-29-04.pdf

Events

- ★ FLA makes bogus demands of Gildan.
- ★ Universities pressure their admins
- ★ Gildan is allowed back into the FLA (big surprise)
- ★ Students continue to press the issue.

Newest Update

Gildan is going to give first hire priority at numerous factories around that area to fired El Progreso employees, provide transportation to workers to factories in other areas.

campaigns to join the worker rights consortium

Updated July 2005

What is the WRC? Why should my school join?

The Worker Rights Consortium (WRC) is a non-profit organization created by students, labor rights experts, and workers from across the globe with participation from college and university administrators. The WRC's purpose is to enforce manufacturing codes of conduct adopted by colleges, universities, high schools, and school districts; these codes are designed to ensure that factories producing clothing and other goods bearing school logos respect the basic rights of workers, such as the freedom of association and overtime pay. Today there are more than 140 colleges and universities affiliated with the WRC, using their leverage in the \$4 billion collegiate apparel market to support workers' rights in the global economy. In the fall of 2004, the WRC will open its doors to affiliations from the high school and school district levels. USAS students have been the driving force behind the WRC since day one. We are the ones who work on our campuses to pressure our administrations to adopt codes and affiliate. It is through this process that we build our power as students to be in solidarity with workers who are organizing globally. The WRC has been enormously successful in its support for worker organizing in locations from the Kukdong factory in Puebla, Mexico to the New Era factory in upstate New York, as well as the Dominican Republic, Indonesia, and elsewhere. The WRC affiliation campaign is part of a strategy for any student group that is working to build power for labor justice.



Resources United Students Against Sweatshops can offer you:

- ★ Materials to do educational events at your school, such as videos, literature, and speakers.
- ★ An organizing manual to help you formulate campaign strategy.
- ★ Connections to labor and community organizations in your area that will be your allies in these campaigns, as well as connections to worker organizations around the world.
- ★ A whole network of students around the country who are running these campaigns and winning! USAS chapters have so much to offer each other in terms of strategy, advice, and student power.
- ★ Assistance from the charming and experienced USAS staff!
- ★ Let us know what else you need!

What schools are currently running WRC affiliation campaigns?

Amherst College, Amherst, MA

University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA

The Claremont Colleges, Claremont, CA

San Jose State, San Jose, CA

The George Washington University, Washington, DC...and many more!

Sweat-Free Campus Campaign Outline

Goals:

- ★ Affiliation with the independent monitoring agency the Worker Rights Consortium
- ★ A code of conduct with full disclosure of the names and locations of factories producing for the school, as well as the wages paid to workers who manufacture the garments and a commitment to pay them living wages
- ★ Bringing together students' moral principles and universities' higher ethical standards and institutional power against sweatshops.
- ★ Increased awareness among students and faculty of sweatshop abuse as a national/international issue of concern.

Getting Started: Planning & Preparation Phase (see Organizing Section for Elaboration)

- ★ Research the school's purchasing and licensing structures and the companies they deal with.
- ★ Broad education of the campus community (and surrounding community as well) about:
 - ★ Sweatshop issues in general
 - ★ How schools/students fit in
 - ★ The nationwide Sweat-Free Campus Campaign
 - ★ Your school's specific involvement

Outreach to a wide range of groups & individuals.

- ★ Individual students (undergrad, grad, etc.) & student organizations
- ★ Faculty (& supportive others like chaplains)
- ★ Campus employee unions (including TA & faculty unions if any)
- ★ Community residents and organizations

Organizing & Action Phase:

Serious organizing of students (etc.) into solid engagement with and activity on the campaign. Start by using simple actions for recruitment and group building. Be patient and realistic. Please see the "Organize!" document also included in this manual for greater details.

Set up a coalition/organization/sub-group to run the campaign.

- ★ Not just students, from the beginning
- ★ Design a campus-specific strategy for the campaign
- ★ Have everyone involved in decision making, strategy and planning - keep people involved from the beginning
- ★ Meet people where they're at; some people don't have as much time and dedication as others, be patient, accepting, and happy that they see eye to eye on the same issues as you and want to help with the campaign

Ongoing outreach, education, and publicity to gain more support and keep the campus & community at-large informed about the progress of the campaign.

Meetings/negotiations with the administration.

- ★ Set a preliminary meeting a few weeks into the campaign, and have the administration sign a petition saying they are against sweatshops

- ★ Set time limits for administration response to avoid endless run-arounds
- ★ Base tone of meetings on responses, and on what will make administrators move

Actions and events to increase pressure

- ★ Build on each other progressively in numbers and excitement
- ★ Tone and specifics determined by level of support and administration response
- ★ Press coverage can be a crucial way of putting pressure on administrators

The New Sweat-Free Campus Campaign

This Fall semester, USAS is launching an ambitious new campaign that will vastly strengthen the power of the campus anti-sweatshop movement. Under the new proposal, university apparel companies will be forced to produce garments in truly sweat-free factories where workers have a voice on the job and the power to win livable wages.

The Problem:

Though universities have adopted anti-sweatshop policies, the reality is that university apparel is still made under sweatshop conditions in factories around the world.

Sweatshop conditions and poverty wages: Workers making university apparel face abusive treatment, excessive working hours, dangerous conditions, and wages that are inadequate to meet basic needs.

Illegal repression: When workers organize and demand improvements, they are subject to threats, harassment, illegal firings, and the closure of their factories.

The race to the bottom: As multinational brands scan the globe for the cheapest products, supplier factories face tremendous pressure to keep costs to a bare minimum. In this reality, workers and their unions have little hope of winning the wages and conditions they need.

The Solution:

University apparel should be made in designated sweat-free factories, where workers have a voice on the job to stop sweatshop abuses and earn a living wage.

A voice on the job: The best way to eliminate sweatshops is for workers to have the power to advocate for their interests on a daily basis through the collective voice of a union. University products must be made in factories where workers have this voice to eliminate sweatshop abuses.

A living wage: The prices paid by U.S. clothing companies are simply too low for factories to pay workers enough to meet their basic needs. In order for workers to earn the income they need, we must require brands to pay the designated factories prices high enough to enable living wages.

An alternative to the Wal-Mart model: Currently, most university apparel is produced in the same factories that produce for big box retailers like Wal-Mart, and under the sweatshop conditions that Wal-Mart has established as norms for the industry. We must create an alternative model – a race to the top – in which university apparel is produced in factories that demonstrate respect for worker rights – not just low prices – and in which worker victories are sustained and protected.

Background on the Sweat-Free Campus Campaign

Five years ago, universities throughout the country began adopting anti-sweatshop codes of conduct for university apparel. Since that time, we have seen codes of conduct used successfully to support workers' efforts to achieve positive change in individual factories. We are very proud of these achievements. But it is also true that even in factories in which there have been significant gains, these gains have been sharply limited and are under constant threat due to the destructive pressures of the apparel industry, and that the majority of university apparel continues to be made in factories that violate workers' rights. Workers producing university garments continue to endure abusive treatment, excessive hours, wages that are insufficient to meet basic needs, and illegal repression when they organize for improvements.

In order to make the principles behind our codes of conduct a reality, we believe our universities need to strengthen our policies and set a higher standard. USAS has launched a new campaign to get university apparel to be produced in a set of sweat-free designated factories. Each of these factories would be required to have a legitimate labor union, or another representative employee body, so that workers can have a voice at work. Each factory will be required to pay workers a living wage, as negotiated by worker representatives. And university licensees will be required to order products at prices and in sufficient quantities to allow the factories to pay a living wage and provide secure employment. This proposal is motivated by the following basic realities:

Workers need a voice at work to prevent sweatshop abuses. Workers are the best monitors of their working conditions. Unlike outside auditors – which may visit a factory once every several months or years – workers are on the shop floor day-in and day-out and they know better than anyone else what problems exist. When workers have a voice on the job through a union or other organization, they have the power to advocate for their interests and correct abuses when they occur, without being forced to rely on outside entities. Yet most factories producing university goods refuse to recognize workers' organizations and consequently workers have little power to prevent abuses.

Current wages are insufficient to meet workers' basic needs. Employment in factories producing for major multinational brands should be a ladder out of poverty. But by any reasonable measure, wages in factories producing collegiate apparel are woefully inadequate. Even according to official government data, wages of collegiate apparel workers in most major apparel producing countries fall well below what is deemed as necessary to cover basic subsistence needs for a family. At current wage levels, in order to provide meals for their families that meet basic, minimal nutrition standards workers would need to spend 50%-75% of their incomes solely on food; as a result, workers families' diets frequently lack critical sources of nutrients such as meat, fish and fruit. Rigorous cost of living analyses show that apparel workers typically earn roughly one half to one fourth of what they need to provide basic nutrition, shelter, energy, clothing, education, and transportation – what could be called a living wage.

Wages are kept low by price pressure from university licensees and other multinational brands. A key force keeping wages so low is the unreasonably low prices paid by brands to contract factories. In recent years, brands have demanded dramatic cuts in the prices they are willing to pay for their goods. For example, according to U.S. government data, during the past decade the price for cotton knit shirts paid by U.S. brands to factories in the top 15 producing countries fell by an average of 49.7%. By relentlessly demanding lower prices, brands squeeze their contractors and effectively place a ceiling on workers' wages. While labor costs are a small portion of a factory's overall production costs, they are the cost factor over which managers have the most control. Thus managers feel tremendous pressure to keep wages to an absolute minimum. And because in most apparel producing countries there is little meaningful enforcement of labor

law, factories can cut labor costs through illegal means – such as paying wages below the legal minimum – with impunity.

Brands prevent improvements by failing to reward factories that respect worker rights.

Complying with labor standards entails increased costs: it costs more to pay the minimum wage than to ignore it; it costs more to buy necessary safety equipment than to avoid such purchases. Yet brands, including university licensees, rarely reward factories that take on the costs of respecting worker rights by taking into account these expenses when negotiating prices or by directing business to factories that stand out for their compliance with labor standards. As a result, factories that do opt to accept the added costs of compliance are – perversely – made less likely to succeed than nearby factories that violate workers’ rights. It is thus not surprising that so few factories respect worker rights standards.

It is economically feasible to substantially raise wages. The economics of the industry are such that workers’ wages could be raised by substantial margins without factories or brands losing profits or consumers paying substantially higher prices. Wages typically account for about 1-1.5% of the final retail cost of a garment. For example, for a shirt sold on campus for \$20.00, workers would typically be paid about 25 cents. If the shirt’s retail price were to be increased to \$20.25, and the additional 25 cents went directly to workers, wages could be doubled. If brands absorb some of the increased costs, then price increases would be that much smaller.

For workers to achieve truly sweat-free conditions, we must create an alternative to the Wal-Mart model. University products typically comprise a small minority of the goods being produced at a given factory; the rest of the factory’s production is for big box retailers or other non-collegiate brands that are not committed to our universities’ standards. We cannot ensure that the rights of workers making university apparel are respected so long as this apparel is being produced along side Wal-Mart products and under the sweatshop conditions that Wal-Mart and other brands have established as norms for the industry. Only by creating an alternative model, in which business is contingent upon respect for workers’ rights rather than solely low prices, will it be possible for workers making collegiate apparel to win truly sweatshop-free conditions. Under our proposal, university apparel will be made in factories that produce primarily for the university market where workers will truly be able to exercise their rights free from the destructive pressures of the apparel industry at large.

USAS began the Sweat-free Campus Campaign with the vision that our campus apparel would no longer be made in sweatshops. The current proposal is needed to bring us to the day when collegiate apparel factories truly are places where workers are treated with dignity and respect, have a voice on the job to ensure fair conditions, can count on secure and steady employment, and earn wages that allow them to better their lives. This is a step universities must take to finally make their anti-sweatshop commitment a reality.

Frequently Asked Questions

About the Campaign:

Is this a boycott? No, we are not asking that you boycott anyone. That's a decision that you should make for yourself. Our objective is to stop our school from purchasing garments or putting its name on apparel that was made in sweatshops. Instead of calling for individuals to boycott these irresponsible companies, we are asking all students to act collectively to bring pressure on our school administrators to act responsibly in licensing and purchasing apparel. A responsible policy includes adopting a strong code of conduct and a policy of full, public disclosure of factory locations and worker wages as well as joining the WRC. Affiliation with the WRC is a positive, pro-active step, which your administration can take in order to help ensure that your school's logo apparel is made under safe and lawful conditions. Higher education facilities are major consumers of apparel. The success of this campaign has had a huge impact on manufacturers, as collegiate licensing is a billion dollar industry.

Are we asking companies to move their production back to the US? NO! We believe that workers in developing countries deserve jobs that will actually contribute to development, not create a cycle of impoverishment and abuse, as sweatshop jobs do. So, we are asking US companies that produce in other nations to help improve working conditions in their factories, not move production.

What companies should I avoid? Central to this campaign is the idea that there are unfortunately no purely good or bad companies. The entire industry is structured around finding the cheapest source of labor without regard for workers' rights or dignity. Companies place their orders in hundreds of factories worldwide, and move their production often. At any given time, some of these factories may be considered sweatshops, while others may respect workers' rights. While some companies are certainly more aware and responsive to workers' issues than others, it is difficult to say do or don't buy specific brands.

What difference can our schools make? Our schools can make a great deal of difference. Individually, universities buy a tremendous amount of apparel, most of which is made under exploitative conditions, and many also sell companies a license to make clothes bearing the name and logo of the institution. Students at over 100 universities across the continent are trying to force their schools to take responsibility for the conditions under which the clothes bearing our logos are produced. One institution acting alone to fight sweatshops is a formidable adversary to those who make huge profits by exploiting their workers, but many universities organizing collaboratively can really shake up these greedy manufacturers.

How do you enforce a code of conduct? First and foremost, full, public disclosure of factory names and addresses – as well as worker wages – helps to shed light on a system that was hidden for so long. This enables independent human rights groups, NGOs and unions to find out if codes of conduct are being enforced. Further, a system of independent monitoring of factories to ensure compliance with codes of conducts has been developed by NGOs, students, and unions in the US with the input of grassroots activists in the developing world. It is the WRC's job to ensure that the codes of conduct of its affiliated colleges and universities are enforced.

About Living Wage:

Won't living wages just hurt workers by making companies move their factories?

Corporations have ensured a world where it is easier for factories looking for lower wages to cross borders than it is for hard-working people looking for a decent job to do so. Even so, it's not impossible to keep factories open when workers win higher wages. First, a company's decision to invest in a given country is based on a variety of issues—including the legal environment, human capital, transportation infrastructure, and real exchange rate—thus, the decision to leave will not hinge on the cost of labor alone. Second, USAS and other activists have already been successful in forcing factories producing for Nike, Reebok, and others to stay put when workers win higher

wages and union representation. Third, we are demanding that apparel companies pay living wages wherever they go, so that they can't escape their obligations to be decent employers.

Well, then, according to the laws of free market economics, living wages artificially raise the “price” of labor above its market rate. Won't that accelerate unemployment and inflation? Critics of the minimum wage laws and living wage ordinances argue that raising people's wages without an increase in their productivity will cause employers to reduce their demand for labor because of the higher cost, thus causing higher unemployment. However, evidence from the experience of U.S. city ordinances, and arguments from many labor economists, indicate that this simply doesn't happen in reality. The experience of cities like Detroit that have adopted living wage ordinances shows that it actually improves efficiency and competition, reduces turnover and absenteeism, and increases worker morale. In addition, the apparel industry is such a wildly profitable industry, that it is likely that manufacturers would sooner take a cut in profit than reduce their workforce and hence their production.

With regard to inflation, economists, researchers, and government officials agree that higher maquila wages would not cause generalized inflation, since a relatively small proportion of the population is employed by this sector.

Will living wages make the price of garments go up for consumers? In research that has been done, we have calculated that the total labor cost for the sewing of a \$15 college t-shirt was less than 3 cents, or less than 0.2% of the total cost of the t-shirt. In general, almost 75% of the ticket price for a garment made in a sweatshop is devoted purely to profit for the manufacturer and retailer. A company will not be forced out of business if it raises wages, but it may be forced to take a marginal cut in profit. Paying workers a living wage will not bankrupt the massive manufacturers currently paying pitifully low wages with no benefits of any kind. Research has consistently proven that an unexploited worker is a better worker. People are most efficient when they aren't tired, hungry, and scared. Paying workers a living wage can only increase their productivity. Paying fair wages has the added bonus of allowing workers to become consumers, contributing to the health of the economy as well, and promoting a more sustainable model of development.

Why do workers need such a high wage? Isn't the cost of living much cheaper overseas? A living wage is calculated based on a cost of living estimate of the specific region where workers live. Although basic goods do often cost less in developing countries, the fact is that foreign sweatshop workers do not earn enough money to support themselves and their families. Countries frequently set a very low minimum wage to attract companies and bring jobs to their struggling economies. We want these companies to pay their workers a living wage, not just an artificially low minimum wage. A living wage enables workers to meet their basic needs for food, shelter, clothing and medical care and to set aside money for future purchases.

How do you calculate a living wage? A living wage is based off of an analysis of the cost of the basic needs of a family, taking into account the average family size of a particular region, and a percentage of income to save for long-term planning and emergencies. The following categories are often included in a formula for basic needs: nutrition (food), housing, education, childcare, health care, clothing, energy, water, and transportation. Other categories – including entertainment, vacation, paid family leave, retirement, life insurance and personal liability insurance – are considered by some to be important factors for any living wage formula.

Don't governments base their minimum wage laws on the basis of the poverty line? Shouldn't we focus more on governments enforcing their own minimum wage laws? Many governments base their minimum wage laws on something called the “Basic Basket of Goods,” which includes only the most basic food items and cooking costs. That means that the minimum wages of many countries are far beneath the amount of money actually necessary to survive. It does not account for essential factors like the cost of housing, transportation, education, childcare, health care, clothing, energy, and water. Thus, enforcing minimum wage laws does nothing more than enforce poverty wages that offer no hope for advancement or development.

About Disclosure:

How will disclosure of factory locations and worker wages help end sweatshops? The garment industry has remained as corrupt as it is because it has created an elaborate system of secrecy. A garment probably goes through at least three different shops before it is labeled. This makes it extremely difficult to trace the garment through all stages of production. Knowing which factories a company is doing business with can aid in this discovery. Disclosure should also include what wages the workers were paid, what benefits (including overtime, etc) they receive. Publicizing wage levels will make it dramatically clear where worker exploitation is running rampant, and the publicity alone may force corporations to pay better.

What does disclosure need to cover? At a minimum, the manufacturer/licensee should supply the university with a full list of all its production sites and factories with which they have a contracting relationship along with the wages for workers there. We need to know where university garments are cut, sewn, laundered, embroidered, embossed, finished, packaged, and distributed.

How can I respond to administrators and company representatives who say that factory names and addresses are “trade secrets” and that disclosing factory names and locations will make them lose their competitive advantage? It is well known that companies that compete with one another in the consumer market often produce their goods in the very same factories. That is to say that Nike and Reebok already know where the other is producing because they are often producing in the same places. Further, these companies are producing t-shirts, not smart bombs. Arguments about trade secrets are simply not credible in light of products that we are talking about. T-shirt and sweatshirt design is neither extremely complicated nor sensitive information.

In legal terms, it is clear that claims of companies that factory names and locations are “trade secrets” is bogus. Lawyers have said that for location to be considered a legitimate trade secret, the company would have to treat it as such in all business dealings. Thus, employees would be contractually bound not to reveal it; merchants, transporters and suppliers would have to be sworn to secrecy; etc. In addition, it is clear that the US government does not regard factory location as a trade secret since the US Department of Labor publishes a list of contractors and manufacturers (including names and addresses) that have violated the Fair Labor Standards Act, and links them to the manufacturers for whom they are producing. Thus, it is clear that companies’ argument that they cannot comply with full, public disclosure because it is a trade secret is a smoke screen to hide their abusive and unjust labor conditions. Companies claim to already collect information about wages from their factories through internal monitoring. Moreover, these wage levels are relatively well-known in these countries; after all, you cannot prohibit a worker from telling someone how much she earns.

Talking on campus about the Sweatfree Campus Campaign

Nike makes IU clothes in sweatshops; we have a plan to make them do the right thing.

- **Indiana University clothing is made in sweatshops.** The IU Nike sweatshirt you bought in the bookstore and the Indiana t-shirt your dad bought at Steve and Barry's on parents' weekend were made in factories where workers are forced to work long hours and are not earning enough to meet their basic needs. Workers regularly face abusive treatment and suffer debilitating injuries resulting from work in the factory. Any and all efforts by workers to defend their rights and demand improved conditions are systematically and illegally squelched. Unionization, as a means for representing workers' interests and improving conditions, is almost unheard of in the global garment industry. The power imbalance between workers who earn pennies an hour and companies like Nike, who are constantly scouring the globe in search of the lowest wages and most lax enforcement of labor standards, is so great that workers have little hope of having their voices heard.
- **We can make a difference in the way workers are treated.** The collegiate apparel industry (t-shirts, sweatshirts, caps, etc, with university logos) is worth \$3 billion annually. The university can tell companies like Nike to make our products in factories that do not abuse workers, impacting the lives of thousands of families around the world. IU has already made a commitment to fighting sweatshops by adopting a code of conduct. This has made a tremendous difference in the lives of many workers making our apparel, but it is not enough. Even when substantial improvements are made in these factories, they are not rewarded with new business, but forced to slash costs just to stay afloat, making any long-term improvements in wages or conditions impossible. Now is the time to take the next step and put workers in a position to make truly sustainable improvements in factories making IU clothing.
- **IU apparel must be made in sweat-free factories.** We must require companies making clothing bearing the Indiana University name to produce these products in factories where workers have a voice on the job and are paid a living wage. Workers, as the best monitors of conditions, need to be collectively represented by a union or other organization if there is any hope for maintaining sweat-free conditions on an ongoing basis. If companies pay slightly higher prices, it will be possible for workers to earn a living wage. Wages typically make up less than 2% of the final retail cost of a garment, so doubling workers' wages would only add about \$1 to the cost of your \$60 Nike sweatshirt. These changes will not be possible if IU clothing is made, as it currently is, in the same factories producing goods for companies like Walmart that have established sweatshop conditions as the industry norm. We can only improve conditions if our products are made in a set of factories that respect a higher standard.
- **We need your involvement.** We cannot make this happen unless we can show the university that students are united behind this campaign. Get involved. [Be prepared with a number of things you would like the person or group to do, from signing a petition, to attending a rally, calling the administration, getting their student group on board, etc.]

wrc affiliation point-counterpoint

Worker Rights Consortium affiliation rarely comes easily. Your administrators are going to throw various excuses at you to try to throw you off course. Here are some common administrative excuses, and some possible rebuttals.

Your School Says:

The Fair Labor Association is our monitor. We don't need to affiliate with the WRC.

You Say:

The FLA has a proven history of ineffectiveness. For example, with the most recent situation at Gildan's El Progreso factory in Honduras, the FLA allowed Gildan to close a factory in the midst of remediation laying off hundreds of workers. It was the WRC's involvement that forced the company to provide first-hire opportunities for these workers at a number of their facilities. The FLA is not independent – companies are on its board and are its members. The FLA works for these corporations. The WRC is completely independent, and works directly for the educational institutions that affiliate with it. The WRC is also consistently more transparent than the FLA, making all of its reports publicly available. Another major difference is that the FLA certifies entire corporations, without being able to monitor all of its factories, an extremely flawed practice in a global garment industry in which capitol mobility and secrecy is the norm. The FLA itself understands the shortfalls of corporate monitoring. Its executive director has publicly stated that the WRC and FLA are complimentary, and many major breakthroughs would not have been possible were it not for the work of the WRC. (For a more in-depth analysis, check out the full WRC-USAS comparison in the USAS organizing manual.)

Your School Says:

Our bookstore has its own monitoring program.

You Say:

The WRC works for schools. Corporate monitors work for corporations. That gives them an incentive to hide information and make the corporations look good. These monitors work for the corporations and need to make sure that the corporations are happy so they can receive their paychecks. Corporate monitors forewarn factory management of monitor visits and are not required to make their findings public. Therefore, a college/university may never know the conditions under which its apparel is made if it relies only on corporate monitoring agencies. Corporate monitors also only interview workers who management hand selects. These workers are told that they will be interviewed and that they must not say anything bad about the company if they wish to keep their jobs. The very existence of the WRC is a testament to the failure of corporate monitors, and every success it has in uncovering worker exploitation provides additional proof.

Your School Says:

We have a code of conduct/our bookstore has a code of conduct. That is sufficient.

You Say:

Codes of conduct are merely pieces of paper if there are no mechanisms in place to enforce them. The WRC provides that enforcement by receiving worker complaints and conducting factory investigations. Codes of conduct are important tools, but only work if an independent monitor is present. Neither educational institutions nor students are expert enough to be this enforcement mechanism on their own. The WRC provides these expertise and resources.

Your School Says:

We don't have the money.

You Say:

The WRC's affiliation fee system is designed to take money directly from a school's licensing/purchasing revenue. The fee is set at 1% of licensing revenue or \$1000 (whichever is larger), with a \$50,000 maximum annual fee. Any school earning money on the licensing of their logo or the purchasing of logo items consequently has the money to invest in the only independent monitoring agency that works on behalf of affiliated educational institutions. Additionally, if your school attempts to tell you that the students should fundraise the money for WRC affiliation, you can tell them that it is their responsibility to ensure fair working conditions, not that of the students. Plus, the administration is making money off of the licensing/selling of these goods, not the students; therefore the university must come up with the money.

Your School Says:

We don't use sweatshops.

You Say:

Very few administrators have the audacity to make this statement anymore. The global garment industry is known for its exploitative conditions. Companies scour the world searching for the cheapest labor and the least enforcement of workers' rights laws. The only way to ensure that our school's goods are made under safe and adequate conditions is for 100% of production to be made in factories where workers' have a voice through an independent union with a collective bargaining agreement. Unless all of your licensed goods are union made, your administrators can't, in good conscience, say that your goods are not produced in sweatshops.

A Guide to a Model Code of Conduct

So hopefully you have a general understanding of what a licensing code of conduct is. Basically, it's a policy document that sets standards for working conditions in the factories that produce the apparel licensed by a university. If a manufacturer wants the right to make clothes with the school's name on them, it has to comply with the provisions in the code. The code also has guidelines for how the school will try to make sure that the provisions are enforced, particularly through monitoring.

NGO allies in the sweatshop movement drafted the code that USAS has adopted as its 'Model Code' with the input of students and of NGOs and human rights, labor rights, and women's rights groups from developing countries. It goes far beyond any of the codes adopted by institutions like the Fair Labor Association, the Collegiate Licensing Company, and most universities that have adopted codes. The provisions for things like full, public disclosure of factory names and locations, a living wage, and women's rights are absent from most other codes and are essential to making codes of conduct effective. You'll notice that the Model Code breaks down into six parts. Here is an outline of those parts:

- ★ Part I: A self-explanatory introduction.
- ★ Part II: Clarifies that the code applies to all the university's licensees and all the contracting and subcontracting factories the licensees use to make university-logo apparel
- ★ Part III: Describes the consequences ("remediation") when a licensee's factories are found to be in violation of the code, including a "corrective action plan" to remedy or improve the violations, and possible termination of the licensing contract if violations persist.
- ★ Part IV: Contains the provisions for workplace standards. Our model code varies from most university codes as well as the codes for the FLA and the CLC by providing for a living wage and including a new section specifically about women's rights (based on input from Central American workers).
- ★ Part V: Has provisions for the paperwork that the licensees have to submit to the university, including information about all the factories they're using.
- ★ Part VI: Clarification that the information specified in Part V is considered public information
- ★ Part VII: Describes the university's commitment to independent monitoring of factories to check compliance with the code, and list some guiding principles for monitoring (no code yet has attempted to set forth a specific plan for how a monitoring system would work, primarily because of the many logistics and complexities to be worked out). The last principle for monitoring is a very important one, about publicizing code information and results to consumers. In the Model Code this principle is explicit about what is publicized – including, most importantly, factory names, addresses and conditions – as. The Model Code also specifies in the description of monitoring that local Non-Governmental Organizations (as opposed to U.S. accounting firms) should carry out independent monitoring.



WORKER RIGHTS CONSORTIUM

Model Code of Conduct

Member schools may adopt this code as the standard they will require of licensees. The Worker Rights Consortium will use this code of conduct as the basis for its investigations.

I. Introduction

- A. The Universities participating in the Worker Rights Consortium are each committed to conducting their business affairs in a socially responsible and ethical manner consistent with their respective educational, research and/or service missions, and to protecting and preserving the global environment.
- B. While the Consortium and the Member Institutions believe that Licensees share this commitment, the Consortium and the Member Institutions have adopted the following Code of Conduct (the “Code”) which requires that all Licensees, at a minimum, adhere to the principles set forth in the Code.
- C. Throughout the Code the term “Licensee” shall include all persons or entities which have entered into a written “License Agreement” with the University manufacture “Licensed Articles” (as that term is defined in the License Agreement) bearing the names, trademarks and/or images of one or more Member Institutions. The term “Licensee” shall for purposes of the Code, and unless otherwise specified in the Code, encompass all of Licensees’ contractors, subcontractors or manufacturers which produce, assemble or package finished Licensed Articles for the consumer.

II. Notice

- A. The principles set forth in the Code shall apply to all Licensees.
- B. As a condition of being permitted to produce and/or sell Licensed Articles, Licensees must comply with the Code. Licensees are required to adhere to the Code within six (6) months of notification of the Code and as required in applicable license agreements.

III. Standards

- A. Licensees agree to operate work places and contract with companies whose work places adhere to the standards and practices described below. The University prefers that Licensees exceed these standards.
- B. Legal Compliance: Licensees must comply with all applicable legal requirements of the country(ies) of manufacture in conducting business related to or involving the production or sale of Licensed Articles. Where there are differences or conflicts with the Code and the laws of the country(ies) of manufacture, the higher standard shall prevail, subject to the considerations stated in Section VI.
- C. Employment Standards: Licensees shall comply with the following standards:
 1. *Wages and Benefits*: Licensees recognize that wages are essential to meeting employees’ basic needs. Licensees shall pay employees, as a floor, wages and benefits which comply with all applicable laws and regulations, and which provide for essential needs and establish a dignified living wage for workers and their families. [A living wage is a “take home” or “net” wage, earned during a country’s legal maximum work week, but not more than 48 hours. A living wage provides for the basic needs (housing, energy, nutrition, clothing, health care, education, potable water, childcare, transportation and savings) of an

average family unit of employees in the garment manufacturing employment sector of the country divided by the average number of adult wage earners in the family unit of employees in the garment manufacturing employment sector of the country.]

2. *Working Hours*: Hourly and/or quota-based wage employees shall (i) not be required to work more than the lesser of (a) 48 hours per week or (b) the limits on regular hours allowed by the law of the country of manufacture, and (ii) be entitled to at least one day off in every seven day period, as well as holidays and vacations.
3. *Overtime Compensation*: All overtime hours must be worked voluntarily by employees. In addition to their compensation for regular hours of work, hourly and/or quota-based wage employees shall be compensated for overtime hours at such a premium rate as is legally required in the country of manufacture or, in those countries where such laws do not exist, at a rate at least one and one-half their regular hourly compensation rate.
4. *Child Labor*: Licensees shall not employ any person at an age younger than 15 (or 14, where, consistent with International Labor Organization practices for developing countries, the law of the country of manufacture allows such exception). Where the age for completing compulsory education is higher than the standard for the minimum age of employment stated above, the higher age for completing compulsory education shall apply to this section. Licensees agree to consult with governmental, human rights, and nongovernmental organizations, and to take reasonable steps as evaluated by the University to minimize the negative impact on children released from employment as a result of implementation or enforcement of the Code.
5. *Forced Labor*: There shall not be any use of forced prison labor, indentured labor, bonded labor or other forced labor.
6. *Health and Safety*: Licensees shall provide a safe and healthy working environment to prevent accidents and injury to health arising out of, linked with, or occurring in the course of work or as a result of the operation of Licensee facilities. In addition, Licensees must comply with the following provisions:
 - a. The Licensee shall ensure that its direct operations and those of any subcontractors comply with all workplace safety and health regulations established by the national government where the production facility is located, or with Title 29 CFR of the Federal Code of Regulations, enforced by Federal OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration), whichever regulation is more health protective for a given hazard.
 - b. The Licensee shall ensure that its direct operations and subcontractors comply with all health and safety conventions of the International Labor Organization (ILO) ratified and adopted by the country in which the production facility is located.
7. *Nondiscrimination*: No person shall be subject to any discrimination in employment, including hiring, salary, benefits, advancement, discipline, termination or retirement, on the basis of gender, race, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, nationality, political opinion, or social or ethnic origin.
8. *Harassment or Abuse*: Every employee shall be treated with dignity and respect. No employee shall be subject to any physical, sexual, psychological, or verbal harassment or abuse. Licensees will not use or tolerate any form of corporal punishment.
9. *Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining*: Licensees shall recognize and respect the right of employees to freedom of association and collective bargaining. No employee shall be subject to harassment, intimidation or retaliation in their efforts to freely associate or bargain collectively. Licensees shall not cooperate with governmental agencies and other organizations that use the power of the State to prevent workers from organizing a union of their choice. Licensees shall allow union organizers free access to employees. Licensees shall recognize the union of the employees' choice.
10. *Women's Rights*

- a. Women workers will receive equal remuneration, including benefits; equal treatment; equal evaluation of the quality of their work; and equal opportunity to fill all positions open to male workers.
- b. Pregnancy tests will not be a condition of employment, nor will they be demanded of employees.
- c. Workers who take maternity leave will not face dismissal nor threat of dismissal, loss of seniority or deduction of wages, and will be able to return to their former employment at the same rate of pay and benefits.
- d. Workers will not be forced or pressured to use contraception.
- e. Workers will not be exposed to hazards, including glues and solvents, that may endanger their safety, including their reproductive health.
- f. Licensees shall provide appropriate services and accommodation to women workers in connection with pregnancy.

IV. Compliance and Disclosure: Licensees (for themselves and on behalf of their contractors, subcontractors, or manufacturers) shall disclose to the Worker Rights Consortium, the University, and the public the information set forth in Sections A, B, and C below.

- A. Upon execution and renewal of the License Agreement and upon the selection of any new manufacturing facility which produces Licensed Articles, the company names, contacts, addresses, phone numbers, e-mail addresses, and nature of the business association for all such facilities which produce Licensed Articles;
- B. at least sixty (60) days prior to the end of each contract year of the License Agreement, written assurance that (i) Licensees are in compliance with the Code and/or (ii) licensees are taking reasonable steps to remedy non-compliance in facilities found not to be in compliance with the code;
- C. at least sixty (60) days prior to the end of each contract year of the License Agreement, a summary of those steps taken to remedy material violations, and/or difficulties encountered, during the preceding year in implementing and enforcing the Code at all of Licensees' facilities which produce Licensed Articles.

V. Verification: It shall be the responsibility of Licensees (for themselves and on behalf of their contractors, subcontractors, or manufacturers) to ensure their compliance with the Code. The WRC and its Member Institutions will undertake efforts to determine and clearly define the obligations associated with the development of adequate methods and training for independent external monitoring, as guided by the principles in the founding document of the Consortium.

VI. Labor Standards Environment: In countries where law or practice conflicts with these labor standards, Licensees agree to consult with governmental, human rights, labor and business organizations and to take effective actions as evaluated by the University to achieve full compliance with each of these standards. Licensees further agree to refrain from any actions that would diminish the protections of these labor standards. In addition to all other rights under the Licensing Agreement, the University reserves the right to refuse renewal of Licensing Agreements for goods made in countries where:

- A. progress toward implementation of the employment standards in the Code is no longer being made; and
- B. compliance with the employment standards in the Code is deemed impossible. The University shall make such determinations based upon examination of reports from governmental, human rights, labor and business organizations and after consultation with the relevant Licensees.

VII. Remediation: Remedies herein apply to violations which occur after the Effective Date of the Code.

- A. If a Licensee has failed to self-correct a violation of the Code, the University will consult with the Licensee (for itself and on behalf of its contractors, subcontractors, or manufacturers) to determine appropriate corrective action.
- B. The remedy will, at a minimum, include requiring the licensee to take all steps necessary to correct such violations including, without limitation:
 - 1. Paying all applicable back wages found due to workers who manufactured the licensed articles.
 - 2. Reinstatement of any worker found to have been unlawfully dismissed.
- C. If agreement on corrective action is not reached, and/or the action does not result in correction of the violation within a specified reasonable time period, the University reserves the right to
 - 1. require that the Licensee terminate its relationship with any contractor, subcontractor, or manufacturer that continues to conduct its business in violation of the Code, and/or
 - 2. terminate its relationship with any Licensee that continues to conduct its business in violation of the Code.
 - A. D. In either event, the University will provide the Licensee with thirty (30) days written notice of termination. In order to ensure the reasonable and consistent application of this provision, the University will seek advice from the Worker Rights Consortium regarding possible corrective measures and invocation of options 1 and 2 above.

ELEVEN CAMPAIGNS:

Case Studies of USAS Campaigns for Affiliation to the Worker Rights Consortium UNITED STUDENTS AGAINST SWEATSHOPS



Introduction

The following case studies have been shared by students who have run or are still running campaigns to get their schools to join the Worker Rights Consortium (WRC). Not only do the students mention their successful tactics, but they also discuss what they wish to have done better.

Hopefully, students who wish to start a WRC campaign or are in the midst of one will find these case studies useful in planning their strategies.

We'd like to thank the students who took the time to share their experiences. We hope you find them useful.

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First compiled August 2001. NOTE: We continue to collect case studies for this manual. Please contact us at organize@usasnet.org to get us your case study!

The Studies:

- ★ State University of New York at Buffalo
- ★ University of Arizona –WRC affiliate
- ★ Florida State University
- ★ Kent State University – WRC affiliate
- ★ San Diego State University
- ★ Notre Dame University – WRC affiliate
- ★ Harvard University
- ★ Cal Poly State University SLO – WRC affiliate
- ★ Tulane University—WRC affiliate
- ★ Indiana University—WRC affiliate
- ★ Loyola University – Chicago—WRC affiliate

University at Buffalo

Prepared by Brenden Stepien, *smashitrebuildit@yahoo.com*

Current Status: Affiliated officially with the WRC for 1 week

Background of campus group:

In fall 2001 students from the Environmental Network at the University at Buffalo started work on a campaign against New Era which grew out of concerns for workers rights violations in a cap factory in Derby, NY. In spring 2002, during a full-fledged campaign for workers, UB Students Against Sweatshops was formed. Workers hailed Ubsas' efforts in the New Era victory and said without student support the victory could not have been possible.

In fall of 2002, Ubsas started a campaign for WRC affiliation. At the start of 2004 Ubsas gained much needed steam with the departure of an inaccessible president and a new president that was actually interested in hearing what students had to say.

UBSAS started out as a 4-5 person group and over the last year has grown to 15-20 active leaders and other various volunteers. We have leader meetings on one night and the other night, our 'Action Meetings' consist of people that would like to help but may not have the extra time to devote to leadership.

Allies:

- ★ Feminist Action Group, Environmental Network, Hip Hop Student Association
- ★ UB Trademarks and Licensing Department
- ★ Student newspapers that published our events.
- ★ Local progressive organizations, politicians and community leaders.
- ★ Student Association Assembly which passed 2 resolutions in favor of WRC affiliation.
- ★ Nypirg offered us materials and a meeting space until they left our campus in fall 2004.

Opponents:

There weren't any groups actively trying to sabotage our campaign.

Target:

Our target was directly pointed at the one person we knew could make this decision, which would be the president of our university. With President Greiner inaccessible to students, we found ourselves meeting with the Vice President of Student Affairs. Dennis Black was our direct link to the administration and the President for the duration of our campaign.

Tactics:

In fall of 2002 our group started its campaign for WRC affiliation by meeting with the administration with 3 specific demands. We wanted a code of conduct for companies producing UB apparel, WRC affiliation, and a sweatshop advisory committee, consisting of equal parts students, faculty and administration, that would act on recommendations from the WRC. UB's position was that it wasn't the role of a public institution to take a stand against sweatshop labor. We had over 100 class presentations, a teach-in, and a benefit show. We then met with Dennis Black, and on the second meeting he said that the university would try to work with us to see how we could implement our 3 recommendations. We had a die-in to publicize our recommendations for the university against sweatshop labor.

In spring 2003 we began meeting more frequently with Dennis Black, and started working with the office of Trademarks and Licensing to see how we could implement these recommendations. We were able to get the UB student assembly to pass a resolution in favor of affiliating with the Workers Rights Consortium. UB developed a policy on sweatshops that included a code of conduct

on goods purchased by UB but not goods that were licensed, such as apparel. An advisory committee was setup that contained only administrators, and not students or faculty. We continued our efforts in the fall and started a petition drive to get students educated about the university's policy on sweatshops and why the WRC would be beneficial to our school. Our president was a lame duck for this semester and we waited patiently for his departure and the arrival of a new president.

In spring 2004 we met repeatedly with Dennis Black in hopes that we could meet with President Simpson and voice our concerns that we didn't think the university's sweatshop policy was strong enough to be effective. We spent this semester raising awareness through a steady stream of articles in the school newspaper and outreach. The turning point of our campaign was when Dennis Black agreed to reform the advisory committee to equal parts students, faculty and administrators, with a special spot for one Ubsas representative, and also agreed to let us meet with President Simpson.

We met with President Simpson over the summer and he agreed to bring WRC and FLA representatives to UB in the fall semester.

In the fall of 2004 we began to intensify our petition drive, and began collecting signatures from faculty. We brought WRC and FLA representatives to talk to President Simpson and Dennis Black, and also to speak to the advisory committee. We also held a forum where both the WRC and FLA were able to present themselves to students and faculty and answer questions and concerns that they had. We held a die-in to commemorate the second anniversary of our first one and also to present the administration with fifteen hundred student and eighty-three faculty signatures in support for affiliation with the WRC. We get a commitment from the administration that a decision will be made by the end of the next semester.

In spring 2005 we held a solidarity rally to start off the semester demanding affiliation with the WRC with very good media coverage. We also distributed WRC NOW! patches that was very successful in gaining interest of the student body. We had a teach-in later that day to educate students on the importance for workers that UB affiliates with the WRC. We got dozens of letters of support from influential community leaders and politicians in favor of WRC affiliation sent to the administration. Dennis Black sent his recommendation to President Simpson. The recommendation asks that UB affiliate with the WRC and FLA, develop a code of conduct for licensees, and get the sweatshop advisory committee up and running. President Simpson accepted Dennis Black's Proposal and the University at Buffalo is the 136th school to affiliate with the Worker's Rights Consortium.

University of Arizona

Prepared by Tim Bartley

Current Status:

WRC affiliate

Background of campus group:

Students Against Sweatshops at the University of Arizona was founded in the fall of 1997. Early on, the focus was on the Nike contract the U of A was considering signing. The primary focus of SAS is on sweatshops in the collegiate apparel industry, although we have also worked on other issues in coalition with local labor, human rights, and environmental groups.

Typically, SAS has been disproportionately made up of grad students. The majority of members have usually been white, and men have often been over-represented in leadership positions.

At the time of the WRC campaign (roughly, Nov. 1999 – May 2000), there were around 25-40 active members, with over 100 people on the email listserve.

Allies:

During the WRC campaign, we received lots of support from local labor groups. The

Southern Arizona Central Labor Council endorsed a resolution calling for Likins to join the WRC. Individual unions also supported us, with members of the Teamsters, IBEW, and other locals speaking at our rallies. A number of other campus and community organizations (including the Committee to Organize Graduate Students) and faculty members also signed letters endorsing the WRC. The Faculty Senate Task Force on Monitoring Labor and Human Rights Issues also served as an indirect ally by recommending that the university join the WRC in the midst of our campaign.

Opponents:

There was no serious organized opposition apart from the foot-dragging administration.

Target: U of A President Peter Likins; sub-target: Licensing Director Mike Low

WRC Campaign:

In Nov. 1999, we held a rally on the lawn of the Administration building to announce its support for the WRC. At a retreat in Jan. 2000, we made the WRC our “primary campaign. In Feb., we had another rally on the admin lawn. In early March, SAS members met with President Likins, presenting him with a large packet of information on sweatshop workers and the WRC, and demanded an informed answer on WRC affiliation by March 31st. (Later that month, the Faculty Senate Taskforce on Monitoring Labor and Human Rights Issues—which includes some SAS members—provided the president with more information on the WRC.) Around this time, we also gathered endorsements of the WRC from faculty, campus groups, and community groups.

The central point in our campaign was the formation of the College of Worker Rights, which was open around the clock from April 4-6. We constructed some minimal “buildings” on the administration lawn, decorated with pictures of sweatshop workers. Here, we distributed literature on the WRC and related issues, spoke through a bullhorn about the WRC and the administration during class-changes, and engaged students in conversations about the global economy, sweatshops, the WRC, the FLA, etc. We also invited students to write a message to President Likins on a ribbon and tie it to a nearby construction fence. (These ribbons remained on the fence for several months.) SAS members stayed at the College of Worker Rights for nearly three days straight, even enduring an egg and water-balloon attack by passing students. (One SAS member was quick enough to wake from his sleep and catch the attacker a couple of blocks away!)

The College of Worker Rights, and the previous demonstrations, did a lot toward informing the campus about the WRC. In addition, these rather mild demonstrations were particularly significant because of the administration's fear of another sit-in (like the one of April 1999). (This tendency of previous civil disobedience to enhance the significance of later events seems particularly important to me.)

On April 14th, the Faculty Senate Task Force on Monitoring Labor and Human Rights Issues ("the Task Force") sent a letter to President Likins, recommending that he join the WRC and outlining some reasons for doing so.

At the end of May, Likins announced that he intended to join the WRC, although he didn't officially do so until July.

This is roughly the series of events that led up to the University of Arizona joining the WRC. Of course, many other things were important—decent press coverage (at least in amount), the "commitments" signed by the President to end the April 1999 sit-it (which called for the university to seek out "alternative means" to the FLA.), etc.

Even after the U of A affiliated with the WRC, the administration continued to communicate skepticism about it. This skepticism began to diminish once Rich Appelbaum, from the WRC Governing Board, visited campus in October, 2000. He came as part of a speaker series organized by the Task Force (Sam Brown from the FLA came later). In addition to his public presentation, Appelbaum met privately with Likins to talk about the WRC. Likins has stated that he became more optimistic about the WRC after meeting with Appelbaum, and similar sentiments have been expressed by members of the Task Force who were skeptical of the WRC.

Florida State University

Prepared by Tony Williams

Current Status:

In the middle of our campaign (and trying to figure out how to finish it)

Background of campus group:

Grew out of the campus Amnesty International group in Fall '99. Completely fell apart by the end of the year, and accomplished nothing. A group of about five (mostly freshman and sophomores, one of whom was female; all were white) began meeting in Fall '00 to try to bring back the sweatshop issue. After plenty of meetings over the semester to get basic organizational stuff together, we really got going during the Spring semester this year. Meetings vary in size. We've had problems getting people to come consistently. Leadership roles have been assumed by one or two people, which is unfortunate. Not too many people have become heavily active in researching the school and the issue, so most suggestions for activities come from those one or two people.

Allies:

Our main ally is Prof. O'Rourke, our faculty sponsor. He's been one of the main people on campus (student or faculty) whose pressed the issue. Another ally, of sorts, was the Apparel Committee. Prof. O'Rourke was on this committee, but our group had no representation. Other student groups were occasional allies, but support hasn't been too consistent; Center for Participant Education and the Women's Center have been great

helping fund speaking events.

Opponents:

No one has directly come out against us. It's been more of a "we'll look into it" delay approach by the administration. They'll provide us with information we request, but never seem prepared to make any decisions. And the Apparel Committee had one devout free-market business professor, but he eventually voted with everyone else.

Target:

President Sandy D'Alemberte. He makes the decision (with the advice of others), so he gets to deal with us.

Tactics:

We pretty much started when FSU Amnesty International decided to have an anti-Nike protest with us, even though 1) the one FSU AI officer who's active in our group advised against the protest since it was sloppily put together and 2) we never really knew or participate- most of us found out by reading about the planned protest in the student newspaper. So the protest sucked, but we did get coverage in the paper, the FSView.

Some of us have consistently emailed D'Alemberte because he answers his own email. We ended up getting a meeting with him this way (but the meeting seems to have been another delay tactic).

We've also been active against Sodexo-Marriott, our school's food service provider. Through these actions, we've built a few temporary coalitions and gotten more coverage in the FSView.

One of our members writes for the FSView, which is where the articles came from (she became interested after first covering us for the paper).

That's been about it. We had our protest, a Marriott boycott with a number of other groups, met with the President, and gotten a few stories in the student paper. Also of note is that the Apparel Committee passed a resolution at the end of this past school year saying that FSU should remain in the FLA but also join the WRC. We'll use this in the Fall!

Things we'd do differently: Form lasting coalitions, since they've all fallen apart. Network more with student groups to expand the issue to its many facets. Associate more with local labor groups, including the state AFL-CIO. Talk to the faculty more, since several members seem as if they'd help. Encourage more people to become seriously active, so that it doesn't seem like one or two people are running things.

Things that have been helpful: Prof. O'Rourke. Financial support from FSU Amnesty International, Center for Participant Education, and the Women's Center. Campus groups and the state AFL-CIO, and AFSCME, for participating in the Marriott boycott (and the local businesses that offered discounts to boycotters). Articles in the FSView. D'Alemberte answering his own email.

Kent State University

Prepared by Meghan Zimmerman

Current Status:

KSU has decided to join the WRC, but has yet to act on its decision.

Background:

In the fall of 2000 a Conflict Management course, Nonviolence Theory and Practice, took on the task of starting a sweat-free campaign. During this class, much of the background work was done: information about sweatshops and their use in university apparel, information about the bookstore, profit from the bookstore, different examples of codes of conduct. This class also started a petition and held a protest/ fashion show in the university plaza. During this time a secret committee was formed by the university to do its own research about sweatshop use. At the end of the fall semester, one of the students from the nonviolence class was commissioned to start an organization on campus that would continue the sweat-free campaign. This was the birth of CHANGE, the Coalition for a Humane And New Global Economy. CHANGE was comprised of a variety of homogenous people. We had first year through senior year status members, nontraditional students, and professors. The ratio of men to women was fairly equal, but sided slightly with the women. The make up was predominately Caucasian. At each meeting we had about ten people. The mission of this coalition is to end human rights abuses and promote equality by focusing on economic issues. Our first task was to get the university to adopt a code of conduct and sign onto a reliable, independent monitor.

Allies:

Late Night Christian Fellowship This group brought large numbers to our events, members from late night became involved with the sweat-free campaign, and they helped us to raise money for our expenses.

AntiRacist Action (ARA) also brought people to our events, ran articles about our progress in their newsletter, and took part in our events.

Women Movement Network Took part in a major event and supported us.

May 4th Task Force Allowed us to announce our victory at their annual May 4th Commemoration.

Kent Stater Newspaper Reporter We had a reporter from the school newspaper whom took a great deal of interest in our campaign.

AFSCME joined with us for our April 4th action.

International Students in Education Allowed us to decorate for their International week.

Students for Eliminating Environmental Destruction invited CHANGE to set up a table at their Earth Day.

Opponents:

We did not have anyone working actively against us that we were aware of.

Target:

Our main focus was the president of the university, Carol Cartwright. However, after CHANGE came to be a second committee was formed to make a recommendation to Cartwright on whether or not to have a code of conduct and a monitoring organization and which code and monitor to chose. The Undergraduate Student Senate chose faculty, students, and administration to be on the committee.

Tactics:

To start our campaign we had the luck of having The Olympic Living Wage Project Tour coming through the northern part of Ohio. On January 29th, Jim Keady and Leslie Kretzu came to Kent.

They spoke to classes, athletes and their coaches. In the evening, Jim and Leslie did a large presentation. About 300 people showed up for the event.

FLYERS were used for everything! Flyers were hung up for events we were having, but also general information about sweatshops and CHANGE. Flyers were hung up in classrooms, dorms, the student center, library, and bathrooms. We had an ad in the Stater (newspaper). We handed out quarter sheets in the student center. We got displays in the student center. We had a sign made for an event. We also had a website that would be updated on our progress.

In late January, we had an interview (one of the many articles about CHANGE) about the sweatshop campaign and the University committee that was formed. The article wasn't negative or positive, but it got our name out.

We wrote letters to the editor.

We continued to get signatures for the petition.

We had a movie night showing Michael Moore's The Big One.

We started working on a workshop developed by Indiana University, adapted it to Kent State, and presented the workshop to classes and other organizations.

In March, we were invited by the International Students in Education to decorate for their International Week. We created a great display of the life of a KSU shirt starting with the company through the factory to the university shelf. The President had to give a speech in front of the display. It was a great photo op.

We tried to table at least three times a week in the student center. Our petition, upcoming events, information about CHANGE and sweatshops were always displayed on the table. Our huge display we made for International Week was used. We also showed "Zoned for Slavery" at the table.

In March, we decided to divide into two groups. One group would work with the committee and the other group took a more aggressive route.

We attended an open forum with the administration and the students. We bombarded them with questions about the university and their involvement with the bookstore, the code of conduct, sweatshops, and the way they planned to remedy the sweatshop problems.

In late March to signify the bureaucratic stalling, we red taped ourselves to polls outside in the students' center. We also handed out flyers saying why we were doing this and asked people to sign our petition.

In April we took part in the Student Labor Days of Action. We had a week of actions. Tuesday we showed videos about sweatshops, corporate power, and April 4th 1968. Wednesday we had a rally in the plaza. We had speakers from ARA, WMN, AFSCME, AAUP, faculty, SOA Watch, and CHANGE. Later we had workshops on the SOA/Colombia, sweatshops/FTAA, and AFSCME unions and students working together. On Thursday, we had speakers speak about immigrant workers in Ohio and the Missile Defense System. On Friday, we had one more speaker talk about doing work with farmers on the U.S./Mexican boarder. That night we had a benefit/celebration party.

Towards the end of April, we attended an open forum of committee members to discuss only signing on with the WRC and not signing on with the FLA.

In early May, the night before the committee was going to make it's final decision we chalked the names of everyone who signed the petition (over 1500) in the student center. In the morning, members of CHANGE presented the petitions to the committee and read a statement.

On May 4th we announce at the commemoration that Kent had adopted a code of conduct, decided to join the WRC, and was planning on selling a line of fair trade clothing produced by the children of the Fair Trade Coffee farmers.

Things to do Differently:

Try to develop coalitions with Black United Students, Spanish And Latino Students Association, and other minority organizations on campus. Try to be a little more organized. Spread the power. Dividing into two groups was not very successful. There ended up being two people working with the committee and everyone joined in the other activities. Many ideas were never concretely decided on and therefore never carried out. Tabling to get people to sign the petition did not work, some say we needed to be more aggressive. In the weeks and months of tabling, we got maybe twenty signatures. Receive more input about what was happening with the committee. We needed more play time for the organization's members. COMMUNICATION.

Things That Worked Well:

Olympic Living Wage Project Tour, International Week, Red Tape, having an interested reporter, flyers, the information we had already looked up to give to the committee, central focus of CHANGE on the sweat-free campaign, reading the statement from CHANGE about why it was important to sign on with only the WRC and not the FLA to the committee the day they were going to decide.

We had a very committed core group of people who keep the campaign going full speed ahead. Their dedication made it possible to get Kent to adopt a code and sign with the WRC in one intense semester.

San Diego State University

Prepared by Saeed Khan

Current Status:

Our campaign is about 1 year old. We have been pushing hard for membership ever since our inception.

Background of campus group:

Initially we dubbed ourselves “Students for Labor Rights” although our main goal was affiliation with the WRC and USAS. There was some confusion because we also went by “Students Against Sweatshops”. We also felt the name SAS was clearer on campus and did not diminish from any other labor rights struggles or campaigns. Our group is very diverse in terms of age and ethnicity. We have a nice balance of lower and upper classmen, hopefully one that will keep the group going for many years after SDSU becomes a WRC campus. We have a core group of about 15-20 people with an email list of about 300 people. The list is a vital party of our campaign to educate and connect to interested parties on campus and within our school and community

Allies:

We have been blessed with many allies and friends such as:

SEAC (Student Environmental Action Coalition), Amnesty International, the Campus Green Party, MECHA, Students for Economic Justice,

Latin American Students Studies Org., Women’s Resource Center, the California Faculty Association and the Student Government. We are also building more bridges and are working on the getting acquainted with the University Senate.

Opponents:

I don’t really think we have any physical, tangible opponents. We have and are struggling against a vast amount of campus complacency and a conservative business-friendly mentality. We probably spend a good amount of time battling ignorance and apathy.

I suppose our opponents are the bookstore management (where licensed apparel is sold) and the university President.

Target:

The President of the University and the Bookstore management are the targets and decision-makers.

Tactics:

In the beginning, there were only a few of us. We had to build and “sell” our group to the campus. We spent a lot of time recruiting, advertising and educating people on the basics.

The reasons why sweatshops are bad and exactly how bad they are and WRC criteria.

We also learned about how corporate power creates and relates to labor rights. WTO, IMF, WB, NAFTA, FTAA, free market economics, etc. We also had to get to know each other and define who we were as a group and what we stood for.

Our target was always those who had the power to make SDSU a WRC school. However, we are following a bureaucratic and diplomatic route to the top of the pyramid of power. We started with educating ourselves and then building ties with other groups who were like-minded. We drafted a proposal and then sought endorsements from as many groups as possible. We then presented this proposal to the student government and ask for endorsement. Soon after, we approached the bookstore management and asked for a spot on their agenda. Thus far we have been to two of their

corporate board meetings, the first being a presentation. The bookstore agreed to form a “task group” to cope with the issue. They are expected to come forward with some kind of a decision soon. We also ask the President for a meeting, it was granted after some media attention. Presently, our group is waiting for the results from the bookstore task group.

We have made ourselves known through a number of activities such as: a lively mock fashion show, a Gap protest (Saipan), Human Rights Week, A Human Rights Vigil with Amnesty, WRC rally on campus quad and march to bookstore, End-of-the-year BBQ. Coverage in the campus newspaper gave us a lot of recognition, which injected the issue into people’s consciousness. Additionally, just talking to people face-to-face the good old-fashioned way.

Things to do differently:

I truly believe that most of the decisions we have made have been constructive and productive. I think at times, we worried too much about getting support before challenging authority. Although a strong base of support is important, its the confrontation with the “powers that be” that is key. We made it very clear that we would not allow “them” to marginalize or discount us. Honestly, at this point in our campaign I think we have the upper hand and the task group is pissing their trousers. Personally, I think I should have been more aggressive when I met with the President but we were still “getting to know” each other and I was trying to be diplomatic and polite.

It is also important for us to have fun and enjoy being together and working on this campaign. Our meetings are informal and we ride a line of being productive yet still enjoying our time together, after all most of us are full-time students and have jobs.

Things that were helpful to the campaign:

The basics are always important. I’m glad we spent a lot of time discussing what we were doing and why and also how that relates to our lives and our futures. We still back track especially when we have guests or new-comers to the group. The creation of a many times seamless cohesion with other groups has been important. The campus newspaper was also monumental in publicizing our struggle. Even when the tone of the article (or lack thereof) was slanderous, it still served as fine advertising for the group. Even bad advertising is good advertising.

Notre Dame University

Prepared by Aaron Kreider

Current Status:

WRC affiliate

Background of campus group:

The Notre Dame Progressive Student Alliance (PSA) is a multi-issue group that has existed for three years and focuses on sweatshops for the past two. On average, ten people attend our meetings. We lack racial diversity. Members share a wide range of political views, but we find unity through our campaigns.

Allies:

We did the main campaign work by ourselves. We got some support from students in other progressive groups and the faculty senate.

Opponents:

We benefited from having very little opposition. The strongest opposition came from our demand to leave the FLA, which was (and is) strongly opposed by our administration.

Target:

We targeted our school president. We also targeted (i.e. lobbied) members of our taskforce, who made a recommendation on the issue and seemed to have a significant level of influence.

The Campaign:

It started in the fall of 1998, by a PSAer who returned from Union Summer. In February 1999, PSA mostly loses our main campaign and at the same time there is surge in student anti-sweatshop activity (sit-ins) and our administration starts several initiatives, so we switch our focus to sweatshops. Our administration announces that it will do independent monitoring (using PriceWaterhouseCoopers), joins the FLA as a founding member, and creates a taskforce. We try to get on the taskforce, but are excluded. That spring we do a teach-in which attracts maybe fifty people, and a small clothesline protest when our trustees meet on campus.

The next fall we distribute a thousand leaflets at a home football game, and do a small protest outside our bookstore (during a second football game). Our administration reverses its previous position and agrees to “recommend” full disclosure. We develop a short proposal calling for the university to leave the FLA and join the WRC, trying to join the WRC in time for the founding conference.

In Jan. 2000, the university announces a strict right to organizing clause. In February, we distribute 350+ leaflets targeting visiting parents. In March, the Faculty Senate votes 23-5 to join the WRC. A similar attempt to gain support from the undergraduate student government is killed in committee. We tried to hold a public forum on Mar. 27 to hold our president and administration accountable. Attendance was good (fifty people), but the administration was able to set the format (or they threatened not to attend) and our side fared poorly in debate. One advantage was at the forum our president commits to making a decision on joining the WRC within thirty days of having a meeting with the WRC director. Several days later, our sister school, St. Mary’s College justifies our demand by joining the WRC (unfortunately with a statement that it was best for them to join the WRC, but for Notre Dame it was perfectly fine to remain in the FLA).

So we missed the deadline to join in time for the WRC opening conference, but since we lacked general campus support and felt that antagonizing the administration (ex. with a sit-in) would ruin our chances of joining at a later-date, we took no action.

In the fall of 2000, our group had declined in size and we worked on several non-sweatshop issues. That spring our administration, after waiting for ten months, was finally going to meet with the

WRC Executive Director (I'd assumed after the promise made at our public forum that they would try to setup a meeting - but they never did), so in February we shifted into high gear. We did some recruiting and got an influx of members. Leslie and Jim (Olympic Living Wage Project) spoke, five of us attended the Midwest USAS conference, we distributed 2500 fliers (in 20-30F weather, without gloves), and had 70-110 people attend our hour-long rally for the WRC in 28F weather. After the rally we collected over 700 signatures and lobbied the taskforce. The taskforce made its recommendation, but kept it secret. At this point, I thought we should assume that the decision went against us and should do a sit-in, since it would be very hard to reverse the decision after our president had announced it. However, it was the week of midterms so students were very busy and it was hard to organize when we did not know what the recommendation was. So we waited and on March 6 learnt that our President had accepted the taskforce's recommendation to join the WRC.

Overall, I think our campaign won because our administration is Catholic and will act in a socially conscious way if it does not cost too much or offend powerful interests (e.g. rich alumni). So our administration was genuinely interested in doing something to fight sweatshops, it was mostly a question of convincing them that the WRC would work and not be too radical (i.e. anti-corporate). Our role was to prod the administration and taskforce to take a stronger position than what they would otherwise take.

Things to do differently:

(Perhaps) Build a coalition. We tried and got some organizations to endorse our pro-WRC/anti-FLA proposal, but never had a strong level of involvement. This is hard to do, though.

Not hold an open meeting with our president, and other administrators, where he could control the agenda.

A large protest before a home football game. Or maybe even during the game. We could have done more creative actions.

Tried harder to get on our taskforce, or lobbied them more especially in the early stages of the campaign. The taskforce had a big say in deciding our university's policy.

Things that were helpful to the campaign:

Lobbying taskforce members, providing them with information.

Not giving up (ex. we kept up after failing to join in spring 2000).

A constant stream of letters and opinions in our school newspaper.

Leafleting. In front of classroom buildings, the cafeteria, or during a football game. We distribute over 3800 leaflets, which helped educate students and also build our organization.

Harvard University

Prepared by Ben McKean

Current Status:

Have been fighting for WRC membership since October, 1999

Background of campus group:

Harvard Students Against Sweatshops is one of two campaigns run by the Harvard Progressive Student Labor movement (the other being the Harvard Living Wage Campaign), and a founding chapter of USAS. In the spring of 1998, HSAS worked with UNITE to bring to campus workers from the BJ&B factory in the Dominican Republic where they were paid 8 cents to make a Harvard cap that sold for \$20. Since then the group has fluctuated in size from 15 to 20 coming off of a huge rally and full disclosure victory in the spring of 1999 to about three at the start of the fall 1999 semester back to about 15 to 20 in the fall of 2000.

Allies:

Had bi-weekly “WRC Days” co-sponsored with other student groups; have supported anti-sweatshop efforts by local high school students; have had anti-sweatshop speakers come speak with help of UNITE, Campaign for Labor Rights, etc; have worked with local Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice. Should have looked more to grad students, helped start campaigns at other Boston-area schools.

Opponents:

Indifferent campus zombie students; heartless administrator ghouls.

Target:

Our primary target was the President, and eventually the Harvard Corporation, the school’s ultra-secretive governing board. But most of our meetings were with a lawyer from the Office of the General Counsel who was the administrator’s point person on anti-sweatshop issues; we had a good working relationship with him, but he was not the ultimate decision-maker and his proposal to the President that we join the WRC was rejected. He subsequently left the Office of the General Counsel, and we met with the General Counsel herself along with the university’s Director of Federal and State Relations. Because Larry Summers was just installed as our new monarch, it is unclear with whom we will now meet, or in what direction the campaign will go.

Story of Campaign

Just before the announcement of the WRC, we had Nike worker Haryanto talk about his experiences. We then kicked off our WRC campaign by leafleting the whole week of the press conference at which the WRC was announced. We brought our WRC message to Boston’s anti-WTO rally in solidarity with Seattle, where we spoke about Harvard’s complicity with the sweatshops of the global economy. We culminated that fall semester of 1999 with an anti-sweatshop tour of Harvard Square, which took in the stores that sell Harvard clothes in addition to the GAP and Abercrombie & Fitch; the tour ended with a rousing performance of “WRC,” to the tune of Naughty by Nature’s “OPP.” Having forced disclosure of factory locations, we publicized the release of the first information about Harvard’s factories and called on Harvard to join the WRC to find out what was happening in them. We fasted in solidarity with the successful U-Penn sit-in. Two days after U-Penn left the FLA, we scared the ever-living crap out of our administration by sending 3 people and a table into the President’s office, where we refused to leave for awhile and “leafleted” WRC information; we figured that we’d been leafleting the students for months about the WRC, and it was about time to leaflet where the information apparently wasn’t reaching. Police were stationed outside of the president’s office for the remainder of the year. A week later, shortly after cops forcibly removed UW-Madison sit-inners, we got the student government to pass a resolution calling on the school to leave the FLA and join the WRC. Next month, we organized two debates on sweatshops, one which featured a horrific call from the widely-reviled Jeffrey Sachs

for more sweatshops and another which featured Dara O'Rourke and Jeffrey Ballinger going head to head with the FLA's Sam Brown. In response to the second debate, the school newspaper called for Harvard to leave the FLA and join the WRC. And all through the semester, we leafleted, postered information, and held a variety of small actions, such as binding and gagging ourselves in Harvard Yard to symbolize the silencing of workers brought about by the administration's refusal of independent monitoring to enforce the workers' right to organize.

As the fall semester opened, we held a series of "All You Ever Wanted to Know About Sweatshops But Were Afraid to Ask Nike" dinner discussions, designed to answer questions like, "Isn't a bad job better than no job?" and so on. In addition, we held silent protests at a variety of alumni events to respond to the release of Harvard's "Independent University Initiative" report. This report confirmed the terrible working conditions in Harvard's factories, and included a devastating portrayal of the ineptness of the corporate PriceWaterhouseCoopers monitors Harvard had chosen despite our protests — thanks to Dara O'Rourke, who released his own study of the study. We continued our educational campaign through the fall and spring semesters, but combined it with bi-weekly "WRC Days," protests typically co-sponsored with another student group. Every other week, we had simple, visible actions like getting people to sign a balloon petition and then tying these hundreds of balloons, each with a signature and the words "WRC NOW," around school. We also put up displays in Harvard Yard, around themes such as "women and sweatshops," emphasizing that 90% of sweatshop workers are women and many endure sexual harassment, forced abortions, and pregnancy testing. On another occasion, a dozen of us stormed the offices of the Harvard Corporation with police line tape and signs proclaiming "CAUTION – Social Injustice Zone," demanding that the university join the WRC and divest from Kohl's, which was then busting its Nicaraguan union. For Christmas, we delivered cookies glazed to say "WRC NOW!" as we sang anti-sweatshop carols. We organized a Nike call-in day around the Kuk Dong campaign. We hosted a talk by WRC Advisory Board member Alice Kwan, from the Hong Kong Christian Industrial Committee. We helped local anti-students organize a rally at Niketown. And, somewhat infamously, we organized a "full disclosure of factory conditions" striptease, which was shut down by the police. There was a certain sense that we were experience diminishing returns with stunts like these, as they were increasing our visibility but perhaps diminishing our credibility among the self-important student body.

So we spent much of the spring semester working to involve faculty with the group, hoping that their presence would finally bring an end the tiresome "these kids don't know what they're talking about" carping from the peanut gallery. We put a great deal of energy into convening a faculty committee to add new heft to our calls for WRC membership and also to see if there were other ways that an enormous research institution such as Harvard could move the anti-sweatshop debate. The move was also prompted in part by the replacement of the university's primary anti-sweatshop negotiator/administrator. Unfortunately, we made the cardinal error of expecting that professors would actually get involved, actively contribute, and be available to meet with each other. After several weeks of fruitlessly attempting to get about 10 professors in one room, we just wrote up a more extensive platform ourselves — which ended up included WRC membership, studies of environmental impact and effective monitoring, and a student/faculty oversight board — and e-mailed it to dozens of professors, who occasionally provided feedback and usually just rubberstamped it. We then set about pushing the platform with the new anti-sweatshop negotiators/administrators.

And, of course we met several times over the course of the year with our President, who continued to refuse action. So, we occupied his office for three weeks. Our widely-publicized sit-in called for a living wage for workers on campus and in Harvard's factories abroad, and demanded WRC membership. While the sit-in was resolved with some success, WRC membership was not part of the settlement package. Though we pushed hard for the inclusion of anti-sweatshop concessions in the settlement, we did not publicize our WRC membership demand as much as we publicized the campus living wage component, and the university clearly took advantage.

California Polytechnic State University at San Luis Obispo

Prepared by Jesse McGowan

Current Status:

WRC affiliate

Background of campus group:

Just a few weeks after the campus anti-sweatshop group of about seven students formed, a larger umbrella social justice group formed called the Progressive Student Alliance (PSA) with about 35 students attending weekly meetings. The anti-sweatshop group eventually became a committee of the larger group and was helped tremendously by the support of the PSA. The PSA is fairly diverse for the not very diverse Cal Poly. Many women participate, although not many, unfortunately, take up leadership roles. Various community members also participate in the PSA with vast experience in activism. There are many seniors and freshmen in the PSA and not many third and fourth year students for some reason. The PSA is only two years old.

Allies:

The faculty union and progressive professors

The Multicultural Center

The Provost (Vice President in charge of student affairs)

Influential student government member who eventually became president

School newspaper that was willing to publish all our letters including an open on to the President

Opponents:

We had no real opponents who actively argued against WRC affiliation although some free market thinkers in student government were apprehensive. The administration was against leaving the FLA. I should say the administration was never vocally opposed but the way they dragged their feet indicates that WRC affiliation was something they didn't want to do.

Target:

Our target is always president Warren Baker although we work mostly with Provost Paul Zingg who is willing to meet with us and personally represent the president on a number of occasions. We work on some people we think could influence the president like our student president, he however, turned out to be a tool. We also work to inform our Foundation executives about the sweatshop issue and the WRC. The Foundation is a quasi-private corporation that runs the bookstore and laundries, I mean solicits money from big corporations into our school with strings attached (this is a whole other story). I believe similar Foundation-type auxiliary organizations operate at many other California State schools. We are careful not to spend too much time with them, however, because they still have to follow standards that the president sets.

Tactics:

We begin our campaign in November 1999 with campus awareness events to educate students about the global sweatshop system and the power students have to change such a system. The first of these is a sweatshop fashion show, which is what first got me involved when I read about it in the Mustang Daily. I heard later that the hastily put together event read much better than it actually was. A little later, Arlen Benjamin drives up from UCLA to show the film she made with her mother, Medea, called "Sweat'in for a T-shirt." We are invited to do an anti-sweatshop presentation in an Ethnic Studies class.

We begin a dialogue with the administration in a very respectful manner requesting a Code of Conduct similar to the one the University of California system signed onto. We knew about the WRC at this time but we thought it would be best to get a code passed as a first step. A meeting with the Provost struck a deal to develop a Code and our group labored through the weekend to produce a rough draft Cal Poly Code. Then the Provost emails back a super weak and watered down revision with no living wage, women's rights, etc. So here is where things turn around...We schedule a meeting with the Provost and invite five progressive faculty members to attend including the union president and academic senate president. The Provost was then hit with a

barrage of questions as to why the code was so weak, and not just from us. A week later, the Provost wrote up a strong Code that included all of our revision requests. Some time passed so we wrote an open letter to President Warren Baker asking him to take a stand in the Mustang Daily. Other letters of support also followed and this tactic proved effective as he endorsed the Code.

So after that, we wanted to keep the momentum going for the WRC and we got lucky to have Eric Brakken and Charlie Eaton come to Poly, Speak, and show the new video, "Something to Hide." This was a great event as well as a good learning experience for the newly formed PSA. Our PSA adviser, the invaluable Dr. Greenwald keeps us up to date with sweatshop related Chronicle of Higher Education articles. He also writes an academic senate resolution backing the Code, which easily passed. Now school is ending, but before it does we are graced with the presence of Medea Benjamin who talks about the sweatshop issue as well as Seattle and other activism. We get inspired.

Summer happens, we develop a web page with the Code on it and information about the WRC. One member attends the national USAS conference in Oregon.

Fall 2000 begins and we waste no time in collectively writing out our goals and delivering them to the administration. The goals include WRC affiliation and a "sweat-free" zone in the bookstore. The goals are also posted on the web page. Our cause is published in the SLO New Times; a local left leaning weekly paper. We make another ally with New Times journalists, Tracy. Then two great student government representatives work to educate ASI, our student government, about the issue and write a resolution in support. The resolution eventually never needs to be proposed.

Another meeting with the Provost in January triggered the forming of a three-person faculty advisory committee made up of our allied professors. They of course write a formal recommendation to the President to sign onto the WRC. We write more letters urging WRC affiliation in the Mustang Daily.

In February, we organize a GAP protest in downtown San Luis Obispo urging the company to sign onto the Saipan Lawsuit. This gets ample coverage by TV and newspapers. The event was unrelated to the WRC but I think it still gave the administration the worrisome message that we like to protest. A delegation goes to the statewide conference at UC Davis and brings back a new vigor to organize. I get appointed by the student president (after my comrades lobby Sam on my behalf) onto a Bookstore advisory committee and get to talk with Foundation executives. Amazingly, human rights and the WRC are on the first agenda of monthly meetings. The committee eventually endorses WRC affiliation.

In March 2001, comrades go to the NIKE day of action in San Francisco and bring back photos for a great Mustang Daily article. By now the WRC Kukdong preliminary investigation comes out and is extremely useful in our argument. The Provost comes to a PSA meeting and says Cal Poly will join the WRC. We thought we won but a month later...nothing.

Then things get a little more intense. With two weeks left before spring break we draw a line in the sand. We tell the president in email and letter-form, hand delivered to his office, that he must either sign onto the WRC or personally meet with us before the break. The provost had promised WRC affiliation already but we never talked about a timeline. Other activists flood the president's email. We decide that we had covered all our bases by now and start preparing for a sit-in the first week that school resumes. Even the invaluable Dr. Greenwald said we were being "too nice." We are not that careful who we tell about the sit-in because we kind of want the rumor to spread. We know the President hates student confrontations.

A couple days before the break, we receive an email from one of the Foundation executives informing us that the administration had formally sent a sign on letter to the WRC's office. Yes, we finally won. Cal Poly became the 75th member of the Workers Rights Consortium and we celebrate the following night.

Things to do differently:

I would have tried to get progressive faculty members involved sooner.

I would have tried to get our campus service workers union, the Cal Poly CSEA that is part of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) involved. They turned out to be very interested in the campaign when they heard about it

I would have tried to set a timetable with the administration concerning the signing onto of the WRC.

I would have met with the campus ombudsman who we met later and looks to be a valuable resource for planning an approach for getting what we want from the administration

Things that were helpful to the campaign:

Letters to the Editor and Mustang Daily articles

Speaking events and video showings

The development of a larger base of support; the PSA

Ally at the Multicultural Center who helped with the logistics of events

The faculty union's vocal support and willingness to give students extra credit to attend our events

The GAP protest

The web page as an educational tool

The fact that the entire UC system had already signed on and Cal Poly wants to be just like a UC school

Being represented on the Bookstore Committee and getting their endorsement

The Kukdong preliminary report and mention of it in the Mustang Daily

A very receptive administrator in Provost Paul Zingg

The fact that Cal Poly is super image conscious and absolutely hates bad press and student confrontations

The New Times magazine which brought the issue to some extent to the larger community

Dedicated and persistent activists who kept working on the issue through a year and a half and after the original leader of the group graduated (the administration thought they could wait us out until we graduated but younger activists kept getting involved)

Tulane University Sweat-Free Campus Campaign

Prepared by Dan Lutz

December 1999 to October 2000

Goals

1. Tulane to leave Fair Labor Association
2. Tulane to join Worker Rights Consortium

Our organization

The struggle was led by the Labor Issues Committee of the Tulane Latin American Peace and Justice Group; in public the Committee was referred to as Tulane United Students Against Sweatshops. LAPJG was founded in the fall of 1998, and had largely organized around opposition to the SOA. The Labor Issues committee formed in early 1999 to do solidarity work in a local hotel workers' organizing campaign. LAPJG was made up primarily of upperclassmen, but most members of the Labor Issues Committee were freshman. The group was primarily white. Originally, leadership was divided between females and males almost evenly.

Allies:

- ★ Loyola Students Against Sweatshops phone-banked for us while we sat in, handled some of our press-work, and helped feed us.
- ★ UNITE rank-and-filers spoke at our rallies and organized a forum where about twenty laundry workers and twenty students talked during the sit-in. Several students had been active in a contract campaign at a laundry recently organized by UNITE.
- ★ Community Labor United, a local alliance of community groups and labor unions, led by former SNCC activists, helped feed us and provided us with some good long-range political perspective during our sit-in. Two of our members had become active in CLU in the fall of '99.
- ★ Nationally, we relied on the staffs of the WRC and USAS plus contacts at other USAS schools for advice, information, and solidarity.
- ★ We reached out to other student groups on campus, but most remained aloof, while some became actively hostile.

Opponents:

- ★ Our president, in his first year of office, refused to accept all of our demands in order to discourage future protests.
- ★ The committee he appointed to deal with the issue argued for a compromise.
- ★ The national leadership of the FLA actively encouraged the school not to withdraw. They suggested that the school join the WRC in order to placate the students. Bob Durkee, university liaison to the FLA, drew up point-by-point refutations of the documents we presented to the committee.

Targets:

We tried to focus our attack on the president of the university. We accepted the review of our demands by a committee, but in our group we decided that we would not accept the committee's decision if they did not meet our demands.

Our Story

Background

Tulane isn't the type of school where activism flourishes. Most of the students are white. Most are rich. Most come to New Orleans to party. The school itself, located in the heart of white Uptown, is very isolated from New Orleans' black working class districts. Two nations. The school has seen little political activism since our SDS chapter dug graves in the quad, raised the National Liberation Front flag on the flagpole, and burned down the ROTC building. Since then, the school's small black population has kept alive most of the activism on campus.

In 1998, white radicals and bohemians began to coalesce around the Latin American Peace and Justice Group. Under the prodding of the radicals, the group began to take up more local labor and community issues during 1999.

Education and confrontation

Our campaign began on the first day of school, January 2000. With a group of ten students, we barged into our president's office and presented a packet with our demands to his assistant. When planning the campaign in December, we had decided to combine education with confrontation in our campaign. While we educated the student body around the issue, we wanted to involve them in escalating actions against the administration. We wanted to move quickly in order to build and sustain momentum. From the beginning, we considered a sit-in at the end of March a distinct possibility. During the remainder of January we tabled and flyered, and we held two successful recruiting events, a movie showing and a forum on the issues with Martha Braithwaite of TUSAS and Curtis Muhammad of UNITE. At the same time, we continued to pressure the president, approaching him at public events and pestering him to accept our demands.

Committee

By the middle of January, our president informed us that he would refer our complaints to a committee of the faculty senate. We were scared that we would get stuck, like some of our USAS comrades at other schools, in a never-ending, fruitless committee process. Our group decided to enter the committee process in order to build legitimacy for our cause among the student body. We knew that the committee was powerless, so we were determined to keep pressure on the president throughout the conflict. When we accepted the committee process, we demanded from the president a quick review and resolution of our concerns. At the beginning of February, we delivered petitions to our president's office with a group of about twenty students; we marched to his office during a class change so that a large number of students would see us, and we flyered along the way.

New members of our group became angry and loud when we crowded into his office only to learn he wouldn't meet with us. We staged a larger march towards the end of the month. At the same time, we turned the committee process itself into a point of confrontation with the administration. The committee agreed only to allow two of our members into its meetings, so we publicized the meeting all over campus. At the first meeting, about twenty students came at 8 am and sat on the floor outside the meeting room. Cops hassled us, and the committee members thought we were staging a sit-in.

While the committee met, one of our members conducted a small teach-in on the issue for the new folks. Through this escalating pressure on the administration, we kept the committee process to three meetings, a total of four weeks.

Sit-in

At the beginning of March, as we returned from our Mardi Gras break, we learned that the committee had recommended that the school should join the WRC, but remain in the FLA. The president quickly accepted their decision. We decided to occupy our administration building on March 29. At the same time, we scheduled events for nearly every day of the weeks leading up to the sit-in. We tabled, flyered, petitioned, had mass-emailing days, dropped a three-story banner, held a teach-in, and staged a guerrilla theater performance of "Who wants to be a sweatshop

owner?” by Martha Braithwaite. In the days before the sit-in, we held nightly work meetings, including a poster party where we made posters to re-decorate the campus after our occupation, a meeting with our allies at Loyola to discuss their outside support work, and a meeting with a local activist lawyer with experience in civil disobedience.

On the day of the sit-in, our plans worked very well. As about thirty of us occupied the administration building at 12:15, our Loyola supporters fanned across the campus, pasting up huge banners, handing out fliers, and covering the sidewalks in chalk. Inside, we copied the tactics of the second part of the University of Penn sit-in. Instead of trying to hold our president’s office, we occupied the main public areas of the building so that supporters could come and go easily and new folks could drop by with little commitment. We completely re-decorated the public areas of the building with posters, pictures, and copies of the FLA and WRC.

We had already decided on a list of activities for the first three days of the sit-in, but as evening approached on the first day we were informed by campus security that they would arrest us if we did not leave the building by midnight. We scrapped our old list of events and instead planned a mass rally outside the building at eleven. This time, a group of TUSASers spread across the campus, talking with other students about the threat of arrest, knocking on doors, chalking, putting up new signs. At the same time, our Loyola comrades phone-banked our 300+ database to tell them about the emergency rally. Inside the building, the remaining students planned a long rally program of speakers, songs, and chants in order to keep a crowd past midnight. As our members flowed back into the building, we met with our lawyers to discuss the possibility of arrest. All present agreed to get arrested. At eleven, only about fifty people had appeared outside, but in ten minutes the crowd had swelled to over 200, including Loyola students and supporters from Community Labor United. About 38 folks were inside. The rally continued until 12:15, when the university cops told us we wouldn’t be arrested. Elated at our first victory, we stayed up until three in the morning, meeting first in a big group to discuss the day’s events, then in small groups to plan the next day’s struggle.

Unfortunately, our situation deteriorated from that point. Over the next week, the administration refused to negotiate with us while we remained in the building past closing time. While our numbers continued to grow, the constant pressures of leading a sit-in exhausted some of our older members, while some of the new members thought our positions too radical. At the same time, we learned that a leader of the campus anti-racism group was urging her members active in the sit-in to withdraw because we had not consulted fully with them before taking action, and they feared that our action would drain momentum from their own campaign against a racist fraternity. As our exhausted leadership increasingly moved toward a compromise with the administration, a new faction of TUSASers urged the group not to accept any compromise. On the eighth day of the sit-in, we left the building to sleep outside, continuing our occupation during the day-time.

On the eleventh day, the group, with strong dissent from the new faction, accepted a compromise of withdrawal from both the FLA and the WRC, with the issue to be decided by a student referendum in the fall.

Collapse

I dreamed that our sit-in had laid the basis for radical activism on Tulane’s campus, but when we returned in the fall, TUSAS rapidly fell apart. Three of our best freshman leaders, including Martha Braithwaite, the driving force behind the campaign, dropped out of school during the fall semester. Most of the leaders of the anti-compromise faction, who I hoped would form the base for organizing a radical group, quickly faded out of activism all together; one even voted for Bush! We kept a small group together, and we won the election, thanks to low voter turnout. But by the end, all of us had drifted away into other branches of activism. But even though our group collapsed, those people who stuck with it helped to infuse other campus groups with the radical lessons we learned during our campaign. Two of our leaders helped to found a new feminist group on campus, while my roommate and I helped to build an alliance between white campus groups and the anti-racist group we had feuded with during the sit-in.

Lessons learned

We learned as much from what we did wrong as from what we did right.

1. Don't look for friends inside the administration. Don't expect a committee or your president to listen to your reasonable arguments. We made a point to take at least ten people with us whenever we had to deal with the administration, even if we were only delivering a letter. We made every encounter with the administration a confrontation.
2. Campaigns need to move forward quickly, with action escalating, in order to build momentum. But the need to build and sustain momentum must be balanced with building equitable, accountable relationships with other student groups. The white left is so isolated because we're so arrogant. Before starting any campaign, look around on your campus. What issues are other students concerned about? What issues are other student groups working on? If you're white and male and straight, be aware of the privilege you have even to pick which issue to work on. Consult with other groups before beginning a campaign. Get their approval. Work on their campaigns before you ask them to work on yours. At Tulane over the last year, several sit-in veterans helped to create the Justice Coalition, a coalition composed of white progressive groups, student of color groups, and anti-racist groups. We've established a procedure for beginning a new campaign: a group presents a new idea for a campaign to the Coalition; Coalition reps report the idea back to their groups; reps come back to the Coalition and decide whether or not the group can carry out the campaign. It's a slow process, but it has built trust and a sense of unity and accountability among the participating groups.
3. We need to use conspiratorial methods to carry out an action like a sit-in effectively. But during the preparations for our sit-in, leadership increasingly became concentrated in the hands of only two of our members, Martha and myself. This was healthy for neither Martha and me nor the group. During the sit-in, we held mass membership meetings at least twice a day, but the pattern of leadership we developed leading up to the sit-in stuck. TUSASers either looked to us to solve every problem of the sit-in, or when the anti-compromise faction formed, rejected everything Martha and I said. By the end, Martha and I found ourselves exhausted, unable to provide leadership, while no one else in the group would step up. Conspiratorial methods are a necessity, but these methods must be balanced with the development of new leadership within the group. Without active participation in decision-making, people rapidly lose any commitment to the group.
4. Strong female leadership in a campaign doesn't mean a group is free of sexism. In our group, we found that while new male members easily found their way into positions of leadership and responsibility, new female members were often excluded from decision-making. Sexism is rooted in us deeply. Groups need to revisit issues of institutionalized oppression continuously.

Indiana University

Prepared by Micah Maidenberg, November 2001

Micah.Maidenberg@oberlin.edu

Current Status:

WRC affiliate

Background of Campus Group

No Sweat! was started in the spring of 99 to start an anti-sweatshop campaign at Indiana. The fall semester of 99 the anti-sweat campaign started. While No Sweat!'s primary mission remains student anti-sweatshop work, the group also works closely with local labor struggles (most closely and prominently with workers fighting concessions at a local General Electric plant) and has sponsored forums on campus democracy/corporatization. Demographics of the group were overwhelmingly (if not completely) white students, with a good mixture of graduate students and undergrads from all years in school. There was parity in women and men.

Allies:

Lots of support from other campus groups (nearly all participated in our popular education program, which I'll get back to below). Several left/labor professors provided support, came to our meetings, participated in bargaining, our actions, etc. Local labor provided support and came to trust No Sweat! as a reliable ally for their campaigns. We worked with the electrical workers, the local Jobs for Justice branch, steel workers in northern Indiana, and others. Every central labor council was mailed a copy of our newsletter. Local Catholic church social justice group provided crucial and unwavering support.

Opponents:

Not much here. No student groups or professors actively campaigned against us. IU is more apathetic than conservative.

Target:

President Myles Brand. We participated in bargaining with two deans of students, the director of the licensing bureau (a former owner of a sweatshop in Central America, it was rumored).

Tactics:

Our campaign was based on our popular-education program. We approached classes, student groups, unions, church groups, community groups . . . anyone who would listen and set up a time to do the pop-ed as they were called. The program was written by Amber Gallup and Kenneth Miller, and designed to connect sweatshops and the global economy to local issues that had resonance with people. After the program, people signed up to be on our email list and get involved in the group (anyone could come to bargaining and join No Sweat - in one particularly fun example, a labor conference was happening close to school and we invited union members attending the conference to join us at bargaining. Around 30 folks came, packing the room, letting the administration know where they were from in the state and that they were up to date on the WRC campaign). This was our main tactic: leveraging the support we built using the education program and newsletter at the bargaining table. We made it very clear that the WRC/USAS had support from a broad base of folks in the community, around the state, and from other students around the country. When we finally got a meeting with our President, we invited all our supporters to it, and I think about 30 groups were represented.

Things to do differently:

Hold regular meetings so new people could more easily get involved (many of our meetings were not advertised). Around 10 members of the group were deeply involved in the campaign, in national usas, etc . . . and we didn't integrate new folks very well.

No Sweat! reached out to minority students in an effort to bring our campaign to cover all bases of progressive power on campus and to understand the experience of minority students. to facilitate the forging of our relationship, No Sweat! did its popular education at various student group meetings and also tried to engage minority student groups as to what they experienced. The latter end of our strategy needed more time and effort from our part, as it is essential to building lasting relationships. No Sweat! contacted various minority student groups through personal contacts that we had within the group and tried to make more contacts. Various minority student groups endorsed the letter to the administration to join the WRC.

Things that helped

The pop-ed campaign - reaching out to over a thousand people and talking about sweatshops was key. Connecting sweatshops and Indiana apparel to local issues/struggles. Good press. Working closely with similar schools close to us (Michigan, Wisconsin, Purdue). A newsletter. Having many folks (especially community/labor allies) at bargaining sessions.

Loyola University – Chicago

Prepared by: Tom Strunk, tstrunk@luc.edu

Current Status: WRC affiliate

Background of Campus Group

Loyola Students Against Sweatshops was formed in the winter of 1999 to address labor issues and our university's apparel. Our group was small then and we focused mostly on educating ourselves and keeping our school off the FLA. LSAS has slowly grown in numbers and now our meetings usually have 20-30. Our group has been predominantly white, though not completely. There is a good balance of men and women. Our members range from PhD students to first year students with good leadership from 2nd and 3rd year students. Our school is an urban Jesuit Catholic private institution.

Allies:

We received support from several on campus organizations, and too few off-campus groups (our own fault). On campus we were supported by Anti-Racist Action, Amnesty International, Loyola School of the Americas Watch, Loyola University Ministry Center, the Loyola Jesuit Community, The Chicago Anti-Sweatshop Coalition, Chicago Jobs with Justice, and the student government.

Opponents:

We had no active opponents.

Target:

Our president John Piderit

Tactics:

We tried to use tactics that were in our means. Loyola had a task force that included two LSAS kids. So we applied pressure on our president and the committee which was to make the recommendation to the president. We spent a lot of time leafleting the campus to educate students on the WRC and FLA. We also had Jeff Ballinger come to speak on our campus and to our committee about the WRC. Sometimes discussing the WRC was difficult because this was before the founding conference and a lot of things were vague. There were also a lot of actions going on at other schools to get them on the WRC. Whenever any of these actions occurred, we always informed our administrators, kind of a heads up that we knew what was happening around the country and we could be just as crazy if we had too. We had folks sign petitions to join the WRC, though this was mostly used to educate the signer. We wrote editorials to our student newspaper regularly. We also used our student government to pass legislation supporting the WRC and against the FLA.

Our committee meet over lunch, so at one point we held a week long fast. We did this because Loyola is a Catholic school and invites people to fast each fall to raise awareness about hunger, so this was an action that our fellow students understood as an act in solidarity with the oppressed. Our administrators were also impressed. Who wants to mess with a group of kids who are willing to not eat for a week? So this was another see how tough we are tactic. We sent letters explaining the fast to all our allies and to our administrators. This happened to coincide also with the UPENN sit-in. We also hung several large banners from the tallest building on our campus when the students at Madison were arrested for their sit-in. We used this to draw attention to their action and the need to join the WRC and not the FLA. Stuff like this hadn't been done in a long time on our campus and so people were starting to notice us. We even ended up on the front-page of the Chicago Tribune and later the Sun-Times. Just before Spring Break we essentially asked our committee if we could make the decision to join the WRC since we wanted to be in before the founding conference. This was just after the banner incident and so the committee made the recommendation and the president accepted it. I should also stress that we actively worked to educate our committee about the WRC and the entire issue of sweatshops. We were way more

educated on the issue and made sure they were reading the right things. We also took advantage of Catholic social teaching on workers' rights, which is pretty strong.

The last thing we did, which was to keep our school off the FLA, but I still see as part of our WRC campaign, was to have a sleep out the night before our committee was to make the FLA decision. The Purdue students were doing their hunger strike then and so it was done in solidarity with them too. This got us on the news and gained a lot of support for us. Through some connections in the president's office (conveniently one of our members worked in the president's office), we leaked that we would be doing a serious action if the decision was made to join the FLA. The next day the decision was made to not join.

Things to do differently:

In the end I guess we didn't really need it but we should've built stronger ties with local labor groups. We got the victory, but we didn't take advantage of the opportunity to form those relationships until later. I think another thing we did wrong was to underestimate our administrators. At the beginning of our committee we were fairly belligerent, which might have been good, but by the end we found out that a lot of the people on the committee supported us and were genuinely good folks, so we might not have needed to come out so forcefully. Overall though I think we ran a solid campaign.

Things that were helpful to the campaign:

Despite what I just mentioned, we did play a lot of good cop to go with the bad cop attitude. This helped us gain a lot of support from non-student sectors of the campus, such as student affairs, university ministry and the Jesuit community (Catholic priests). We also did our homework, and not the kind assigned by our professors either. In the end, I think we relied a lot on the strength of USAS to give us the inspiration and resources to see the campaign through.



Comparison of the Worker Rights Consortium (WRC) and the Fair Labor Association (FLA)

**United Students Against Sweatshops
February 2005**

For official FLA information, please see the FLA website: www.fairlabor.org

For official WRC information, please see the WRC website: www.workersrights.org

And for more information on the WRC and USAS, contact USAS national organizer Allie Robbins: allie@usasnet.org or (202) NO-SWEAT

I. WRC Core Principles

A. Transparency: the WRC is committed to as much public disclosure as is possible while securing the confidentiality of workers. Informational transparency allows colleges and universities to make informed judgments about implementing collegiate codes of conduct.

B. Working closely with local worker allied organizations and independently of the industry: Workers, who are present in the factory every day, are ultimately the best monitors of working conditions. Workers need to be able to report abusive working conditions to local parties who have the trust of the workers and who can understand the cultural and political nuances of the situation. Trust and collaboration between the WRC and pro-worker organizations is possible because the WRC's investigative work is completely independent of the apparel industry. This allows WRC investigative teams to obtain detailed information about labor rights violations that is not available to other monitors.

C. Information gathering

A) Worker complaints—The WRC gathers information through worker complaints and interviews. The WRC works with local NGOs to conduct trainings for workers at collegiate apparel factories, informing them of their rights under codes of conduct, including the right to file a confidential complaint if they believe their rights are being violated. Interviews are conducted away from the factory by local worker-allied NGOs, with complete anonymity.

B) Self-reporting by the industry—The WRC gathers information provided by industry representatives, including factory locations.

C) Research—The WRC conducts research on labor rights and other important topics related to apparel production in countries where collegiate products are manufactured.

D) Proactive investigations—When WRC research indicates that workers' rights are particularly suppressed in an area, or where there is a known history of repeated violations, the WRC conducts systemic spot check investigations.

D. Remediation: The WRC is committed to the remediation of all worker rights violations that are uncovered in its investigations. In most cases, this requires the sustained involvement of WRC staff long after the investigation has been complete and the report is published. The WRC works with workers and management at the factory level, as well as collegiate brands and colleges and universities to correct code of conduct violations and bring about improved working conditions in the factory.

II. WRC/FLA Comparison

The WRC and the FLA are two distinct organizations, with different approaches to labor rights enforcement and different scopes. Any comparison of the two must start from the recognition that their projects are fundamentally different. The WRC works with local NGOs to empower workers to report labor rights violations in order to assist colleges and universities in enforcing their codes

of conduct. The FLA seeks to accredit apparel brands as in compliance with FLA standards by requiring that companies adopt monitoring programs.

This comparison seeks to be up to date on the FLA's developments as of May 2004.

Governance

The FLA board of directors consists of six representatives of participating companies, six NGO representatives, and three representatives of university administrations. The board operates by a supermajority vote, meaning that 4 out of 6 members of each constituency must approve of any initiative for it to pass. This means that the companies on the FLA board have veto power over any proposed initiative, including changes to the FLA Charter Document, which lays out the FLA's code of conduct and basic monitoring protocols, and other decisions such as the decision to terminate a company's participation in the association. In addition, this means that the three university representatives to the FLA board's votes have little chance of affecting an initiative's passing.

The WRC governing board operates by a majority vote of its constituencies: 5 representatives of United Students Against Sweatshops; 5 representatives of the WRC University Caucus (college and university administrators); and 5 representatives of the WRC Advisory Council, an independent collection of labor rights experts and representatives of worker-allied organizations. This is because the WRC was created by university students and administrators, and labor rights experts, specifically to serve colleges and universities seeking to enforce their codes of conduct. The governance of the organization is completely independent of the companies that run the apparel industry.

Transparency and Reporting

The FLA reports to the public via an annual report, which gives a general overview of each company's internal compliance program and the FLA's monitoring system, as well as individual "tracking charts" which show the results of external monitor visits. The charts are little more than check-lists of code provisions, sometimes with brief commentary on the violations, and do not provide the name of the factory being monitored, so there is no way of verifying the information. Given the prevalence of serious worker rights abuses in the industry and the difficulty involved in changing these practices, these cryptic charts are not an appropriate way of communicating information about factory conditions to the public and reflect a lack of seriousness about improving conditions.

The WRC is committed to as high a level of public transparency as possible, while securing the confidentiality of workers bringing complaints. WRC factory reports are intended to be public documents, providing substantial background information on the relevant labor rights issues, and in-depth discussion of findings of code noncompliance, including an explanation of the investigative process itself. Reports detail the status of remediation efforts at the factory, including improvements that have been made and the remaining steps necessary to correct the violations. Affiliate schools also receive periodic updates on the progress of remediation. This allows colleges and universities to be an integral part of the WRC process by working with other schools and the relevant licensees to ensure that conditions at the factory are improved.

NGO* Partners and worker representation

The FLA Charter Document was not drafted in consultation with NGOs who actually represent apparel workers. The FLA does not require that external monitoring be done by NGOs. Instead, the vast majority of the FLA's accredited "independent external monitors" are for-profit auditing firms whose business depends on the continued patronage of companies like those on the FLA.

The WRC Founding Document was drafted in consultation with workers and worker-allied NGOs who represent workers. The WRC's upstanding commitment to NGO involvement is demonstrated by the nine NGOs on the WRC Advisory Council. As explained in the WRC Investigative Protocols, one of the members of any WRC investigative team is required to be representative of local workers, such as a member of a worker-allied NGO. These and other NGO partners were and continue to be central in the development and implementation of the WRC's monitoring program.

(*An NGO is a non-governmental or civil society organization, such as a women's advocacy group, a community support organization, or a legal aid center. For more information on the WRC's partner organizations, see the list of Advisory Council members or members of investigative teams listed at the end of each WRC factory report.)

Monitoring Protocols

The FLA charter states that companies first submit a list of applicable facilities to be monitored. The FLA then determines which facilities will be inspected, selects a monitor from their list of accredited monitors (the majority of which are for-profit companies), schedules the visit, and receives the report at the same time as the company. There is no requirement to involve local workers or worker-allied organizations in the monitoring visit or worker interview process, and any third-party complaints (such as those coming from workers themselves) are referred directly to companies and their contracted monitor.

The WRC Investigative Protocols lay out the composition and protocols for official WRC investigations and verification. The Protocols require that any WRC investigative team include, at least, both of the following members: a WRC staffperson/board member/ official delegate, and "on-site workers or community members in the immediate locality or region of the workplaces to be investigated." Essentially, participation from local workers and/or worker advocates is mandatory in all WRC investigations. While the workers who brought the complaint to the WRC will not be in a position to make findings of fact on behalf of the WRC or participate on the investigative team themselves, the input of the party which brought the grievance is central to the WRC investigative team's proceedings.

The WRC investigative teams conduct interviews outside of the factory, in workers' homes or community centers where workers feel they can speak freely, and names of workers who have given testimony are kept completely confidential. This allows the WRC to obtain information on serious abuses that workers are highly unlikely to discuss with monitors associated with the companies or an industry-backed organization such as the FLA. The WRC also is serious about seeing violations corrected, which requires substantial time spent on each case after the initial investigation period. The process of "remediation" in order to correct problems can take anywhere from six months to two years and requires regular monitoring to ensure that improvements are permanent, a process which the WRC is committed to in each of its investigations.

Complaint Procedure

The FLA complaint procedure throws third-party complaints back to the company in question and their contracted monitor for a 45-day period. After that period, if the FLA Executive Director is not satisfied with the company response, the FLA Executive Director may appoint an independent monitor in consultation with the company in question. Given the scope of FLA operations and the infrequency of monitoring visits, the weakness of its third-party complaint procedures is reprehensible. Fast timing and response is critical for documenting and resolving abuses occurring at factories.

The WRC Investigative Protocols stipulate that the WRC accepts complaints from any party. The WRC Executive Director, in consultation with the WRC board, has the authority to follow up on a complaint by appointing a collaborative investigative team to investigate, subject to the criteria laid out in the WRC Investigative Protocols. The WRC has the flexibility to be able to respond to urgent situations within a period of several days when necessary to respond to urgent cases of violence or other serious irreparable abuse of workers.

Certification of Companies

The FLA allows participating companies to advertise publicly that their products are manufactured in compliance with Fair Labor Association standards. This statement can be included on garment labels, in advertising, and in communication with shareholders after the FLA's only two-year initial implementation phase. Despite the fact that this "sweatfree" certification does nothing to advance the cause of worker rights and has been at the center of FLA criticism from worker advocates, the FLA recently showed its eagerness to move forward with this

bogus stamp of approval by accrediting Reebok's footwear labor compliance program. Clearly the public relations benefit far of this move outweighs any priority on accountability to workers at the FLA.

The WRC does not certify companies. The WRC founding document says, "One-time investigations often just cover up poor working conditions. Hence, certifying 'compliance' of an entire corporation or factory is ultimately impossible and only extends the probability that the name of the University will be lent to companies that are still be profiting off of abusive working conditions." Instead of certifying companies, the WRC is transparent with its information, allowing universities and consumers to make informed decisions about which garments were made under fair conditions. This encourages all companies to make the necessary improvements, outlined in WRC reports, to bring their factories into compliance with the code.

VIII. Track Record: Independent monitoring leads to improved conditions.

Sometimes both the WRC and the FLA conduct monitoring work at the same factory. In fact, most of the accomplishments that the FLA publicly boasts of involve factories where the WRC was already leading the way in identifying problems and stressing the need for remediation, and where worker campaigns had been highly publicized by USAS. In these cases, the FLA repeatedly hindered remediation efforts by refusing to take a strong stand on the well-known violations or publicize its findings, and through its inability to sanction companies that are refusing to take code compliance seriously. The violations, some of which had been overlooked by other monitors, were brought to the FLA's attention by the WRC, and remediation was carried out because of WRC and USAS (and hence university and public) scrutiny of the situation.

There are a few key reasons, all addressed in the above outline, for why the FLA model has proved insufficient, and sometimes detrimental in these cases. The first relates to the FLA's investigative methods and governance structure. Because the FLA represents apparel brands, its monitors are unable to gain the level of worker trust that WRC staff and local allied organizations can, and because there is no commitment to interviewing workers outside of the factory, the FLA simply does not have access to the detailed information on code violations that the WRC regularly receives from workers. This creates the potential for many serious problems to be overlooked. Another key advantage the WRC has in reporting problems and bringing about improvements is its commitment to public disclosure and transparency in the investigative process. None of these cases would have been public knowledge in the university community without the involvement of the WRC and USAS, and it was the public attention to the situation that pressured the FLA and the brands (in some cases reluctantly) to correct violations in a timely manner. The WRC is able to publish detailed reports and updates when a company is refusing to comply with the recommended remediation steps, instead of needing to consult endlessly with the brands as the FLA does in order to avoid angering its constituent corporations. This is not to say that the purpose of the WRC is to publicly embarrass companies in its reports, but the understanding that the brand's response will be reported to universities and consumers provides a strong incentive for swift compliance with WRC recommendations, which is necessary to correct ongoing violations and in most cases prevent further irreparable harm to workers. This process has led to constructive dialogue with brands and meaningful remediation, which would not have happened in the absence of an independent organization acting on behalf of universities and in the interests of workers.

Kukdong: The Kukdong factory (now called Mexmode) in southern Mexico, which produces Nike sweatshirts for many U.S. colleges, was the first maquiladora in the country to recognize an independent, worker-led union and negotiate a collective bargaining agreement. When 500 workers staged a wildcat strike in January 2001 to protest conditions in the factory and demand an independent, representative union, the WRC's factory investigation capacity was put to the test for the first time, and it passed with flying colors. When peacefully striking workers were brutalized by riot police, and later prevented from returning to work because of their participation in the protest, the WRC was able to bring together an investigative team and begin interviewing the then locked-out workers within a week. While the WRC was documenting the abuses and providing guidelines for universities and brands to address the ongoing harm being done to workers, Nike expended most of its energy on press releases denying the seriousness of the abuses.

Nike initially cited an audit report produced several months earlier by one of their corporate monitors, Pricewaterhouse Coopers, which indicated that Kukdong was a model factory. In reality, there were long-standing violations of minimum wage laws, among other problems at Kukdong, but Nike's monitor failed to identify this.

Due to student and university pressure, it became clear to Nike and the FLA that this labor dispute was too important to ignore. Nike sent down another monitor and its own compliance team, and slowly began to work with the WRC and others to push the factory to reinstate the workers, cease harassment and intimidation of employees associated with the independent union drive, and allow a free and fair union election. The results represented a historic breakthrough, and while Nike proudly touts its cooperation with the remediation process, it is clear that it would not have happened without schools' commitment to the WRC and independent monitoring.

New Era: The FLA's handling of the New Era Cap Company's application to participate in the FLA monitoring program demonstrates the organization's inability to make difficult decisions when dealing with companies that have a proven lack of respect for workers' rights. In September 2001, New Era submitted its application to participate in the FLA monitoring program. At this time, workers at the company's Derby, NY, factory had been on strike for several months after the company refused to bargain in good faith with the workers' union, instead attempting to impose a contract that would have cut many workers' hourly pay in half. New Era had a long history of illegal anti-union behavior and severe health and safety violations, and had been cited by both the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) and OSHA for violating the law. The company also refused to cooperate with a WRC investigative team by providing necessary documents or access to the factory, even at the strong urging of its licensor universities. To any reasonably astute observer, New Era was clearly a sweatshop employer with a lot to hide—which is perhaps why the company thought itself fit for membership in the FLA.

The FLA board initially considered New Era's application in January 2002 but did not make a decision, repeatedly deferring this decision throughout the coming months, despite public promises to the contrary. In mid-May 2002, the FLA set up a board sub-committee to evaluate the New Era application for a period of 4-5 months. (It is interesting to note that the FLA charter, which provides a process for considering company applications, has no provisions for establishing such a sub-committee, the FLA invented this procedure to further avoid any decision on New Era's application.)

The FLA's handling of the New Era application demonstrates that it is incapable of making tough decisions when faced with a company that has repeatedly violated workers' rights. The FLA requires that a company demonstrate good faith when submitting applications to the FLA monitoring program. New Era did not demonstrate good faith, but the FLA simply avoided or deferred making any decisions on the application. At this point, it was a lose-lose situation for the FLA: either they accept the company and destroy any credibility they may have had as an organization serious about workers' rights (because New Era had a proven track record as a sweatshop operator), or they reject New Era, which would mean all colleges and universities on the FLA would be required to drop their contracts with the company, an action the corporate-controlled FLA certainly did not want to take. So they did nothing. Based on the New Era experience, one can only assume that there are no circumstances under which the FLA would make the decision to reject a sweatshop employer.

The WRC, on the other hand, because it is not in the business of accepting companies into its programs, was able to initiate an investigation and report to the public to the best of its abilities on New Era's compliance with codes of conduct, even while the company refused any good-faith cooperation with monitoring efforts. Eventually, the WRC's publicizing of New Era's code violations, as well as the commitment of member colleges and universities to the WRC process, forced New Era to take seriously the investigation process and cooperate with the WRC. Eventually, the strike was resolved and the company negotiated a fair contract with the union.

3. BJ&B: The FLA's involvement in the BJ&B case is similar to the Kukdong situation. BJ&B is a factory in the Dominican Republic that produces Nike and Reebok baseball caps for universities. Since the factory first opened, groups of workers had attempted to organize a union to improve

some of the abysmal working conditions. Every time they did so, the group of workers was summarily and illegally fired. When USAS brought a BJ&B worker to the U.S. in 1999 to denounce these violations, Nike ran a PR campaign to discredit the worker and USAS. In December of 2001, a group of workers was fired again, and this time the WRC was able to assemble an investigative team and document the illegal firings. In the following year, Nike and Reebok acknowledged the problems at BJ&B and began to press the factory to respect the workers' right to organize. Eventually the factory allowed a free and fair election to be held, and workers voted in favor of union representation. In the spring of 2003, management and the union negotiated the first collective bargaining agreement in a factory in a Dominican free trade zone to provide for wages above the legal minimum. The FLA prominently cites their participation at BJ&B as a significant achievement for the organization, and while the participation of brands was necessary to force the factory to make improvements, it is clear that the brands would have done little to tackle this problem without the work of the WRC.

4. Primo: In March of 2003, the WRC released its preliminary report on the Primo factory, a Lands' End supplier in El Salvador. The report cited evidence of blacklisting of union members, a problem widely acknowledged to be widespread in El Salvador's free trade zones, not only preventing countless qualified workers from finding employment because of their real or perceived union affiliation, but preventing all zone workers from exercising their legal right to form unions. Soon after the WRC report was made public, the FLA sent a monitor to the factory whose findings corroborated those of the WRC. Although FLA staff told members of USAS that they had found evidence of blacklisting and would move quickly, they made no public statements about the results of their investigation. In May, Lands' End agreed to a remediation plan laid out by the WRC and FLA, only to do nothing and then change course several months later, reverting to its earlier strategy of attacking the WRC's credibility while hiding behind the FLA. In communications with schools, Lands' End denied that the WRC report provided any evidence of blacklisting, and claimed that they had been vindicated by the FLA's investigations.

The FLA, as it is prone to do, said nothing about the fact that one of its member companies (all university licensees are required to participate in the FLA) was blatantly lying about its findings in order to avoid correcting a grave and ongoing violation of worker rights at its facility. Although this case was eventually resolved to the workers' satisfaction, it is clear from the FLA's behavior that without the public scrutiny provided by USAS and the WRC, the very serious issue of blacklisting would have been overlooked.

5. Gildan: Gildan Activewear is a major collegiate t-shirt manufacturer. In January 2004, in response to a complaint from workers, both the WRC and FLA conducted investigations and found that Gildan had illegally fired dozens of workers who had attempted to organize an independent trade union at its factory in El Progreso, Honduras. In July 2004, in the midst of joint negotiations with the WRC and FLA to correct violations, Gildan suddenly announced it was shutting down the El Progreso factory and firing all 1,800 of the plant's workers – a transparent and brazen act to end the investigations and the effort by workers to organize for better conditions. The FLA put Gildan on "special review", but instead of requiring Gildan to provide employment to the illegally terminated workers – the only action that would sufficiently rectify the illegal mass termination caused by the closure – the FLA asked Gildan correct misrepresentations of the FLA on its website and in the media, and take several other measures. When Gildan met these minimal requirements, the FLA reinstated them as a participating company, sending the message that it is acceptable for a company to shut down a factory in response to an investigation and still retain its status in the FLA. Gildan eventually did provide reemployment opportunities for the El Progreso workers, but only after the WRC expressed its strong disagreement with the FLA's position and USAS students pushed their administrators to threaten Gildan's contracts. Had the FLA been the universities' only monitoring agent, Gildan would not have been held responsible for this egregious abuse of worker rights.

IX. The FLA agrees—corporate monitoring is insufficient and schools must support the WRC.

The staff of the FLA also recognize the need for independent monitoring through the WRC to identify problems and correct them. The FLA's executive director has publicly stated that the two organizations are "complimentary" because of the WRC's strong intelligence-gathering capabilities and the FLA's ability to work closely with the brands on remediation, and has encouraged schools to join both organizations. Unfortunately, while the FLA may feel that the WRC's work helps its monitoring efforts and can cite cooperation with the WRC to gain legitimacy, the existence of the FLA does little for student and university efforts to improve conditions in university supplier factories.

The FLA acknowledges that these major breakthroughs would not have been possible without the WRC, yet its very existence continues to prevent increased WRC affiliations, providing a cop-out for administrators who want to "prove" to students that they are doing something about the sweatshop issue without making a commitment to independent monitoring, which they believe might potentially offend their licensees. In the same way, the FLA is a smokescreen for corporations to hide behind in an attempt to demonstrate their commitment to improving conditions, while stalling and providing little real information to the public on important cases. There is nothing "independent" about the FLA's external monitoring or the organization itself, and in addition to lending their names to this sham, university affiliates are essentially paying their licensees to monitor themselves. All university codes of conduct require that licensees conduct their own internal monitoring, and they are free to do this through the FLA, but schools should not subsidize it. Instead, universities must continue to support and participate in the WRC so that the scope and effectiveness of these independent efforts can grow.



Affiliated Colleges and Universities

144 Colleges and Universities as of August 5, 2005

American University	Haverford College
Antioch College	Hunter College
Arizona State University	Illinois State University
Ball State University	Indiana University
Bard College	Ithaca College
Bellarmino University	James Madison University
Beloit College	Johns Hopkins University
Berea College	Kent State University
Boston College	Kenyon College
Bowdoin College	Kutztown University
Brandeis University	Lake Forest College
Brown University	Louisiana State University
California Polytechnic University	Loyola University Chicago
California State University, Long Beach	Loyola University New Orleans
California State University, San Bernardino	Macalester College
Carleton College	Marquette University
Carnegie Mellon University	Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Clark University	McMaster University
Colby College	Miami University of Ohio
The College of the Holy Cross	Middle Tennessee State University
Columbia University	Middlebury College
Cornell University	Moravian College
DePaul University	New Mexico State University
Duke University	New York University
Duquesne University	Northern Arizona University
Earlham College	Northern Illinois University
The Evergreen State College	Northwestern University
Fordham University	Oberlin College
Franklin & Marshall College	Occidental College
Georgetown University	Ohio State University
Gonzaga University	Ohio Wesleyan University
Grand Valley State University	Purdue University
Grinnell College	Queens University
Hamilton College	Regis University
Harvard University	Rutgers State University of New Jersey
	Saint Cloud State University

St. John's University
Saint Joseph's University
Saint Mary's College
Saint Olaf College
San Diego State University
San Francisco State University
Santa Clara University
Sarah Lawrence College
Seattle University
Smith College
Stetson University
SUNY, Cortland
SUNY, New Paltz
Syracuse University
Transylvania University
Tulane University
Union College
University at Albany, SUNY
University at Buffalo, SUNY
University of Arizona
University of California, Berkeley
University of California, Davis
University of California, Irvine
University of California, Los Angeles
University of California, Merced
University of California, Riverside
University of California, San Diego
University of California, San Francisco
University of California, Santa Barbara
University of California, Santa Cruz
University of Colorado at Boulder
University of Connecticut
University of Dayton
University of Delaware
University of Guelph
University of Illinois, Chicago

University of Illinois, Springfield
University of Illinois, Urbana Champaign
University of Iowa
University of Louisville
University of Maine, Farmington
University of Maine, Orono
University of Maryland
University of Massachusetts, Amherst
University of Massachusetts, Boston
University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth
University of Massachusetts, Lowell
University of Massachusetts, Worcester
University of Michigan
University of Minnesota
University of Missouri, Columbia
University of New Hampshire
University of New Mexico
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
University of Notre Dame
University of Pennsylvania
University of San Francisco
University of Toronto
University of Washington
University of Wisconsin, La Crosse
University of Wisconsin, Madison
University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee
University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point
Vanderbilt University
Vassar College
Villanova University
Washington University in St. Louis
Wayne State University
Wellesley College
Wesleyan University
Western Michigan University
Williams College

New SweatFree Campus Campaign Proposal

Designated Suppliers Proposal

Overview

Under the Designated Suppliers Program, university logo goods will be sourced from factories that fully respect the rights of their employees, including rights of association – as evidenced by the presence of a legitimate, independent union or other representative employee body – and the right to earn a livable wage. University licensees will pay these factories prices for their products sufficient to allow factories to achieve these standards, prices which will represent a significant but manageable premium over industry norms, and will maintain the kind of long-term relationships with these factories necessary to allow for a reasonable degree of financial stability and job security. These factories will produce primarily or exclusively for the university logo goods market.

Sourcing Requirement and Workplace Standards

Upon implementation of the Designated Suppliers Program, licensees will be required to source a portion of their university logo goods from factories that have been designated by the Worker Rights Consortium (WRC). In order to qualify as a designated university logo goods supplier, a factory will be required to meet the following criteria:

- The factory must demonstrate full compliance with internationally recognized labor standards, as embodied in university codes of conduct
- The factory's employees must be represented by a legitimate, independent labor union or other representative employee body
- The factory, must demonstrate that its employees are paid a living wage, once it is receiving prices for its products sufficient to make this feasible
- The factory must produce primarily or exclusively for the university logo goods market, or for other buyers committed to equivalent standards (including payment of a living wage)

Because of the nature of apparel industry sourcing practices, it is not presently feasible for any factory to fully meet these criteria. Only when, as a result of the Program, stable orders are available to factories at appropriate price levels will full compliance be possible. Therefore, the Program will involve a start-up phase in which licensees, factories and the WRC will work to identify potential designated suppliers, direct orders to these suppliers, and bring them into full compliance with the standards of the Program.

This process will work as follows:

Upon adoption of the Program by licensor universities, the WRC will provide licensees with a list of factories that possess the capacity to achieve designated supplier status, but have not yet done so. This determination will be based on the level of overall code compliance demonstrated by particular factories, including manifested respect for rights of association. Licensees may choose factories from this list and/or or factories from their existing supply chains that they believe can be brought into full compliance under the standards of the Program. The WRC will work with licensees and the factories they identify to map out plans for remediating deficiencies and achieving full compliance.

The first six months after the inception of the program will be a grace period; licensees will not be required to demonstrate that they are sourcing from designated suppliers until this period has ended. During the grace period, the WRC will advise licensees on an ongoing basis as to whether sufficient progress is being made at a given factory such that it will be feasible for compliance to be achieved in a timely fashion. Assessment of factories to identify designated suppliers will begin

after the end of the grace period, and will be initiated in response to requests from workers and their representatives at each factory.

After the grace period concludes, licensees will incur the obligation to demonstrate that they are sourcing the appropriate percentage of their university logo goods from designated suppliers. Compliance will be measured annually, starting from the end of the grace period – meaning that the first compliance assessment will occur 18 months after the inception of the program and will cover the period from the 6th through the 18th month.

The portion of collegiate production that licensees will be required to source from the designated factories will increase over time, as the number of facilities that meet the university's standards increases. The minimum percentage of production that licensees will be required to procure from designated suppliers in each year after the end of the grace period will be as follows:

- After One Year: 25%
- After Two Years: 50%
- After Three Years: 75%

Explanation of key standards

Freedom of Association

To qualify as a designated supplier, a factory must be found to fully respect employees' associational rights, as evidenced by the existence of a legitimate labor union or other representative employee body and a demonstrated commitment by management to negotiate a collective bargaining agreement with the union or other worker representatives in good faith.

Living Wage

Factories will be obligated to pay employees, as a floor, a living wage. A living wage is a "take home" or "net" wage, earned during a country's legal maximum work week, but not more than 48 hours, that provides for the basic needs (housing, energy, nutrition, clothing, health care, education, potable water, childcare, transportation and savings) of workers and their families.

Since in most or all cases, suppliers will need to receive increased prices from buyers before a living wage can be paid, compliance with this standard will be measured only after a factory has been in receipt of orders from licensees at appropriate price levels for at least six months. If a factory is subsequently found not to be in compliance with the living wage standard, and the factory refuses to remedy the non-compliance, the factory will lose its status as a designated supplier.

Because wages at each factory will be set through contract negotiation between worker representatives and management, a factory's compliance with the living wage standard will not be assessed until there is sufficient opportunity for these negotiations to occur.

Producing primarily for the university logo goods market

In order for compliance with the above standards to be achievable, university licensees will need to account for a substantial majority of production at each participating supplier factory. The burden will therefore be on licensees to ensure that those factories they intend to use toward fulfillment of their obligation have sufficient orders to ensure that two thirds of annual sales are for the university logo goods market. At the end of its first twelve months as a designated supplier, each factory will be assessed to verify that this standard was met during those twelve months. If it is determined that the standard was not met, the factory will lose its status as a designated supplier and licensees will not be able to count goods sourced from that factory over that twelve month period toward fulfillment of their sourcing obligations under the Program. The purpose of this requirement is twofold: to ensure that designated suppliers receive sufficient orders at prices adequate to allow for compliance with Program standards, and to ensure that these orders are sufficient in volume, and in consistency over time, to enable suppliers to provide stable employment to their workers.

Fair Pricing Requirement

Licensees and/or their agents will be required to order goods from the designated factories at prices that are sufficient for the factory to pay a living wage and to comply with all other code of conduct standards. The failure of a licensee to purchase goods at prices that meet this standard will represent a violation of its obligations under the program. It is the responsibility of each licensee, in negotiation with each supplier factory on each order, to determine the appropriate price. The WRC will provide technical assistance, as needed. If the WRC determines that the price being paid for a particular order is insufficient to allow a factory to meet the living wage standard, the licensee will be deemed to be in violation of its obligations under the Program.

Monitoring

Ongoing compliance with the standards by designated suppliers will be assessed by the WRC through a combination of complaint-based investigations and spot investigations.

Transparency

Licensees and designated suppliers must be fully committed to transparency in order for the WRC to effectively verify their compliance with this program. Factories must allow the WRC and its representatives unobstructed access to the factory when requested. In the case of a dispute over fair pricing, both the licensee and the factory must provide the WRC, on a confidential basis, access to relevant financial records and production data. In order to maintain designated supplier status, factories must comply with the obligations of transparency.

**United Students
International
2004**



**Against Sweatshops
Internship Reports**

Introduction

United Students Against Sweatshops is a five-year-old national grassroots student labor justice organization, working with student groups on over 300 campuses nationwide. We organize and mobilize students to take action on their campuses to support worker organizing; from the very local, supporting campus workers, to fighting the collegiate apparel industry by supporting international worker organizing. In our five-year history, USAS has had an incredible record of success by building the Worker Rights Consortium, an independent monitoring organization that provides effective monitoring of collegiate apparel factories. Internationally, USAS can count numerous important victories in this past year, including campaigns that supported workers in ending the blacklisting of union members in El Salvador, and organizing with workers to win the first union in a Free Trade Zone in the Caribbean basin in five years, at the BJ&B factory in the Dominican Republic. Each of these was a major victory that affected thousands of workers and broke new ground for freedom of association in the region. USAS has also launched a major new initiative this fall that will seek to raise wages globally for apparel workers and, in the process, challenge the premises of the corporate-driven “free trade” agenda that brings attacks on workers’ rights, wages, and working conditions. **USAS organizes an international internship program every summer, to place student organizers in countries across three continents to work with unions and worker-led organizations, in order to support campaigns to defend the right to organize and earn living wages globally.**

USAS and its growing list of affiliates have also had important victories in support of the service and trades workers on our campuses and in our communities. Using pickets, rallies, hunger strikes, and other high visibility tactics, our students have stood with workers from California to Georgia to Massachusetts to win union elections, good contracts, and other improvements for thousands of workers on campuses and in communities around the country. Just this semester, we have supported worker strikes at Yale University, Miami University of Ohio, and the University of Minnesota, where students have organized to support workers. Our work spans labor and social justice campaigns across the globe, using our power as students to organize and win.

USAS’s International Programs: A Short History

“...the efficacy of international organizing is not just dependent on just one small example in an isolated organization – but rather that the type of actions utilized in the BJ&B campaign are affiliated with the national (and the international) labor struggle. My hope is that this one union’s victory will motivate others and that the national labor community will recognize that other, new methods of organizing are possible.” Becca Garoznik

“I have learned an enormous amount about the labor laws of Mexico, the abundant violations of worker rights that take place daily in the maquiladoras, and the long process of educating workers about their rights, documenting violations, and organizing independent unions.”

Laurel Bellante

Since USAS’ formation, student-to-worker connections have been at the core of our international solidarity work. Our model of organizing centers around supporting worker-led campaigns in collegiate apparel factories around the world, by using the power that we have developed through the Worker Rights Consortium to hold corporations accountable for the working conditions in

factories that produce for our schools. USAS's Collegiate Apparel Research Initiative (CARI), begun in 2000, was designed to "help USAS students get a better understanding of the apparel industry and the challenges faced by apparel workers, by living in an apparel-producing region, working for an NGO, and conducting some independent research." By making it integral to our work that we form on-going and cooperative relationships with international organizations, means that we are able to organize with workers seeking justice in their workplaces worldwide, and support their struggles in our universities, where we have the power to make change.

The CARI program took place in 2000 and 2001, sending groups of students to Indonesia, Honduras, and Mexico as a group of three to four students abroad for three months over the summer, to work with different workers' rights organizations. USAS' direct relationship to different organizations worldwide is key to our success in the campaigns we work on, as building trust with these organizations and working with them to develop agendas for campaigns is necessary to achieve any victory. For example, students working with the Centro de Apoyo al Trabajador (CAT), a workers' support center in Puebla, Mexico, were able to develop an effective campus strategy to support the formation of the first independent union in Mexico's garment sector. Without these personal and sustained connections with our international allies, USAS would be much more limited in our ability to cross global barriers and effectively act in solidarity with workers across the world. In the summer of 2004, USAS expanded our program, by sending twelve interns abroad to nine different countries on three continents, in order to develop new organizational relationships and new understandings of labor conditions around the world.

Interns conduct research, campaign strategy development, and relationship building with their partner organization. Most interns are located in an Export Processing Zone and work out of the office of a workers' center or union. Research focuses on worker interviews in order to gain knowledge about wages, working conditions, and barriers to organizing that workers face. Interns also educate their partner organizations about the role that USAS can play in developing a campaign strategy, through our power on college and university campuses with respect to factories that produce collegiate apparel. This internship program has been crucial to our work as an organization and also in developing student leadership -- a majority of our international interns return home to become active in the national leadership bodies of USAS, as members of our Coordinating Committee or as Regional Organizers. Without the student to worker relationships that are developed during the internship program, USAS would not be able to win the victories that we have been able to win, supporting worker organizing worldwide.

International Internship Program, Summer 2004

The summer of 2004, USAS had nine students abroad in seven countries, through a partnership with the American Center for International Labor Solidarity. This diverse and impressive group of student activists spent 8-10 weeks working with workers' rights groups abroad, researching collegiate apparel production, wages, and working conditions, as well as building strategic relationships across Africa (South Africa, Swaziland, Lesotho), Asia (Bangladesh, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India), and Latin America (the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, and Mexico). The interns were an incredibly diverse group, in terms of both racial and socioeconomic background, as well as previous organizing experience. This year's internship program broke new ground because of the number of countries that were involved, and because of the relationships with new workers' organizations throughout the world that were formed.

The internship program commenced with a four-day training in Washington, D.C. in June, with most interns departing directly after this training for their placement country. The training consisted of educating students about the work that USAS has done, meeting with representatives from allied organizations, and discussing and learning the skills needed to work with international workers' organizations. Almost all returned to the U.S. by coming directly to USAS' summer affiliates gathering in early August, to share the work that they had done and use their knowledge to develop campaign strategy for the upcoming year.

Two Reports from International Interns

MFA Phase-out: Impact on Chinese Workers

Jane Li, USAS International Intern to China, 2004

Abstract

In the post-MFA world, China is expected to attract investment for a variety of reasons including vertical-integration, lower wages, and currency manipulation. Although set out to be the "winner" of the MFA, this in no way means that workers will be the beneficiaries of this system. On the contrary, in an expanding textile and apparel industry dominated by fewer players, the workers are left in a less desirable position. Without the freedom of association and a higher minimum wage set by the state, workers in China are powerless against market forces.

The Multi-Fibre Agreement

The international textile and apparel industry has been governed by a strict system of quotas known as the Multi-Fibre Agreement since 1974. Originally the agreement was intended to protect the garment industry in developed countries, so that they could adjust to the competition posed by producers in developing countries.¹ Under this regime, countries would annually negotiate the quotas to be granted, in the light of the country's previous performance. As a result of this system, preferential access was given to developing countries that were not necessarily the most competitive producers.

In 1994, the Multi-Fibre Agreement was replaced by the Agreement on Textiles and Clothing (ATC). The purpose of this change was to encourage more neoliberal trade policies and bring the textile trade into accordance with General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) principles.² Under the ATC, the plan was to phase-out the quota system over a ten-year period, with complete removal occurring by January 1st, 2005.

¹ *Bombarded by Bilaterals*. TIE Asia.

[http://www.tieasia.org/Documents/Bombarded_by_Bilaterals\(FULL\).pdf](http://www.tieasia.org/Documents/Bombarded_by_Bilaterals(FULL).pdf) (July 12, 2004)

² *Legal Texts: the WTO Agreement*. The World Trade Organization,

http://www.wto.org/english/docs_e/legal_e/ursum_e.htm#General (June 5, 2004)

Although the stipulations of the ATC have been carried out so far, the process by which it has occurred is quite problematic. Countries took advantage of the phase-out by removing quotas categorized as “non-constraining” (by U.S. standards not 85% - 90% filled) during Phase I and II of the ATC, which ended in 2002.³ During 2002-04, corresponding to Phase III, an additional 18% of apparel was liberated from quotas. These were of a more severe nature and caused massive readjustment in the international garment industry. However, to this date only 51% of the quotas have been removed, with the remaining to be removed mostly overnight by 2005.

Background Information on Textile Industry in China

Currently, even before the phase-out occurs, China has already dominated the textile and apparel market. According to the officials of the American Textile Manufacturers Institute, China’s apparel sector is unmatched in terms of the variety and scope of its operation. In 2001, China produced 16 percent of the global supply and has only gained market share since.⁴

Textile and apparel exports also generate a large portion of China’s manufacturing output. In 2001, they accounted for 20 percent of all exports and approximately \$116 billion in output.⁵ Of this output, approximately \$53.3 billions worth was exported. According to official government statistics, employment in the sector is spread amongst 21,144 enterprises, employing 7.9 million workers.⁶ However, these numbers in all likelihood an underestimate since the Chinese government only tallies enterprises that have an annual output of \$600,000 (5 million RMB). In actually, most production occurs at the village or town level. The Chinese National Textile Industry in China estimates that a figure of 15 million workers is more accurate.⁷

The Benefits of Investing in China

The garment sectors of many countries will be greatly threatened by the imminent phase-out, but production will shift to other countries. While it is still not clear whom all the “winners” will be, no one doubts that China will receive the “lion’s share” of the business. When compared with other countries on a factor-to-factor basis, China may not be the most competitive. However, despite what drawbacks there may be, on the whole, China offers investors the most “bang for their buck.” As Neil Kearney notes, “in a free-for all trade situation, brand names and retailers will seek to source in those areas with the lowest wages, and consequently the lowest level of union organization. Not surprisingly, all eyes are on China.”⁸

In terms of wages, although competitive, Chinese workers are not the lowest paid in the sector. Although sources quote different wage rates, the USITC research documents the average wage of an apparel production worker at \$.68 per hour in 2002. While this is a meager wage, fellow workers in Vietnam, Sri Lanka, and other countries often earn much less. Yet, investors find that the increased productivity levels and better quality of the finished products to be worth the greater costs in wages.

Moreover, as the apparel production is a complex industry, companies are looking for ways to increase efficiency and achieve economies of scale. In this aspect, China has much to offer on her own as well, as being in a position to take advantage of the resources in Hong Kong. China offers competitive shipping times, getting goods “to the west coast of the United States generally average

³ Appelbaum, Richard P. “Assessing the Impact of the Phasing-out of the Agreement on Textiles and Clothing on Apparel Exports on the Least Developed and Developing Countries.” University of California at Santa Barbara, 2003.

⁴ United States. USITC, China Profile

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ USITC, Table E1

⁷ USITC, p. E-6

⁸ Kearney, Neil. *Comments by Neil Kearney at Gewerkschaftstag Metall-Textil Congress*. The International Textile, Garment, and Leather Workers’ Federation, <http://www.itglwf.org/displaydocument.asp?DocType=Speech&Index=791&Language=EN> (July 24, 2004)

between 12 and 18 days from China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan, but as much as 45 days from some member countries of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN).⁹ Factories are able to make trial runs and samples in a short amount of time and react well to changes in fashion.

This situation is further aided by the abundance of raw materials and an increase in production of man-made fibers. The domestic cotton industry is thriving, even with the termination of price supports, making cotton prices in China competitive in the world market in 2003¹⁰. Production of man-made fibers, however, is still costly and cumbersome, but is expected to be in a competitive state in the next 2 to 3 years. Growth in this industry has been enormous, with an average annual rate of increase of 18% over the last five years.¹¹

Besides these benefits, researchers contend that China's macro-economic policies provide unfair advantages. China's currency, the yuan, has been pegged to the dollar (8.28 yuan per dollar) since 1994. Most agencies, including the UN, recognize that government is using currency manipulation to boost export sales. The Fair Currency Alliance, a group of U.S. industrial, service, agricultural and labor associations, maintains that China needs to revalue the yuan upwards of 40 per cent. One report, issued by the World Bank, even calls for a 75 per cent revaluation.¹² These unfair trade practices, illegal under WTO regulations, make China's goods more competitive on a global market, thereby stymieing the growth and existence of textile and garment industries abroad.

Pressure to Ease the Quota-Free Process

Given that 49% of quotas, moreover the most restrictive ones,¹³ remain to be lifted on the eve of 2005, it seems unlikely that no action will be taken. Textile and apparel manufacturers from developing countries have recently taken a stand on this issue. Representatives from Turkey, Mexico, America, and many Sub-Saharan countries met in March 2004 in Johannesburg to discuss the ramifications of the phase-out on their countries. The result of this gathering was the issuance of the Istanbul Declaration. This document, addressed to the Director General of the WTO, lays out their demands, among which include:

- ★ extension of the phase out until December 31, 2007
- ★ the WTO undertaking a full review of global textile and clothing production, export and market circumstances as so to determine whether to finalize the phase-out process on January 1, 2008 or to develop an appropriate alternative arrangement
- ★ to convene an emergency session to discuss the proposal no later than July 1, 2004

Source: ATMI website

More recently, a Summit on Fair Trade in Textiles and Clothing was held in Brussels in June of 2004. This convergence, attended by representatives of 25 out of the 47 member countries of the Global Alliance for Fair Trade in Textiles and Clothing, called for more urgent measures. Among those included the implementation of "automatic and seamless transitional safeguard mechanisms in order to prevent massive disruptive surges of trade" and "expedited and effective remedies to all types of unfair trading practices."¹⁴ Although the released communiqué itself does not mention China, to a reader familiar with the subject, it is more than directly implied. Nonetheless, in the

⁹ United States International Trade Commission.

¹⁰ Zhiming Zhang, "Textiles and Apparel in China," p. 90 and USITC Report

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² *Chinese Currency Manipulation Fact Sheet*. Fair Currency Alliance, http://www.steelnet.org/new/fca_fact_sheet.pdf (July 26, 2004)

¹³ Appelbaum, p.15

¹⁴ Appelbaum, p. 16

description of the summit, a participant describes the situation as a “fight against a monopoly by China.”¹⁵

On July 20th 2004, Mauritius became the first nation to make a formal request for an emergency meeting of the World Trade Organization. The WTO discussed the need for a special meeting on the phase out on 3rd of August 2004.¹⁶ However, despite any meeting that the WTO may convene, it is highly unlikely that the Multi-Fibre Agreement will be extended. For this to occur, consent from all 148 member countries is required.

U.S. government officials have already received pressure from domestic lobbies to take action on the issue. In June 2004, members of both the House of Representatives and the Senate drafted a letter to President Bush asking him to re-examine whether textile integration should be postponed until 2008 or later.¹⁷ It is interesting to note that among the signatories is John Kerry, Democratic Party nominee for President. Due to this fact, some textile lobbies are trying to raise the phase-out issue in the 2004 presidential election set to occur in November.

At his point however, the U.S. has publicly announced that it will not support such a decision. James Leonard, U.S. Department of Commerce deputy assistant Secretary, stated, “The U.S. will stick to its commitment to WTO quotas going away.”¹⁸ Additionally, it is presumed that the “winners” of the phase out such as China, India, and Pakistan, would not agree to a delay in the phase-out. However, this does not mean alleviation measures such as anti-dumping laws, safeguard quotas or other types of adjustment policies will not be utilized.

Business Investors Set to Reap Profits

Textile and apparel countries are aware of the change in trade regulation and are eagerly awaiting its arrival. To them, this is an opportunity to earn greater profits through lower costs, improved efficiency, economies of scale, and increased access to markets.

Luen Thai Holding, a rising star in the garment production industry, has been very keen on investing in China. In a recent article published by the South China Morning Post, the company indicates that they will increase their production in China from 25% (2003 figures) to 50% in 2006.¹⁹ They expect that “expanding production in the mainland will translate into cost savings of 2 to 15 percent after the quotas are lifted.”²⁰ In addition to cost savings, consolidating the industry in China can shorten the production cycle by 75 days, a very important factor in the fashion industry.

In their company investment profile, it states that Luen Thai Holdings has been planning since 1999 for the phase-out. They launched a strategic campaign entitled “Rethinking and Renewal” to ensure that their business would be prepared to take advantage of the market forces. Luen Thai has heavily invested in building a factory in Dongguan, PRC and has formed a partnership with Yue Yuen, one of the largest footwear manufacturers, also located in the PRC. However, aware of the sensitivity of the MFA phase-out, they have hedged their risk by retaining factories elsewhere and by producing apparel that is less likely to be safeguarded.²¹

¹⁵ Ibid

¹⁶ Carson International, <http://www.carson.ca/NewsUS.html>

¹⁷ Letter to President Bush from Representatives of Congress

¹⁸ “US Determined to End Allotments,” *South China Morning Post*

¹⁹ SCMP, Luen Thai Eyes China for Cost Savings. July 12.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Leun Thai Listing Informational Pamphlet, acquired from a Hong Kong bank in July 2004.

Smaller companies, in addition to the large producers, are making this shift to China as well. Sun Hing Knitting Factory, which produces for French and English stores, is investing \$2.5 million this year to expand production capacity by 25 percent on the mainland and Hong Kong.²²

Another method that companies may use to exploit the system is to get the quickest market access. According to Auggie Tantillo, the Executive Director of the American Manufacturing Trade Action Coalition, we have read reports that China is shipping goods right now to bonded warehouses in the United States so they immediately can surge into the U.S. market upon the expiration of quotas.”²³

State of Labor in China

Due to the large population in China and relatively few job opportunities in the rural areas, more and more people are becoming migrant workers. In Guangzhou, a province that contains three export-processing zones, there are estimated to be upwards of 20 million migrant workers.²⁴ The abundant labor supply makes it easy to drive wages down and offer workers little job security.

The current minimum wage in Guangzhou is 510 RMB per month (61.8 US dollars.) Yet, there seems to be many workers who cannot earn this amount despite working overtime. Ah Yun, a 19 yr. old worker who sews garments, said that she only received 360 RMB per month in wages. In the three months that she had worked in a particular factory, she had to work overtime an average of 25 days a month. She was only granted one rest day each month.²⁵ In addition to these poor working conditions, it is very common for employers to request a month's salary as deposit, confiscate worker's documents and refuse to pay workers if they want to resign.

Future predictions offer little hope. As cited by the China Labor Bulletin,

“February 2004 reported that the number of new job seekers entering the labour market in China will be around 15 million people every year between 2003 and 2020. However, according to the article, only eight million jobs can be created annually, even if the economy maintains a growth rate of seven percent.”²⁶ These figures indicate that additional foreign investment in the textile and garment industry can be easily absorbed by the available workforce.

Effect on Workers

According to 2001 figures compiled by the US International Trade Commission, workers in the apparel industry earned \$.88 hourly in the coastal area while those in non-coastal areas earned \$.68 hourly. How wages will change with the onset of a free-trade era depends on the sourcing changes that retailers and brands make. As companies seek to consolidate, they will change the nature of the global supply chain. Although subcontractors and manufacturers will still exist, those that are less competitive will be forced out, leaving only the larger and most efficient units. Ms. Jones of the US importers' association expects her members to buy most of their needs from only five or six countries by 2007, down from about 50 today. For most, China will be the supplier of choice.²⁷

Although overseas buyers in the garment industry are increasing their orders with Chinese companies, they are demanding something in return. According to Lung Kin Sang, managing director of a factory, “the quantity [of orders] will increase, the downside, however, is that already, they are looking for a lower price.” He estimates that prices will decrease by 20 per cent.²⁸ Other

²² Textile Firms Positioning for Quota-Free Age

²³ <http://www.amtacdc.org/media/040617.asp>

²⁴ http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/english/doc/2004-03/11/content_313781.htm

²⁵ CWWN worker interview data

²⁶ http://www.china-labour.org.hk/iso/article.adp?article_id=5494, China Labor Bulletin

²⁷ FT series THE TEXTILE REVOLUTION; Financial Times, July 19, 2004

²⁸ Clouds Mass Over HK Rag Trade: South China Morning Post, July 15, 2004.

estimates range from 5% to as much as 50%. This price decrease should be alleviated in part by companies whom no longer have to bid for quotas from the China Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Fung, of Li & Fung Ltd., a supply-chain managing company located in Hong Kong, said it's likely that most of the cost savings will be passed along to consumers.²⁹ This situation will spark more steep competition with regards to prices. However, because the profit margin is not increasing, the workers will end up paying the cost, since they are lowest on the supply chain. When speaking to leaders of Guangzhou Department of the All-China Federation of Trade Unions, they had little idea of what the Multi-Fibre Agreement was and the implications it may hold for workers. Needless to say, the workers themselves are not aware of these international trade quotas either.

WTO Stipulations

It seems very unlikely that the MFA phase-out will proceed as initially planned by the Agreement on Textiles and Clothing. When China joined the WTO in 2001, certain safeguards were erected to protect the U.S. and other WTO members. These include the right to:

“allow a WTO member to restrain increasing Chinese imports that disrupt its market (available until 2013), a special textile safeguard (available until 2008) and the continued ability to utilize a special non-market economy methodology for measuring dumping in anti-dumping cases against Chinese companies (available until 2016).”³⁰

In the last round of negotiations, the EU refused to give China a most-favored nation status since the deemed that China had not done enough to transition to a market economy.

The United States has indicated that it will not hesitate to invoke these safeguards given that U.S industry is harmed. However, a further complication exists: a safeguard can be applied in two different scenarios. The first is when a product is proved to cause market disruption. The second is when a product “threatens” market disruption.³¹ Enacting either of these procedures may take a period of many months.

The United States has responded to lifted quotas with safeguards on a few occasions. In 2003, the U.S. reimposed limits on three categories of Chinese imports. These included: knit fabric (Category 222), brassieres (Category 349/649), and robes and dressing gowns (Category 350/650).³² These quotas can be in affect for up to twelve months but were agreed upon only with consultation between the two governments.

Currently, the Office of Textile and Apparel is considering taking similar action on cotton, wool, and man-made fiber socks.

Policy Recommendations

As the MFA is a complex issue with the potential to affect millions of workers globally. Since it impacts the livelihood of an enormous population, governments, unions, and companies must play a role in protecting workers and society at large.

²⁹ The Discount Debate, Women's Wear Daily: February 10, 2004, Scott Malone

³⁰ China's Accession into the WTO; www.wto.org

³¹ U.S. Determined to End Allotments, Toh Han Shih: South China Morning Post, June 26, 2004

³² US Hits China with Safeguards on Knit Fabric, Brassieres, Dressing Gowns - More to Come?

<http://www.tdctrade.com/alert/us0323.htm>

Specific actions that companies can take are:

- ★ Adhering to Codes of Conduct by ensuring that workers have job security or are compensated if fired
- ★ Retain manufacturing in companies that have achieved good labor relations
- ★ Communicating with governments in the countries that they manufacture in about labor law violations (both local and international)

Specific actions that governments can take are:

- ★ Negotiating an extension to the phase-out or invoking the safeguards, while taking concrete steps to alleviate the displacement of workers once the safeguards expire
- ★ Applying pressure to the Chinese government to revalue its currency, as it allows China to exploit the market system and is ill-effects on workers around the world
- ★ Negotiating better conditions for workers, especially those in export processing zones

Specific actions unions can take are:

- ★ Start communicating with the ACFTU and strategize about ways to increase solidarity with workers in China
- ★ Promote exchanges between workers from different countries so they realize they are both exploited by the textile and apparel industries
- ★ Provide assistance in job retraining and re-employment
- ★ Help workers realize their right to freedom of association and collective bargaining so they are empowered to seek protection from the rights they are entitled to.

Conclusion

The MFA is set to expire in less than four months and little preparation has been taken by governments and unions, although there is much they can do. Furthermore, companies are poised to exploit the shifts in the international production arena to their greatest benefit. This leaves the workers in a position where they can only protect themselves, by joining in solidarity with workers, to form an organized voice to combat large

Report on International Internship in Jordan

Introduction:

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has been promoting its land and resources to encourage investors to Jordan in the last decade and especially after King Abdullah the second started ruling the country. One of the main successes Jordan has had in that respect is the signing of a Free Trade Agreement with the United States of America in October 2000. Although, according to a report by Feizal Samath, the Qualified Industrial Zones (QIZ) were established in 1998. In any case, most argue that the Jordanian economy has experienced a few good years since the FTA, but there remain a few people who argue Jordan has not benefited in any way from it. In any case, it all boils down to the 23387 Jordanian workers and the 24749 foreign workers who are devoting their lives to their jobs in the QIZ and the development of Jordan’s economy.

The following report focuses mainly on the working conditions in the QIZs and the role of the trade union.

The Qualified Industrial Zones (QIZ):

There are 6 main Qualified Industrial Zones in Jordan: Sahab, Al-Hussan, Al-Karak, Dleil, Al-Jizeh, and Al-Rsayfeh. They include companies with Jordanian, American, British, Chinese, Korean, Saudi, Argentinian, Turkish, Taiwanese, Indian, Dutch, Pakistani, Libyan, Australian, Omani, Singaporean, and Imaretian administrations. Most of these companies are run partly by a Jordanian administration and partly by one of the previous nationalities. Table (1) shows the number of companies and workers in each QIZ.

According to the Free Trade Agreement, 8% of all the cloth and primary materials has to be imported from Israel. That is why there are a few Israeli companies in these QIZs mainly in the Al-Hussan Industrial Zone.

QIZ	Num. Of companies	Num. Of Jordanian Males	Num. Of Jordanian Females	Total of Jordanians	Num. Of foreign males	Num. Of foreign females	Total of foreigners	Total
Sahab	31	2153	3363	5516	2733	5546	8279	13795
Al-Hussan	37	4349	6687	11036	2698	5560	8258	19294
Al-Karak	3	965	1422	2387	251	1879	2130	4517
Dleil	14	619	2343	2962	2162	3377	5539	8501
Al-Jizeh	2	222	364	586	292	60	352	938
Al-Rseyfeh	2	328	572	900	139	52	191	1091
Total:	89	8636	14751	23387	8275	16474	24749	48136

Table (1): the number of Jordanian and foreign workers in all the companies in the QIZs according to sources from the trade union.

Most of the companies in the QIZ make different trademarks, such as Calvin Klein, Victoria’s Secret, Hugo Boss, Polo, Ivan, Morano, Reebok, Senco, Bruce, Brooks Brothers, JC Penny, Nike, and Mark Spencer.

As for the profits made by the QIZs, the statistics vary. Last statistics said that the Al-Hussan QIZ alone exported what is worth to 36 million USD in July 2004. However, a few other experts argue that this FTA is not as beneficial as the Bahrain – USA FTA or as the Morocco – USA FTA both of which are going to be signed in the near future.

Worker's issues:

Most of the workers I interviewed have the same concerns and problems. These problems can be divided into the following categories:

- ★ Wages:
- ★ Jordanian workers.

Most of the workers I met in the different QIZs get the minimum wage set by the Jordanian government, which is 85 JD (\$120) for working 8hrs. With the latest rise in prices (16%) the salary is barely enough to buy cigarettes, transportation to get to work, and some food. Therefore, many of the workers have to give up necessities such as meat, or canned food, some of them can't pay all their bills. In order to make their living a little better they work overtime hours.

A typical Jordanian worker that receives 85 JD would spend the money as follows:

- ★ Social security: 5 JD
- ★ Cigarettes: 10 – 30 JD
- ★ Phone bill: 18 JD
- ★ Transportation: 15 JD
- ★ Food at work: 15 – 30 JD

Some workers do contribute a lot of their money to their families, but most women who work in the QIZs are single and live with both unemployed parents.

Another problem the worker's face is that sometimes they do not get paid on time. For example, Maysoon who works at the Serial factory in Sahab gets paid on an irregular base. She says sometimes she gets paid on the 10th of the month, sometimes much later.

Another worker I talked to said he has not got paid for two straight months because the administration was changed again which caused many other problems.

As for overtime hours, most workers are forced to work 2 hours everyday. However, other workers such as Ahmad Ibrahim are forced to work much longer.

A part of an interview with Ahmad Ibrahim:

How many hours do you work daily?

Well, sometimes I work 12 hours with overtime. But things have been quite bad in the last few months.

How so?

In the past three months we had a lot of work and we were forced to work 35 continuous hours on more than one occasion.

Were you actually able to do it?

Well, I was. But there were many people who fainted, maybe 5 in one day. It has become something normal to see people faint.

Did you have any breaks? Food?

We have one 30-minute break in the normal work hours, and no break in the overtime. They provide us with food but it is not enough. We get 2 meals (one hamburger, and 2 falafel sandwiches) for the entire 35 hours.

So what happens when people faint?

Nothing, they take them to the clinic for a little bit, maybe even not, and they presume work when they wake up.

They don't let them leave?

No, no one is allowed to leave. My wife was giving birth to our first child and I was not allowed to go take her to the hospital, my parents took her.

So, a normal day of work for you would be...

To come back home at 1 am or later, then get up at 6 am, and go through the whole thing again. That is if we don't work the 35 continuous hours.

It is true that some workers ask for overtime work for 2 hours per day. That is because some factories give 1 JD or 1.25 JD (around \$2) for those two hours, so it makes a considerable difference of 20 – 30 JD (\$28 – \$42) over the normal salary. Other factories however, give 0.47 (\$ 0.66) an hour.

It is crucial to mention that some factories force their Jordanian workers to work those two additional hours without paying them the overtime money.

★ Foreign workers.

The foreign workers who are employed in the QIZs mainly come from Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, China, India and Pakistan. Their normal working hours are 10 (from 8am to 6pm). That is the main difference between the foreign workers and the Jordanian workers. However, in most factories the foreign workers work until midnight or 1am, sometimes even later.

While talking to the Chinese head of one of the largest factories in Al-Hussan QIZ, she said that it costs 3 times as much to bring in a foreign worker than to hire a Jordanian. That is because the factory has to pay for the foreign worker's tickets, place to stay, and three meals. One of the Jordanian workers told me they pay the foreign worker anywhere between \$210 to \$400 a month. However, most of these workers make \$300 a month from working overtime until midnight or 1 am.

Of course working until 1am on a regular basis has many negative impacts on the workers' health. The following story came up during an interview with head of the garment and textile workers' union.

We heard some news from the "Silver Planet" factory yesterday.

Really? What happened?

Well it seems one of the Chinese workers kept on going to the clinic to ask for a doctor's approval of a medical vacation, but the doctor kept on telling her there was nothing wrong with her. And a few days ago she suddenly dropped in the factory. She was rushed to the hospital, and unfortunately she died there.

What happened afterwards?

All the 400 Chinese workers went on strike demanding lower working hours. They stayed at their own residences and refused to go back to work.

What did the administration do?

Apparently there were negotiations with the workers, and both sides agreed on working until 7pm only and not midnight.

What is the union doing about this?

We are meeting them next Saturday. We have not talked to them yet. We just heard of the story.

★ Working conditions.

Both Jordanian and foreign workers face the same working conditions in the factories. One of the main problems is ventilation and heating. According to a few workers in the “Al-Tayar” factory, the building does not have fans, windows, or any other ventilation systems. The workers say it is very normal to see people faint in there. In addition, the temperature becomes very high inside the factory, which makes the workers drowsy and tired.

During my visit to the “Sari” factory I noticed the fans were working but the air-conditioning was broken. The temperature in the factory was unbearable. During that visit a few inspectors were present and they made remarks about the temperature as well. We found out from one of the workers that it would cost 3000 JD (\$ 4225) only to fix the air conditioning motor. 2 months after that visit, the workers are still complaining about ventilation as nothing has been done.

Some factories do not have clean water for their workers to drink. For example, the “Sari” factory only recently provided its workers with clean drinking water.

Also, most factories do not have cafeterias for their workers to use during breaks. Some factories such as “Itexfield” used to have cafeterias that were closed due to the amount of diseases it caused the workers. Therefore, most Jordanian workers have to spend a part of their own salary for food during breaks. On the other hand, foreign workers get provided with three meals daily. One Sri Lankan was asked about the quality of the food, and he said that he is satisfied with it although it used to be better before the manager was changed. It is important to mention that most companies who employ foreign workers provide them with a foreign cook as well to cook some of their local foods.

Many workers also complain of the bathroom conditions. They are usually unclean and filthy. Some workers smoke in the bathrooms because they are prohibited from taking smoking breaks. Others complain of not being able to use the bathrooms because the administration closes them so that workers don't waste time in them. A few female workers also said their privacy is sometimes invaded as the factory manager enters the bathrooms without warning.

One worker in the “Sari” factory complained of the huge number of mice running around in the factory. She says that definitely indicates an unhealthy working environment and it poses an obstacle in work as most of the girls are scared of mice.

★ Health care.

The trade union has been able to negotiate a health care plan with about 30 different factories in the QIZs. In addition, the trade union has a couple of opened clinics next to its offices in the QIZs that treat workers from different factories. Those clinics were equipped by a grant from the Japanese government. The two clinics include a separate section for dental care. However, many companies have their own clinic with one or two doctors working either full time or part time, and one or more nurses.

In most cases, the doctors are clearly instructed not to give any permits to the workers to take a day off or leave work for the day. Some workers say they pay the clinic 0.5 JD for its services, but they only get a prescription that they have to pay for out of their own money. Other companies have or used to have a good health care plan where the worker would only pay 25% of the medicine's price.

One of the biggest health issues took place in the “Silver Planet” factory in August 2004. The foreign workers in that factory were infected with chicken pox. The administration isolated all of them in their residences, and then forced them to work while they were sick side by side with Jordanian workers. This is the same factory where one of the foreign workers died because of exhaustion during work.

It seems that the most common health care problem present in the factories is exhaustion and not getting enough rest. The head of the trade union's clinic said he had a foreign patient once who

came to get treated. The doctor asked him to lie down on the examination table and when he reached to examine him he found the worker sleeping.

★ Transportation.

The main problem facing workers in terms of transportation is the fact that most of the QIZs are built in dangerous, deserted areas. Some QIZs such as Al-Hussan has a few buses that take workers in and out of the city. However, other QIZs such as Dleil, are built in deserted areas which can be dangerous at night.

One of the workers I talked to said the main way to get out of the QIZ is a known area where girls get kidnapped and assaulted by drivers. She says she gets extremely scared when crossing through that area and tries to always have someone else go with her. However, the situation becomes worse during winter as the sun sets down at 4pm and she finishes work much later.

Many factories do not provide transportation for their Jordanian workers. Some workers even pay 4JD (\$5.6) everyday to get to work and back. The typical problems workers face when they depend on public transportations include being late to work because of the pressure on the buses, or because of the repetitive technical problems. Another problem the workers face is that sometimes they live quite far away from the QIZ and they need 1-2 hrs to get to work on time.

On the other hand, most companies that employ foreign workers provide them with means of transportation.

★ Vacations.

All of the workers with no exceptions that were interviewed told me it is very hard and sometimes even impossible to ask for a vacation. Most workers are unaware of the fact that they legally have 14 days of vacation. Those who are aware receive threats or warnings in order to prevent them from asking for another vacation.

Although Friday is the official day of weekly vacation in Jordan, many Jordanian and especially non-Jordanian workers are forced to come to work. However, some people refuse to come and suffer the consequences later. They either receive a warning or get fired. In both cases a certain amount is deducted from their check.

Some companies divide the workers' vacations into two periods: 5 days at the end of the summer, and 5 days at the end of the winter. They do so to separate their working seasons

As for sick-day vacations, most factories only agree on giving their workers one day off even if he/she were hospitalized for a longer while. One worker had to be hospitalized for 6 days and brought the required papers to prove so. However, only one day was considered as a sick-day vacation (the Jordanian law gives a worker 14 days of sick vacation), and 60 JD were deducted from his month's paycheck. This is by far, the most common problem among all interviewed workers.

Sometimes the workers are forced to go against the factory's rules and take the number of days they need to get better. Some workers even leave work without asking for permission in order to get some rest. Many Jordanian workers take one or two days off after they receive their paychecks.

★ Drug abuse.

A few workers have reported to the union drug abuse cases in the factories they work at. After a little bit of investigation it turns out that Indian and Sri Lankan workers bring a certain type of weed with them and they chew on it like gum for a couple of hours. The effect this has on them is it makes them a lot faster at their work and they reach their production target in less than the required time. Sometimes they make much more over their production line. One worker brought a sample of this weed to the trade union's office in Irbid and it is currently being tested.

An interview with a Jordanian worker who used this drug (the following took place between the vice president of the trade union and the worker):

How did you get this?

I told a friend of mine in another factory to bring it so that I can give it to you.

So did he buy it?

Yes.

Do you know for how much?

Well, when you are just a beginner, they sell it to you for half a JD (\$0.75). When you are hooked, they sell it to you for 2.5 JD (\$3.5).

Have you tried this before?

Actually, I have. Just once or twice though. You put it under your tongue or just chew on it. When I tried it I don't know what happened to me, I was working so fast I must have reached double my target.

So how do you get to know about this?

The Indian worker approaches you, he convinces you to try, and after a while you might get hooked.

Does the administration have to do anything with this? Is it forced on you?

No, not at all.

★ General treatment.

The second most common problem after low salaries is bad treatment from the administration. The treatment varies from insults to beating. Most women that were interviewed said they face a lot of problems from their supervisors, especially if the supervisor is a foreigner. Sometimes the foreign supervisor insults the worker on a regular daily basis, and if the problem reaches the main administration they say there is a language barrier.

The Korean head of the factory has been complained about by many female workers. Since the Muslim culture requires the females to wear the veil and cover their hair, they need their privacy while being in the bathroom washing themselves and so forth. However, the Korean manager was reported to have entered the female bathrooms more than once without a warning which is a violation of the workers' privacy. It is important to mention that the factory has security officers. When he was asked about this action he said he did not know the culture, but the girls claim it was not the first time and that he has been here long enough to know.

The same manager asked his workers to come work overtime on Friday (the only day off) and the workers said they would come just to avoid getting warnings or getting fired if they said no. However, they all agreed on not coming. When the Korean manager found out he went to the foreign female workers' residence and started banging on their doors and pulling them out of their rooms in order to get them to work. He was also seen chasing a few girls at the bus station and was reported to have hit them in the stomach. He was reported to the police but got out without any penalty. The next day the girls that were hit were deported out of the country.

Other mistreats include limiting bathroom rests to only two five minute breaks and at most 7 minute breaks. Some girls reported that they have to take permission to go to the bathroom by signing a paper before going. In addition, all the bathroom breaks are recorded in a separate file.

Another main problem the workers face on a daily basis is the frequent and unnecessary warnings. One worker said he simply said hi to another coworker while passing by him and was issued an immediate warning. Other workers said a week does not pass by without them getting a warning or getting a cutoff from their paychecks.

★ Issues with foreign workers.

Usually the foreign workers work in separate lines from the Jordanian workers, so there aren't that many issues between the workers. The main problems occur if the head of the production line is a foreigner as was mentioned earlier. The language is an obvious barrier because it separates the foreigners from the Jordanians and divides the working unit.

★ Other.

It is crucial to understand that foreign workers face different issues than Jordanian workers. Most foreign workers come to Jordan alone and that is why they can afford to work until midnight (if it is not compulsory). On the other hand, most Jordanian workers have many family obligations they have to attend to.

In addition, Jordanian workers spend the night at their own house. However, foreign workers are put together in groups that sleep in one room. These rooms contain 6-8 workers on bunk beds and are quite small to fit them all in a healthy living environment. Therefore, this is a key issue the foreign worker face.

Other topics such as the difference of religion or culture do not pose a big problem only in that one case of invasion of privacy.

The trade union in Jordan

History

In 1954 the main textile trade union included the three industries: textile, garment, and clothes. It depended on having one round of elections every year until the nineties when it was changed to having elections every 4 years. As for the women's role in the trade union, they have to form at least one third of the elected management. Today, the union is one of the 17 workers' trade unions in Jordan.

The trade union faced many challenges in its past, the main ones being the war with Israel in addition to the flooding of goods from East Asia. As a direct result of both of these challenges 1200 local factories and small businesses closed which lead to losing over 30000 jobs. However, the Jordan – US FTA helped solving a part of this huge unemployment problem later on and so Jordan now has over 90 factories under the FTA.

Fathallah Omrani is the current head of the textile, garment, and clothes workers' trade union. He has been the elected head since 1981.

Current achievements

The trade union had numerous achievements in terms of winning workers' cases and in getting government support and approval for some projects. Their latest achievements can be summarized as follows:

Health care program:

The trade union was able to sign a health care plan with almost 30 factories which gives the workers free health care (they pay a monthly amount of \$ 0.7). A worker can now be examined for free by a doctor in the union's clinic or in the factory's clinic. The worker can also have a free annual medical exam of eyes and ears.

New offices:

The trade union was having problems reaching workers outside of Amman. This was recently solved with the opening of a new office in Irbid next to the union's clinic and another one in the Tajamua't. A new clinic was also opened this summer in the Tajamua't. These clinics include an examining room and modern dental equipment supplied for free by Japan.

Signing new agreements:

During the past year the trade union was able to sign 14 new agreements with different factories. Each of these agreements includes different demands - increasing the wage being the main one. In addition to demanding the availability of a transportation system, a cafeteria for the workers,

clean water to drink, and taking better care of the environment. Many of these agreements were signed because of effective strikes initiated by the workers and supported by the union.

Current problems.

★ Financial restrictions:

According to Fathallah Omrani the union's activities and programs are very restricted because of the unavailability of money. He says if he had enough money, he would appoint a legal counselor to deal with the legal cases, he would also develop the training programs and start new ones, and he would employ more workers in the union's office.

One of the main reasons for the shortage of money is the unavailability of a system to deduct the membership fees from the union's members. The membership is only \$0.7 a month, but it is impossible to collect it from each worker personally. The only time it is collected is when the workers come to the trade union's office. However, the workers only come when they have a personal complaint or problem, after it's solved they don't usually come back for months.

★ Negotiations:

When the trade union starts a negotiation process with one of the companies, it is usually done between the head of the factory and the head of the union. Since there is a lack of employees in the union's office it takes a long time to deal with workers' issues in addition to negotiating on a personal level. Another related problem is that there isn't a long term represented of all these companies, which is why the negotiations have to be done on a personal level.

★ Shortage of government resources:

Even when some agreements are reached with certain factories, some still violate numerous laws. It is easy to violate the law and get away with it because the government does not have enough inspectors to go inspect on a regular basis in all the factories around the country. Therefore, the factories – especially the smaller ones - take advantage of this opportunity to violate the law.

Current programs and future plans:

★ Organizing workers:

According to the Jordanian law, organizing is only allowed for Jordanian workers; non-Jordanian workers are not allowed to organize. This obviously poses a great challenge in reaching any sort of agreement with the administrators especially if the factory contains both Jordanian and foreign workers - as it is impossible for the workers in the factory to act as one unit.

However, the trade union is trying to focus more and more on involving as many Jordanian workers as is possible in the trade union and organizing them, in addition to training them. This poses a big challenge, as it has to be done by recruiting members individually. In addition, it is not considered to be a good thing among the workers to be involved with the union (the factories' administration tries to minimize the number of participants in the union).

★ Collective bargaining agreements:

As was mentioned before, the union has already signed 14 agreements with different factories and is trying to reach all factories.

★ Education and training:

The trade union used to have a few machines in its office where workers used to be trained to acquire new experiences and get better jobs. Unfortunately, due to the union's low budget the activity was cancelled. However, the trade union still holds a few workshops every year where workers are educated about their legal rights (especially social security) and their duties as workers under the law.

★ Current negotiations:

The trade union currently has three opened negotiations with three factories:

The Zei factory: negotiations on giving the workers a raise.

Century for suits factory: negotiations on an annual raise, a raise in the minimum wage, health insurance, providing a healthy working environment, and decreasing the number of over-time hours.

The Medical factory: same as above.

★ A representative negotiating committee:

One of the latest suggestions the trade union proposed this summer was having a committee that includes representatives from the government, the trade union, and the QIZs to ease negotiations. The suggestion was welcomed by all parts and the 7 largest factories (representing different nationalities as well) were chosen to represent the factories' administrations in the various QIZs. This project is still very new and has yet to be tested.

★ Law cases:

The trade union has almost 300 law cases in the court now. The main reason being the closing of the Millennium factory without paying the workers their wages. Each year the trade union submits anywhere from 50 to 100 new law cases to the court.

★ Technological development:

The trade union has been able to establish its own website and it is being constantly developed. The location is: www.JTGCU.org .

The phase-out preparations:

The research interviews show that Jordan is almost absolutely unprepared for the phase out. No meetings have been conducted to discuss how the issue will be dealt with. Even the Arabic textile trade unions' conference held in 8/22/2004 did not discuss the issue or even mention it. This obviously forms many worries for the future of Jordan's economy and the unemployment rates.

When the head of the trade union was asked about the preparations the industry is taking as a whole he replied the focus is towards two main points:

- ★ Trying to compete on the level of the good's quality and trying to constantly improve it.
- ★ Focusing on signing new free trade agreements with the European Union.
- ★ Focusing on building an opened market among the Arab countries.

However, there aren't any companies that are actively perusing the improvement of their good's quality. There are a few negotiations though on free trade agreements with the EU as Jordan's King is constantly trying to promote Jordan as a land full of good opportunities for investors. As for the open market among Arab countries, the subject was also not discussed at the latest Arab textile trade unions meeting.

During a negotiation session with a head of one of the Century factories in Al-Hussan QIZ (Muhammad Al-Nashashibi) on raising wages, his main argument was based on the fact that his factory will go out of business in the end of the year and therefore there is no point for him to lose money now by raising the workers' wages. In addition, raising the workers' wages now will give yet another good reason for the main investor to close the factory and move somewhere else. He also said he is absolutely unprepared for the phase out and that there is no way the issue can be solved by Jordan, instead it needs lobbying in the USA.

The trade union's main argument about the phase out is that Jordan will not be so strongly affected for the following reasons:

- ★ The small production rate which reaches to only 1 billion dollars a year.
- ★ The damage the phase out will have on the US economy itself is going to be very big, therefore the US government will be forced to put some quotas to watch over its own unemployment rate.

- ★ The importance of Jordan's strategic location in the Middle East and the good relationship with the USA. The US needs Jordan in many military ways, especially in having a few bases on the Jordanian land and so forth.
- ★ The peace treaty with Israel.
- ★ The fact that at least 8% of the raw material has to come from Israel shows that phase out will have negative effects on the Israeli economy as well which most Arabs believe the US won't allow.

All the previous reasons make Jordanian believe that the phase-out's effect won't be as harsh on Jordan in particular because of its political importance in the region.

The effects of the war on Iraq on Jordan's economy.

Since Jordan has a very special location and status in the Middle East it is directly affected by all of the events in the region. The latest war on Iraq caused a strong hit to Jordan's economy. First, one of the main pilgrimage lines used to go through Jordan to Iraq and then to Saudi Arabia, this line was completely cancelled which caused the loss of one important economic source for Jordan. Second, Jordan also relied on promoting itself as a tourist attraction site, and in recent years tourism formed almost 10% of the main sources positively contributing to Jordan's economy. However, during and after the war the region as a whole experienced a lack of tourism because of the safety issues.

As for the QIZs in specific, the factories experienced a lack of production requests from American companies during the 6 months before the declaration of the war. However, the production did increase afterwards. Yet, security remains the main barrier preventing foreign factories from investing in Jordan.

Conclusion:

It is obvious that workers in the QIZs in Jordan face many big problems. One can say it is because the QIZ system is still quite new in the economy. However, other factors affect their well being as well and especially the upcoming phase out and the political situation in the region. Textile, garment and clothes workers in Jordan face yet another obstacle in the fact of not being able to organize if they are not of Jordanian nationality. This only makes the situation harder for all workers in general and taking advantage of workers becomes much more easy. Lastly, Jordan's textile, garment and clothes workers' trade union is in an essential need of support from the government both legally and financially.

Personal note:

I would like to emphasize one more time on Jordan's special case due to its political importance to the US. Also, I would like to clarify that Jordan as a third world country is in a constant state of experiencing corruption. This corruption is one major obstacle in achieving any progress in Jordan's economy as a whole. Personal relationships, family membership, and old traditions all make their way in many cases in front of the Jordanian law. It is the same type of corruption that prevents all other Arab countries from improving their economy and especially their textile industries. In many cases, one finds that the heads of the textile trade unions in the Arab countries are unqualified to hold such a position and to defend the workers' rights. In contrast, some heads of the trade unions personally own textile and garment factories such is the case in Libya.

The political situation the region does not allow for an open market among Arab countries. I personally feel Jordan's economy is almost entirely based on the stability of its political relationship with the USA and therefore Israel. Jordan, unlike Syria for example, is not self-sufficient and will never have enough resources to become so. This puts it in a seriously weak position.

Lastly, I see no clear exit or solution for the workers in the textile industry as I feel the QIZ system is heavily integrated in Jordan's economy. If the companies leave, it will lead to 25 000 Jordanian workers losing their jobs. If the companies stay, the ill treatments will continue. The possible

solution would be to support the trade union's efforts especially financially, and to prolong the quotas period.

A seemingly obscure change in trade rules is about to undo the gains that workers and students have made to improve conditions in the collegiate apparel industry. We must take action NOW to insist that our schools adopt policies to ensure that workers' right to organize is respected!

Read below for more information on the phase-out of the Multi-Fiber Arrangement (MFA), including a letter to send to your administration to get started on this urgent campaign.



MFA Background

What was the MFA?

Since 1974 the Multi Fiber Arrangement (MFA) has governed world trade in textiles and garments. This provided the basis on which industrialized countries have been able to restrict imports from developing countries. Every year countries agree on quotas - the quantities of specified items, which can be traded between them. The exporting country then allocates licenses to firms to export a certain portion of each quota.

The Agreement on Textiles and Clothing (ATC) is an agreement to phase out the Multi Fiber Arrangement by the year 2005. The aim is to bring trade in textiles and clothing into line with the rules of the newly established World Trade Organization. This agreement is seen as operating in the interests of developing countries, since it increases their access to the previously protected markets of industrialized countries. Little attention is paid to what the implications are for workers, even though there are likely to be massive changes in the location of the industry. It is important to look at what the ATC will mean in practice not only for different countries, but also for companies and for workers themselves.

Why was the MFA introduced?

The MFA was brought in as a short-term measure to give industrialized countries a breathing space to adjust to competition from imports from developing countries. Special measures were seen as necessary for textiles and garments because the labor intensive nature of the industries meant that it was becoming relatively easy for developing countries to compete in a global market.

What has been the effect of the MFA?

The MFA has not prevented a massive shift in the production of textiles and garments to developing countries. Asia has become the world's foremost exporter. Initially production was concentrated in the East Asian countries Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore and Taiwan but by the middle of the 1980s other Asian countries were becoming major producers. Clothing exports from Thailand, for example increased five-fold between 1980 and 1989. However the shift would have been greater without the continuous restrictions of the MFA. It is estimated that some developing countries have lost billions of dollars of foreign exchange due to the imposition of trade restrictions.

The MFA has also had a marked affect on the distribution of the industry between different developing countries. Quotas have been negotiated on a country by country basis and have been established at different levels. This has affected the ability of industries to expand. For example strict quotas generally operate on imports from Korea and Hong Kong, whilst the EU imposes no restrictions on textile and clothing imports from a group of Least Developed Countries (LDC's). The rapid expansion of the garment industry in Bangladesh during the 1980s was partly due to the fact that as an LDC it was able to establish that exports to the EU should be duty free and unrestricted by the quota system.

Currently the remaining quotas ensure that garment production happens in many countries. This has supplied a small amount of job security to garment workers worldwide. It is projected, however, that with the phase-out of the MFA, garment production will shift from many LDC's and become highly concentrated in a few of these countries.

Implications for workers

The initial impact of the phase-out will be highly disruptive to employment, particularly in the next two years. Jobs will shift more rapidly than we've seen in the past. If factories in Indonesia are no longer competitive because of the costs associated with respecting workers' rights (as seen in PT Dae Joo Leports) then factories will be closed overnight. Millions of jobs are at stake, particularly for women who make up the majority of garment workers. Most workers have migrated from rural areas and it will be very difficult for them to return to their villages. As it stands right now, the phase-out of the MFA will bring earth-shattering effects to countries and communities whose economies are based on garment production.

The phase-out also carries negative implications for workers' rights. The increase in competition at a global, national and local level is resulting in downward pressure on working conditions. With no quota restrictions, brands will be able to source entirely from countries with artificially low labor costs. China, one of the biggest projected winners from the MFA phase-out, bans freedom of association—meaning that every factory in that country is violating the fundamental right of workers to organize. It is important to be keenly aware of the implications of the MFA phase-out in the coming months, so that we can ensure that comparative advantage is not simply a front for degrading labor standards.

For further information on the MFA phase-out, check out the following resources:

Assessing the Impact of the Phasing-out of the Agreement on Textiles and Clothing on Apparel Exports on the Least Developed and Developing Countries. by Richard P. Applebaum (2003) (what many people would call the definitive MFA phase-out paper)

The Bangladeshi Garment Sector: Insecure industry and endangered workers. By Jonathan Rose (2002)

Trade in Textiles and Clothing: Priority Issues for Women in the Post-ATC. by Michiko Hayashi (2004) (Excellent resource put out by UNCTAD)

Sample MFA letter to Administrators

Use this letter to take action and contact your administration about the MFA and sweatshop workers' rights.

Dear Administrator X,

As you know, on December 31 of this year, the phase-out of the Multi-Fibre Arrangement (MFA) will be complete. The quotas that have governed global apparel trade for the past 30 years will be completely eliminated, bringing grave consequences for apparel workers around the world. Millions of workers are expected to lose their jobs as production shifts from its current locations to a handful of countries. The lion's share is expected to move to China where the right of workers to organize and bargain collectively is prohibited by law. Workers who retain their jobs will feel the intensified downward pressure on wages and working conditions as factories struggle to reduce costs in order to compete with lower-cost producers.

The effects of MFA phase-out have serious implications for our ability to enforce *University X's* code of conduct. The progress we and other universities have made in recent years to improve conditions in the collegiate apparel industry will be quickly erased if we don't act immediately. We are aware that the Worker Rights Consortium (WRC) has made some suggestions as to how universities can address the phase-out, but *USAS Affiliate X* feels that *University X* must go beyond that. Specifically, it is imperative that this university take a stand in order to:

2. **Prevent "cutting and running" as a way of avoiding compliance with the code of conduct:** the expiration of the MFA will make it much easier for licensees to shift production from factories where workers are attempting to exercise their rights or where improvements have been made. Licensees must maintain relationships with factories where violations are uncovered and use their leverage to ensure that the code is enforced. This cut and run policy can be divided into two main categories:

a. **Prevent licensees from terminating relationships with factories where workers have raised concerns about working conditions or while remediation efforts are in progress, unless this action is requested by the affected workers:** Workers will never be truly able to exercise their associational rights if they fear that licensees will shift orders and factories might shut down in retaliation. Similarly, once violations are documented by monitoring organizations, it is imperative that licensees remain in the factory in question to ensure that successful remediation occurs.

b. **Protect good factories:** there have been a number of factories where workers have seen significant, often unprecedented improvements in conditions as the result of efforts to enforce university codes of conduct. Due to slightly higher costs associated with respect for worker rights, these factories are particularly threatened at this time. It is imperative that *University X* licensees continue to source from these good factories, and in doing so, ensure that they stay open. This list of factories includes:

- ★ PT Kolon Langgeng (Indonesia)
- ★ PT Dada (Indonesia)
- ★ Kukdong (Mexico)
- ★ BJ&B (Dominican Republic)
- ★ Just Garments (El Salvador)
- ★ New Era (New York, USA)
- ★ Rebound and VF India (India)

2. **Stop the shift of university production to countries that prohibit freedom of association:** it is an implicit violation of *University X's* code of conduct for a licensee to shift production from a country where workers have the legal right to organize and bargain collectively to a country where they do not simply to take advantage of somewhat lower costs. We can prevent this shift of *University X* production to places where enforcement of our code of conduct is impossible by taking a position that several other universities have taken recently to either prohibit or limit production in China and other countries where freedom of association is barred by law. Such a policy is critical to protecting the integrity of *University X's* code of conduct.

Please let us know how *University X* intends to address the effects of MFA phase-out. We must act quickly to inform our licensees of the university's policy on this matter.

Sincerely,

Student Activist X

On behalf of USAS Affiliate X

DRAFT: DO NOT QUOTE OR CITE**The End of Apparel Quotas:
A Faster Race to the Bottom?³³****Richard P. Appelbaum****Edna Bonacich****Katie Quan****December 29, 2004**

The right to organize is the worker's most effective weapon against exploitative conditions. It is also one of the basic labor rights established by the International Labor Organization. Yet the global “race to the bottom” has turned the weapon of unionizing – and the anti-sweatshop struggle overall – into a double-edged sword. If workers organize they are likely to lose their jobs, as corporations pursue factories where unions are forbidden and cheap labor is therefore guaranteed. But if workers do not organize, their rights will continue to be violated. These conditions pose a significant challenge for the anti-sweatshop movement – a challenge that will increase with the end of apparel quotas.

The global “race to the bottom” results from the systemic features of the current apparel production and distribution system. Typically, retailers place wholesale orders with so-called manufacturers, who are in fact branded marketers (Gereffi and Memedovic, 2003) that design clothing and market their label or image, but do not actually manufacture anything. Rather, fabrication is done by the independently-owned factories around the world where the manufacturers (and retailers, in their private label production)³⁴ place their orders. In searching out these factories, manufacturers and retailers scour the planet for the lowest-cost production, as well as places that are free from government regulation, environmental constraints, and pressure from independent labor movements. This global dynamic is driven by a downward squeeze: because large retailers such as Wal-Mart can choose among manufacturers, they have enormous leverage over wholesale prices. Since manufacturers, in turn, can place their orders anywhere on the planet they choose, their contractors are relatively powerless price-takers, rather than partners and deal-makers. While this situation may be changing with the rise of giant contracting firms (discussed below), currently this dynamic poses a significant challenge to worker organizing, since retailers and manufacturers play off competing contractors to force prices (and wages) down and thwart unionization drives.

The collegiate anti-sweatshop movement has achieved some success in combating these conditions, because in this case the retailers are colleges and universities who – under pressure from their students – have established binding codes of conduct under their collegiate licensing arrangements. An enforcement mechanism has also been created in the Worker Rights Consortium (WRC), an NGO that has played an important role in investigating charges of code violations in a number of factories that make clothing under university licensing arrangements, as well as helping to bring pressure on these factories to force compliance.

These gains are now threatened. The end of apparel quotas on January 1, 2004, threatens to greatly exacerbate the global “race to the bottom.” In this paper we examine the reasons for this, and offer some suggestions concerning what might be done by the anti-sweatshop movement.

³³ Richard Appelbaum is professor of Sociology and Global & International Studies at the University of California at Santa Barbara, where he Directs the Institute for Social, Behavioral, and Economic Research. He is currently the Chair of the WRC Advisory Council. Edna Bonacich is Professor of Sociology and Ethnic Studies at the University of California at Riverside and is a member of the WRC Advisory Council. Katie Quan is Chair of the Center for Labor Research and Education at the University of California at Berkeley, and is a member of the WRC Governing Board. Sections of this study are based on UNCTAD (2005, forthcoming), of which Richard Appelbaum was the principal author.

³⁴ Now estimated to encompass as much as one third of all United States retail apparel sales.

The Multifiber Arrangement and the Agreement on Textiles and Clothing

Global trade in textiles and apparel has increased sixty-fold during the past forty years, from under \$6 billion in 1962 to \$353 billion in 2002. Today textile and apparel represents nearly 6% of world exports. The more labour-intensive apparel exports have grown more rapidly than textile exports, so that today apparel accounts for more than half (57%) of the total. Forty years ago, the industrialized countries dominated global exports of textiles and apparel. Today, developing countries account for half of world textile exports, and nearly three-quarters of world apparel exports (UNCTAD, 2004 forthcoming).

The globalization of apparel production has been driven by many factors, but one of the less-appreciated causes is the quota system that was put in place by the Multifiber Arrangement (MFA) in 1974. The MFA establishes limits on different categories of apparel and textile imports to the United States, the EU, Canada and Norway through a series of bilateral agreements between trading partners. As with previous restrictions in the area of textiles and clothing, it was supposed to be a temporary measure. The principal vehicle was an elaborate quota system, whereby each country established import quotas for detailed categories of goods from each major trading partner (for example, specifying the number of women's wool sweaters the United States could import from Hong Kong in a given year). By 1981, 80% of all imports of textiles and apparel to the United States were covered by bilateral quota agreements and consultative mechanisms (Krishna and Tan 1997).

The MFA was renegotiated four times before 1991. As global textile and apparel trade expanded, subsequent versions of the MFA became increasingly restrictive. Although as general rule quotas were supposed to increase at least 6% each year, this limit was often much lower due to bilateral commitments that countries undertook on top of MFA obligations. Bilateral negotiations took place quite frequently, even on an annual basis, resulting in different quota annual growth rates for different products and countries.³⁵

As part of the WTO-related Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations, the MFA expired in 1994, when it was replaced by the Agreement on Textiles and Clothing (ATC).³⁶ The ATC called for the phase-out of quotas on textiles and apparel over a 10-year period, beginning in January 1995 and culminating January 1, 2005.³⁷ This phase-out was scheduled to occur over four phases involving the scheduled removal of existing quotas, and accelerated growth rates of those remaining (see table 1). The initial stages had little impact, however, since they applied mainly to products whose imports were already below quota levels. The final phase will have a strong impact, since it applies to products that are more strongly constrained by the use of quotas.³⁸ The ATC itself will cease to exist on January 1, 2005; it is, in the words of the WTO (2004), "the only WTO agreement that has self-destruction built in."

³⁵ Quotas were administered by the exporting countries. When they were filled and therefore scarce, quota rights commanded a price, and in many countries these rights have been tradable, since in order to export, a firm either has had to buy a quota in the market or forego selling one it owns. In practice quotas have acted as an export tax, estimated by one study as equivalent (in 1999) to a 40% tariff in the United States and a 20% tariff in the EU (Kathurina, Martin, and Bharwaj, 2001: 20).

³⁶ The full text of the Agreement on Textiles and Clothing (ATC) can be found at <http://otexa.ita.doc.gov/atc.htm>; for a detailed explanation, see the WTO's website at http://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/whatis_e/tif_e/agrm5_e.htm.

³⁷ While quotas are scheduled to be phased-out under the ATC, tariffs are not. Tariffs on apparel are much less burdensome than quotas, however. The average U.S. tariff on apparel is 17%, whereas the tariff equivalent of quotas – the amount of tariffs that would be necessary to produce the same restrictive effect as quotas – is estimated to be at least twice that amount, reaching 40% or more in the case of China and other Asian exporters (cited in Nathan Associates, 2002: 11, 22).

³⁸ A quota is said to be "constraining" if it is 85-90% filled, although the EU uses a 95% threshold (Nathan Associates, 2002: note 7).

Table 1

Stages of United States and European Union textile and apparel quota phase-out

Stage	Component 1 Share of importing country's textile and apparel trade to be free of quota (% of 1990 import quantity)	Component 2 Growth rates in remaining quotas (%)	
		Major supplying countries	Small supplying countries
1995-1997	16	16	25
1998-2001	17	25	27
2002-2004	18	27	27
2005	49	No quotas	No quotas

Source: Nathan Associates, 2002.

While the original intent of the MFA was to protect jobs in the importing countries, its actual result was to disperse apparel production around the globe. When a country's quotas for particular items were reached, retailers and manufacturers simply looked for factories in other (lower-cost) places. The result was that production for export is today found in 130 or more countries. There are seven countries in which apparel exports constitute half or more of total merchandise exports: Cambodia (82%), Macao (70%), Bangladesh (68%), El Salvador (62%), Mauritius (54%), and Sri Lanka (50%). These countries may literally have the rug pulled out from under them on January 1. In Bangladesh, an estimated 1.5-2 million people work in the apparel export sector, 90% of whom are women (Khundker, 2002; Shefali, 2002; Hiller and Olfames, 2003; Kearney, 2003); in Pakistan, 1.4 million workers and a quarter of the country's GDP (Kahn, 2003). Sub-Saharan African countries face a similar situation: thanks to the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) of 2000 they are beginning to export to the United States. These exports are now jeopardized.

Table 2

Exporters that are highly dependent on exports of apparel and textiles, 2002^a

Economy	(percentage share of total merchandise exports)		
	Apparel	Textiles	Total
Macao, China	70.0	13.8	83.8
Cambodia	81.7	..	81.7
Bangladesh	67.8	7.7	75.5
Pakistan	22.5	48.3	70.8
El Salvador	61.5	..	61.5
Mauritius	54.1	..	54.1
Sri Lanka	49.5	4.2	53.7
Dominican Rep.	50.9		50.9
Nepal	20.9	22.4	43.3
Tunisia	39.5	3.4	42.9

Honduras	37.4		37.4
Turkey	23.3	12.3	35.6
Morocco	30.4	1.7	32.1
FYR Macedonia	27.7	..	27.7
Romania	23.4	2.2	25.6
India	12.4	12.1	24.5
Bulgaria	18.6	2.2	20.8
Brazil	18.6	1.5	20.1
China	12.7	6.3	19.0
Hong Kong, China	11.1	6.2	17.3

Source: WTO. ^aOr latest year

The End of Quotas

With the end of quotas on January 1, 2005, retailers and manufacturers will be able to source from anywhere in the world. Most studies agree that there will likely be consolidation of production into larger factories in a smaller number of locations. Industry sources claim that large US retailers and manufacturers such as the Gap, JC Penney, Liz Claiborne, and Wal-Mart that once sourced from 50 or more countries already source from only 30-40. With the elimination of quotas it is predicted that the number will fall to 10-15 ((Juststyle.com, 2003; Malone, 2002, McGrath, 2003). This will greatly increase competition among garment-producing countries, contributing to increased pressure to lower wages and weaken labor standards.

China is already the world's largest (and, among major producers, most rapidly-growing) exporter of apparel, and has long been set up for full-package production. When combined with the country's vast supply of productive low-cost labor, it is clear that the end of quotas means that the movement of apparel production to China will accelerate. China is also taking steps to modernize its textile industry (fibers, yarns, and fabrics), suggesting that even in this more capital-intensive sector, China may well increase its share of global production. China's apparel exports had already reached \$41 billion in 2002, approximately a fifth of the world's total – nearly a five-fold increase since 1980. Moreover, China's internal market for clothing is predicted to double, from roughly \$50 billion in 2000 to around \$100 billion in 2010, providing additional impetus to its textile and apparel industries (UNCTAD, 2004 forthcoming; WWD, 2003).

Numerous studies have attempted to predict what will happen after January 1. Almost all agree: China, India, and possibly a handful of other countries such as Pakistan and Mexico (because of its proximity to the United States) are expected to be the winners; most other countries the losers. China in particular is predicted to become the big winner. Some experts predict that China will account for as much as half of the world market after 2005. Even the World Trade Organization has expressed concern: one recent WTO study (Nordås, 2004: 34) concludes that "China and India will come to dominate world trade in textiles and clothing, with post-ATC market shares for China alone estimated at 50% or more."³⁹ The U.S. International Trade Commission (USITC), after an exhaustive study involving testimony at public hearings, written statements provided by officials of affected countries as well as representatives of NGOs, fieldwork in Mexico, East Asia, Central America, and sub-Saharan Africa, and telephone interviews with representatives of U.S. apparel

³⁹ The Nordås study also notes that since "lean retailing" makes time to market (and hence geographic proximity) increasingly important. Mexico, the Caribbean, Eastern Europe and North Africa are therefore likely to remain important exporters to the US and EU respectively, and possibly maintain their market shares" (Nordås, 2004: 34).

and textile producers, importers, and retailers, concluded that “China is expected to become the “supplier of choice” for most U.S. importers (the large apparel companies and retailers) because of its ability to make almost any type of textile and apparel product at any quality level at a competitive price” (USITC, 2004: xi), although the study also noted that

A large number of countries likely will become major “second-tier” suppliers to U.S. apparel companies and retailers for niche goods or services. As U.S. firms seek to balance cost, flexibility, speed, and risk in their sourcing strategies, they likely will look to the second-tier suppliers to meet those needs that are not met by the first-tier suppliers. For example, production of certain goods likely will remain in Mexico and the CBERA region to service U.S. buyers’ quick turnaround or mid--season order requirements, particularly for replenishment of basic items offered in a wide range of different sizes, such as men’s dress shirts and pants (USITC, 2004: xii).

There are some protections against China’s growing dominance – at least in the short run. China’s accession agreement to the WTO (Section D.16-17) includes a temporary “transitional product-specific safeguard mechanism,” according to which WTO members threatened by “market disruption” from increased Chinese products may – if negotiations fail – “limit imports only to the extent necessary to prevent or remedy such market disruption.” Additionally, some WTO members (Argentina, the EC, Hungary, Mexico, Poland, the Slovak Republic and Turkey) have their own specific reservations in China’s accession agreement, designed to maintain certain restrictions against selected imports from China; these too are of short duration.

Two Important Trends in Global Production and Distribution

Two trends in the global economy bear mention as having special bearing on post-MFA apparel production and distribution: the growing power of giant retailers, and the emergence of giant consumer-goods contractors.

The growing economic power of giant retailers: Large retail firms exert growing control over prices and sourcing locations, both through the price pressures they can exert on the independent labels they carry, and through their growing volume of private label production (now estimated to encompass as much as one third of all United States retail apparel sales). The world’s forty largest retailers accounted for nearly \$1.3 trillion in total sales in 2001.⁴⁰ Wal-Mart alone – with revenues of \$263 billion in 2003 – accounts for nearly a fifth of total sales of the world’s forty largest retailers (Appelbaum, forthcoming 2005). Related to these trends, since the mid-1980s, there has been a move toward “lean retailing,” particularly in the United States but also in Europe and Japan. Led by Wal-Mart and other large United States retailers, and enabled by technological changes that permitted a high degree of data sharing and other electronic interchange, retailers increasingly brought their suppliers under more direct control (Abernathy *et al*, 1999: 3), enabling them to replenish their stores on a weekly basis (Nordås, 2004: 4). This trend favors producers that can provide quick turn-around time – either because they can quickly and efficiently organize the entire supply chain, or because they are geographically close to their principal markets. While the former clearly favors China, the latter may give some advantage to Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean countries for the United States, and Turkey and the Central and Eastern Europe for the European Union (see e.g. Thun, 2001; Palpacuer, Gibbon and Thomsen, 2003).

The growing economic power of giant consumer goods contractors: The geographical concentration of production associated with the elimination of quotas favours the growth of an already strong new sector in the global apparel commodity chain: TNCs (mainly Asian) that operate huge factories under contract with large retailers and manufacturers. Large retailers characteristically have large volume requirements, leading them to consider only large producers (1000 + workers) as potential suppliers. For example, Yue Yuen/Pou Chen Industrial Holdings, based in Hong Kong, China, is the world’s largest manufacturer of branded athletic and casual

⁴⁰ Among the top forty, twelve were based in the United States and accounted for 43% of total sales. Almost all of the remaining ones are from the EU (accounting for 46%). The only Asian firms in the top forty are five Japanese ones (accounting for the remaining 11%) (see Appelbaum, 2005 forthcoming).

footwear, producing nearly 160 million pairs of shoes in 2003.⁴¹ It employs 242,000 people worldwide, a growth of 57% in only four years.⁴² This includes an estimated 40,000 workers in its Dongguan (China) factory, and 65,000 in its Huyen Binh Chanh megafactory in Viet Nam, reportedly the world's largest shoe factory complex. About 60% of Yue Yuen's footwear production is for Nike, Reebok, and Adidas (Merk, 2003); other clients include Polo Ralph Lauren, Kenneth Cole, Calvin Klein, and NBA Properties. Other examples of TNC producers include Nien Tsing (Taiwan Province of China), the world's biggest jeans manufacturers, whose Central American factories in 2000 produced 40 million pairs of jeans for Wal-Mart, JC Penney, Kmart, the Gap, Sears, and Target; Yupoon (Republic of Korea), the world's second largest cap manufacturer; and Boolim (Republic of Korea), a maker of athletic, casual, and knit wear in more than 25 countries. To the extent that giant contractors crowd out smaller competitors, concentration of production in a handful of companies and reduced competition at the factory level may counterbalance gains from economies of scale, thus possibly contributing to an increase in prices. It should also be noted that increased concentration of production may also facilitate worker organization, since the large factories are vulnerable to pressure from the large retailers and manufacturers that use them. A number of successful unionization drives involving WRC investigations have occurred in such factories in recent years, including the Kukdong (now Mexmode) apparel factory in Mexico, the BJ&B hat factory in the Dominican Republic (owned by Yupoon), and the PT Kolon Langgeng apparel factory in Indonesia.⁴³

What Can Countries Do to Mitigate the Effects of the End of Quotas?

What can be done by apparel producing countries in order to retain market share following the end of quotas? Countries which are most threatened by ATC phase-out suffer from a common set of interlocking problems at the levels of production and distribution. They typically seek to compete on labor costs alone, and as a consequence their industries are usually characterized by low levels of efficiency, productivity and quality. They often rely exclusively on a single market (the United States or the EU), specializing in a handful of product lines, rather than providing product diversity. They tend to lack both backward linkages to indigenous textile industries, and forward linkages to markets, engaging in simple assembly work at the bottom of the value chain. They suffer from extremely poor infrastructure, impeding the rapid turnaround that is increasingly essential for success in a world of "lean retailing."

Enhancing working productivity through skills training and technological upgrading is one step towards diversifying production into higher value-added garments such as the more fashion-sensitive women's wear categories. Developing indigenous sources of textiles, accessories, and other inputs is another step that has been recommended frequently. Major public investments in dry ports and EPZs would improve turnaround, and governmental provision of grants, loans, or tax relief, would be of benefit. Direct funding to build capacity in the export sector can also be important, along with incentives such as reduced freight charges, reductions in utility costs, and the removal of export duties and other taxes. In countries where the tax system is biased against particular inputs (for example, man-made fibres in India, which are subject to special taxes, industrial licensing requirements, and import duties), changes in the tax code are necessary. Governments should also remove bottlenecks that result in delays in shipping and customs

⁴¹ Yue Yuen Industrial Holdings is the principal source of Pou Chen's shoe production; as of June 2004, Pou Chen held 50.1% of the stock in Yue Yuen (http://www.yueyuen.com/investor_financialHighlights.htm). Yue Yuen also has a network of more than 800 wholesale distributors and 250 outlets in China to distribute the branded products from Nike, Reebok, Adidas, and other labels made in its factories, and it has recently moved into apparel and sports accessory manufacturing (from http://www.yueyuen.com/bOverview_businessDivisions.htm).

⁴² Yue Yuen website, http://www.yueyuen.com/bOverview_productionFacilities.htm.

⁴³ In these examples and others, pressure on the factories and their clients (which included Nike, Reebok, the Gap, and other major United States companies) by local independent labor unions, supported by United States and EU unions and NGOs, have caused the parent companies to allow the formation of independent unions (Esbenshade, 2004).

clearance (for example, introducing electronic data interchange at the ports and customs houses to facilitate faster clearance of imported fabrics).

Finally, and importantly, labour law reform and enforcement is also a largely untapped area for change. A growing number of leading retailers and manufacturers in the United States and the EU, concerned about harsh labor practices (and the adverse publicity that can result from exposure of such practices) have developed codes of conduct that require basic labor rights and protections in their contracted factories. Countries with labour laws consistent with these codes of conduct – and the means to enforce them – could effectively market themselves to the more socially conscious United States and EU retailers and manufacturers.

The Effect of Quota Elimination on Efforts to Combat Sweatshops

The end of quotas will increase the challenges for code enforcement, by making it easier for brands to shift sourcing from countries with relatively higher standards to those with lower standards. One case in point is Cambodia, a country that is currently attractive for United States manufacturers and retailers, partly because it participates in an International Labor Organization inspection program designed to improve factory conditions. This program, which was conceived by labor advocates and negotiated in conjunction with a bilateral trade agreement between the United States and Cambodia, included preferential treatment in the form of extra quotas (up to an additional 14%) that are directly contingent on maintaining acceptable labor standards, including the right to strike and engage in collective bargaining. Eleven field monitors working for the ILO make regular factory visits and publish an on-line report (Brooke, 2004). Once quotas are eliminated, the labor rights portion of the treaty will cease to have an impact, since there will no longer be preferential quota as a reward for compliance – nor, indeed, an incentive to keep production in Cambodia. Therefore the gains for Cambodian garment workers that were made through the efforts of workers and their advocates will be lost.

Similarly, workers in Indonesia, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Honduras, Mexico, and many other countries have expressed deep concern over the possibility of losing jobs. In factories such as PT Dae Loo Leports, PT Dada, PT Panarub, and PT Kolon Langgeng in Indonesia, the Kukdong/Mexmode Factory in Mexico, and Lian Thai Apparel in Thailand that have improved their working conditions due to the efforts of the Workers Rights Consortium and other advocates, the widespread fear is that the retail brands and TNCs will abrogate their agreements to comply with codes of conduct and shift production to low-wage, rights-suppressed countries like China.

This anticipated shift of production to China presents a major dilemma for the enforcement of codes of conduct. China's appeal post-MFA is due to many factors,⁴⁴ but one important consideration is a highly skilled, relatively low-wage workforce that is currently prevented from asserting freedom of association. Most workers in China's export industries are not represented by any union, but even when they are, these unions are affiliated with the Chinese government who are anxious to promote investment policies. Chinese unions stifle opposition and suppress the formation of independent unions or worker organizations, in violation of codes of conduct. However, this situation is changing, and recent reports of widespread labor disputes and strikes show growing dissatisfaction and unrest among export sector workers—and increasing tolerance of dissent by local government officials. It remains to be seen whether Chinese workers will continue to be an exploited labor market that stokes the global race to the bottom, or whether it will become an independent force in the course of China's transition to capitalism that raises standards for workers.

Thus the challenge for the anti-sweatshop movement is to defend the gains won by apparel workers to hold corporations accountable for labor standards and rights, while at the same time ensuring that these corporations now provide the post-MFA workforce, particularly the Chinese workforce, with the same labor standards and rights.

⁴⁴ For a detailed discussion of other factors, see UNCTAD, 2004.

Defending the Gains Made in Workers' Rights

1. *Manufacturers and retailers should make no immediate change in sourcing patterns.*

Any immediate shift in sourcing patterns by corporations will negate good faith efforts by local vendors and governments to improve labor standards compliance, and will show that corporate practices to be driven mainly by economic choice. Therefore as the MFA is phased out and other patterns of sourcing become seemingly more advantageous, no changes in sourcing patterns should be made without reasonable cause.

2. *Manufacturers and retailers should reward contractors who have demonstrated compliance with codes of conduct by continuing or establishing production relationships.*

Abandoning contractors who have worked with manufacturers and retailers to improve labor standards implies that there is no such thing as corporate social responsibility. Therefore contractors who have made substantial improvements in labor conditions should not only be retained, but should be preferred by those corporations who genuinely seek to implement corporate social responsibility.

3. *Manufacturers and retailers should establish long-term relationships with contractors.*

Short-term relationships with contractors provides no incentive to change labor practices, however longer commitments lead to shared interests, heightened trust, and willingness to change labor practices. Therefore manufacturers and retailers should establish long-term relationships with contractors that stabilize the business relationship, assure quality production, and improve working conditions.

4. *Manufacturers and retailers should establish a set of guidelines that define their relationship with their contractors.*

Currently contractors have no security about business relationships with their customers, and as a result workers have no security about their jobs. Yet economic security is basic to the survival of workers and small business owners. Therefore there should be a set of guidelines that clearly delineate the terms of the relationship between manufacturers and retailers on the one hand, and contractors on the other. These guidelines should assume that the production relationship continues in good faith until and unless certain criteria are not met, which would give the manufacturer/retailer reasonable cause for terminating the relationship. The guidelines would also specify the terms by which this termination would take place.

Ensuring that Workers Rights Are Upheld in China

1. *Manufacturers and retailers should actively enforce codes of conduct in China, including freedom of association.*

Violations of codes of conduct regularly take place in Chinese export factories, such as non-payment of wages, lack of health and safety precautions, and repression of freedom of association. Notwithstanding Chinese practice, corporations should make clear to Chinese businesses, government and workers their commitment and intent to uphold codes of conduct. Experiments with corporate approval of freely-elected union representatives and other interventions show that corporate influence can be important in changing local practice.

2. *Manufacturers and retailers should actively promote corporate social responsibility in China.*

Chinese policymakers are only beginning to understand the history of the anti-sweatshop movement and the trend towards corporate social responsibility. However, corporations should immediately engage Chinese business counterparts, government officials, academics, unions, and other stakeholders about the importance of ethical business initiatives and the influence that they have had on modern corporate practices.

3. *Manufacturers and retailers should work with unions and non-governmental organizations to jointly engage in strategies that will promote compliance with codes of conduct.*

Labor rights are human rights, and therefore they are of social concern to both corporations and labor activists. Whenever a diverse group of stakeholders can bring joint effort to bear upon a difficult situation, the outcome is likely to be more favorable. In the case of China and labor rights, there is evidence that shows that this kind of joint effort has yielded important results in achieving labor compliance, including in freedom of association.

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The Student-Worker Victory at New Era

For nearly a year, hundreds of workers at the New Era Cap Company factory in Derby, NY were on strike to defend many of the basic rights that apparel workers around the world are routinely denied: a safe and healthy working environment, a living wage, job security, and the right to be a part of a union that will defend these rights. As a part of their campaign, New Era workers called on United Students Against Sweatshops to pressure the company to support their demands. Students in USAS affiliates across the country organized on their campuses and in their communities, and coordinated their efforts nationally with USAS and the labor movement. As a result of these efforts, the Derby workers now have a strong union contract, decent wages, and respect from New Era management. This section of the Organizer’s Manual tells the story of the New Era campaign through the documents and resources that students created along the way. It is important to understand how this victory was made possible as we organize ongoing and future student-labor solidarity campaigns.

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The New Era Campaign

Introduction: In July of 2001, workers at the New Era factory in Derby, NY, went on strike to protest management's failure to negotiate in good faith a collective bargaining agreement that would provide for decent working conditions. The contract which management was attempting to impose on the workforce would have ended workers' annual COLA (cost of living adjustment) provision, reduced the amount of sick leave workers were entitled to, and cut the hourly base wage of New Era workers by \$3, thereby forcing workers to meet unreasonable production standards if they were to earn a decent wage. The New Era workers, members of the Communications Workers of America (CWA) local 14177 called for support from local and national organizations, and United Students Against Sweatshops affiliates across the country.

The New Era company is a major producer of baseball caps for the U.S. market. It's customer list includes an exclusive contract to produce hats for Major League Baseball, a contract with the National Football League, and contracts to produce hats bearing the names of hundreds of colleges and universities. New Era owns several other production facilities in the U.S. and also subcontracts work to factories in Bangladesh and China. The Derby factory is the only one with an independent union, a union organized by workers themselves that would fight for their interests.

Since the Derby workers organized with CWA in 1997, the New Era Company's vehement anti-union stance was obvious. The company had been cited by the National Labor Relations Board (a government body not known for its friendliness to worker interests) for illegal anti-union activity, including the destruction of union property (a display case in the factory) to remove materials that were critical of the factory's abysmal health and safety record. Evidence indicated that New Era, as part of its union-busting strategy and desire to increase its already healthy profits at the expense of workers, intended to eventually shift all production from Derby to its other non-union factories in Alabama or to its subcontractors in Bangladesh. Wages for union apparel workers in New York are some of the highest in the world. In Bangladesh it is illegal to organize unions in export factories. The motives of management were clear, and the Derby workers were facing an uphill battle to defend the gains their union had won.

Objective: The goal of the New Era campaign was to pressure the baseball cap company, New Era, into meeting the demands of its striking factory workers in Derby, New York. Students planned to pressure New Era into meeting these worker demands by having their colleges and universities to cut or suspend their licensing contracts with New Era until they agreed to end the strike by negotiating a fair contract with workers. Students also used other tactics to make New Era feel the heat, including working with other community organizations to pressure Major League Baseball to cut its relationship with New Era and pressuring the Fair Labor Association (the corporate-controlled sham monitoring organization that many of our universities belong to) to deny membership to this company which had a clear record of illegal anti-worker activity. A list of the specific demands which students laid out at the start of the campaign is found later in this section.

Outcome: After a nearly year-long campaign, New Era gave in to worker demands in Derby, New York. The company also agreed to work with the Worker Rights Consortium (WRC) by providing the information necessary to complete the investigation. The strike ended when CWA 14177 members approved a new contract proposed by management. New Era's eventual decision to propose a contract that met many of workers' demands was undoubtedly a result of the pressure New Era was feeling from its university clients. Approximately ten schools cut or suspended their New Era contracts, and many more had threatened to do so if the company did not cooperate with the WRC and negotiate in good faith with its workers. Several months after the new contract was signed, workers reported a complete turn around in management's attitude towards the union and treatment of workers. The Derby factory now has a reasonable production target system in place that allows workers to maintain their wage levels without sacrificing their health and safety.

Significance: The outcome of this campaign is highly significant for USAS. The campaign tangibly demonstrates the power students have in the apparel industry, both in support of worker demands at the factory level and over companies that are attempting to cut and run from factories where workers are defending their rights to countries where worker rights are even more repressed. By threatening a large piece of a company's market, students were able to demand increased respect for worker rights at a factory making collegiate apparel. Students and universities also forced New Era to cooperate with the WRC investigative team after nearly a year of refusal, which was highly significant in demonstrating the power and credibility of the independent monitoring organization students had created only two years earlier.

New Era Action Plan: At the outset of the strike, after New Era workers had asked for USAS support in their struggle, students met and developed the following action plan to guide student organizing in support of the workers' demands.

Long term goals:

- ★ Disclosure from New Era of all college and university contracts
- ★ STRIKE TO END
- ★ Workers to feel empowered
- ★ Get schools to enforce commitment to WRC by showing that one of their licensee has some major anti union issues
- ★ Get students to build coalitions with local CWAs in their areas
- ★ Make sure local 14177 always knows what students are doing
- ★ Show connection between New Era and Kukdong
- ★ Strengthen links between students and Coalition for Economic Justice in Buffalo-get Buffalo students to become affiliated with USAS
- ★ Bring light to the situation in New Era factories abroad

Media goals (media plan is both integrated into action plan and laid out separately after action plan):

- ★ Embarrass New Era into giving the workers what they want
- ★ Show public that while this company produces mainly in the USA, they are still able to get away with and not feel bad about treating workers like shit
- ★ Bring this issue to a wide range of sources including the campus media list

STUDENT COMPONENT OF NEW ERA ACTION PLAN

July 24 – August 6

- ★ Start with a workshop at the USAS national conference.
- ★ Get students to become aware of the New Era campaign by using the student report. Pass the report out in every folder and have lots of extra copies available so people can bring them back to their campuses
- ★ To continue pressuring management-set up at least 3 computers where students can send messages to New Era management
- ★ PRESS CONFERENCE at USAS conference-This would include AFL executive council and maybe take place at a baseball field in Chicago-this would give the AFL their public opportunity to endorse the strike and put New Era on the boycott list while this could be the launch of a major USAS campaign all in 20 minutes.
- ★ Write new sample press release

- ★ Publicize WRC investigation and report coming out
- ★ Get reports sent to the Chicago conference
- ★ Get students contact info for district CWA offices
- ★ Create materials that students can take back with them for the campaign
 1. Sample Press release about strike
 2. List of schools that we know have production there
 3. Flyer for baseball game actions
 4. Talking points updated

August 6 – September 1

- ★ Find students at 15 schools that have New Era who are willing to work on this
- ★ Send out administration reports, which include WRC findings.
- ★ Write sample press release talking about WRC report
- ★ Update action packet on website to include talking points and info on what went down at the USAS conference
- ★ Make sure JwJs conference will include something on New Era
- ★ Have students send support letters to New Era workers
- ★ Encourage students to throw benefit parties for the workers.... Maybe even throw it with the local CWAs in their area
- ★ Look into New Era background-football contracts?
- ★ Baseball actions
- ★ Get students in Buffalo invested in campaign
- ★ Follow up with AFL-CIO Solidarity Center in Bangladesh concerning labor practices at the New Era facility there

September 1 – December 1

- ★ Pressure administrations to take action
- ★ Get campus press and nationwide press to cover story
- ★ Get students to pressure administration for New Era to give disclosure

MEDIA STRATEGY

- ★ Write sample press release about strike and WRC investigation
- ★ Keep web pages updated
- ★ Press conference at USAS national conference
 1. Contact AFL executive council to see if they can be part of press conference
 2. Get 10 students to be available for press conference
 3. Agree on location which would probably make most sense at a Chicago baseball field
 4. Get facts about OSHA complaints, WRC findings, AFL boycott, tag changing
 5. Find speakers that could include at least one rep from 14177, Gwen from international, USAS student, JwJ/SLAP student, Maria Whyte?

- ★ Get campus press list
- ★ Get AP stories on New Era
- ★ Get help from National Labor Committee with New York Times – try to use message that New Era is so cocky because they are the only ones that still produce here
- ★ Maybe talk to Ira – NLC goes through him so maybe encourage them to go through that route

[In April before the strike began, a delegation of USAS students visited Derby to interview workers and learn about working conditions at New Era. The following is an excerpt from their report.]

Money Made, Workers Forgotten:

The untold stories of the global race to the bottom in western New York

Teena Shattuck is a bright 17-year old girl with a good understanding about what the struggle at New Era means, not only for her mother and her family, but the future of her hometown. She plans to graduate high school this May with more than 220 of her peers, the largest graduating class the town of Derby has ever seen. Yet she has a hard time recalling more than a few of her peers who are planning to stay in the area. She knows exactly why that is:

“It’s becoming more of a ghost town. People are leaving because of financial reasons. It’s getting worse and worse. I think they’re pretty much going to close the plant down. We’re going to go even worse than we are economically. The town is going to go downhill. Everybody’s going to move somewhere else so they can get jobs. When New Era goes down, there’s going to be a high unemployment rate, businesses that actually rely on New Era and don’t realize it, like the fast food industry, will decline because they’re the main business in the area. It’s just going to go all downhill.”

The Koch (pronounced “cook”) Family founded New Era in the town of Derby over 80 years ago. Now, faced with the threat that the largest employer in the town will be gone forever, Teena repeats what you consistently hear New Era employees say: “We’ve made New Era what they are. We did what they asked of us and more. We built this company. Now, it’s like, ‘to heck with you guys, bye.’”

...

We, a six person delegation from the affiliates of the United Students Against Sweatshops, have come to listen to the people of New Era. We have come as students who are very concerned about the working conditions our respective Universities are supporting every time they buy from New Era. We have also come as fellow workers, very concerned about the rights of workers in this country and the way workers’ rights in this specific instance have been ignored and denied.

We have also come with knowledge about the sweatshop conditions of workers around the world and through our experiences here over the past weekend we are prepared to speak the truth about the ways in which David Koch’s “family” business is using the same business strategies as any sweatshop employer in forcing employees to work for less and less or face losing their jobs.

As a result of our investigations during 4 days in the community, interviewing nearly 30 New Era employees, attempting to hold discussions with management, and speaking to several local officials, we have been made aware of some alarming information. Ultimately, we believe that New Era has promoted both a policy towards workers and a working environment that severely threaten the employees’ physical, mental, and economic well-being. In this report we focus on testimonies from workers that we have interviewed to demonstrate the real consequences of New Era’s human rights violations on working families, and therefore demonstrate their need to change their policies immediately and effectively.

Summary of WRC Preliminary Report, New Era Cap Factory

Derby, NY 2001

In May 2001, seven workers at New Era Cap Company's Derby NY facility issued a complaint to the Worker Rights Consortium (WRC) regarding conditions at the plant. In response the WRC initiated an investigation of New Era's Derby plant and issued a preliminary report in August 2001. New Era produces caps for WRC affiliated colleges and universities, and holds an exclusive contract to supply caps worn by Major League Baseball players.

The complaint alleged that New Era failed to comply with WRC and university Codes of Conduct, and with applicable labor and employment laws, in three general areas: Health and Safety, Age and Disability Discrimination, and Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining. The alleged violations would constitute serious violations of the Codes of Conduct of the WRC and of WRC-affiliated colleges and universities. Several of the allegations, if they truly occurred, would also constitute violations of United States and international labor laws. The WRC investigation of New Era and preliminary report concludes that there is, at the very least, substantial credible evidence of serious, and in some instances ongoing, non-compliance by New Era with university Codes of Conduct and law.

Throughout the fact-gathering period, New Era management refused to release pertinent company documents or grant interviews to WRC investigators. The WRC urges New Era management to cooperate with the WRC and disclose all relevant records. Final conclusions as to the alleged instances of New Era non-compliance with Codes of Conduct must await the complete of follow-up evidence gathering.

Health and Safety

The WRC Assessment Team finds substantial credible evidence that New Era has not implemented a minimally adequate program to protect workers from injury and illness in the workplace, as required under pertinent provisions of University Codes of Conduct and United States law.

Musculo-Skeletal Disorders

Musculo-skeletal disorders (MSDs) refer to problems that affect the muscles, tendons, ligaments, and joints of the musculo-skeletal system, as well as the associated nerves that control and regulate muscular movements.

- ★ The injury rate at the Derby plant for the most serious MSDs (those causing lost time or restricted duty) is roughly 4 times the rate for the industry as a whole.
- ★ 23.2% of Derby workers suffered an MSD serious enough to prevent them from working and/or to force them onto restricted duty.
- ★ When MSDs not causing restricted duty or lost time are factored in, 48% of Derby workers suffered an MSD during the last three years.

Ergonomic Programs

The garment industry has received a great deal of attention regarding the numerous ergonomic risk factors associated with garment production. Highly repetitive operations (work cycles times as fast as 15 seconds per item), prolonged awkward postures, forceful movements to manipulate materials, and piece work production methods all contribute to elevated rates of MSDs.

- ★ In 1990, OSHA cited New Era the company's failure to protect workers from ergonomic hazards.

Derby workers have testified that:

- ★ An ergonomic program was virtually nonexistent in the plant until 1999.
- ★ Very few workstation adjustments and modifications have been made by New Era to reduce awkward postures and overreaches.
- ★ Workers have often been sent back to work with little or no action to reduce the risk of further injury after reporting pain or injuries or missing work.
- ★ Activities and programs designed to reduce the risk of ergonomic hazards have been introduced at various times and then quickly abandoned.
- ★ In many cases, New Era management failed to refer workers to a trained physician after reporting pain or injuries. Often workers were referred to an employee in the Human Resources Department who apparently had no medical training or credentials.

Since 1999, New Era has taken new steps in this area including the establishment of health and safety committees, and an ergonomic enhancement program gave the company a grant from the state government. Although, the majority of workers interviews testified that they have received no training or workplace adjustments and it is unclear whether the New Era management is committed to implementing an adequate program.

Needle Punctures

There is substantial credible evidence that New Era management has been aware of preventable needle puncture injuries but not taken adequate steps to protect employees from these hazards.

- ★ From 1995-2000, at least 45 needle puncture injuries have occurred. Many of these required hospital emergency room treatment; some involved the piercing of bone.
- ★ Evidence indicates that when needle puncture injuries have occurred at the factory over the last fifteen years, New Era frequently threatened injured workers with—and in some cases actually imposed—punitive disciplinary action.
- ★ Safety enhancements on several embroidery machines were made in approximately 1997. However, these machines were removed from the embroidery department and transferred to an unknown destination.
- ★ There is no evidence that New Era took minimally adequate measures to prevent injuries in light of the number of such injuries, and the causes of the injuries as reported on OSHA logs by New Era management.
- ★ Reportedly, during the current OSHA case investigation of the Derby facility, New Era management has recently indicated that safety-enhancing equipment has been ordered for the embroidery machines. To date, the WRC Assessment Team has not received evidence that verifies this report.

Blood contamination from cuts and punctures

There is substantial credible evidence that New Era management was aware of the episodic occurrence of injuries that posed significant risk of exposure of workers to blood borne pathogens but did not take adequate measures to protect workers from such exposure. Blood contamination from these accidents has the potential to expose workers to blood borne pathogens such as hepatitis B and HIV.

- ★ New Era Derby has an incident rate of 4.0 punctures per 100 workers – a rate that is fifteen times the national average for the hat and cap industry as a whole.
- ★ Despite OSHA violations sited against New Era years ago no training, planning, equipment, or other requirements to prevent the transfer of blood borne pathogens, as mandated by the US Dept of Labor and OSHA, were in place or used until mid 2001.
- ★ In the spring and summer of 2001, management has made improvements in its policies with respect to training and clean-up methods.

Workers' Compensation

There is substantial, credible evidence that New Era has not provided medical and wage benefits to some injured workers and that, in other cases, benefits were provided only after an extended delay. Problems Include:

- ★ Outright denial of workers' compensation claims on the grounds that the injuries were not caused at work.
- ★ Failure by the company to file workers' compensation claims.
- ★ Delays by the company in granting the necessary approval for diagnostic testing and medical treatment, which in some cases have appeared to have contributed to or caused medical complications arising out of delays in diagnosis and treatment, personal and family financial hardship due to delays in obtaining wage replacement benefits, and risk of termination due to a prolonged out-of-work status. Some workers have been fired for not being able to return to work after two years.
- ★ During the current work stoppage, New Era appears to have directed the issuance of letters to workers currently receiving workers' compensation, indicating that compensation benefits might be jeopardized if workers participate in union demonstrations.

Age and Disability Discrimination

There is not substantial evidence that New Era's unilateral changes in terms of employment constitute intentional or unintentional discrimination against older workers or intentional discrimination against disabled workers. There is sufficient evidence, however, to raise serious concern that New Era's unilateral changes with respects to wage structures systematically disadvantage disabled workers. New Era's new piece rate based payment system is more likely to negatively effect injured workers, and older workers who have worked in the plant longer are more likely to be injured. Therefore it is likely that this system will have a negative effect on older workers, but it is not clear that this would constitute a violation of law or college and university Codes of Conduct.

Freedom of Association and Rights of Collective Bargaining

There is substantial credible evidence that New Era has engaged in a persistent pattern of non-compliance with workers' rights of association and rights of collective bargaining under pertinent provisions of the WRC and University Codes of Conduct and United States labor law and international labor law.

Several but not all of the allegations pertaining to freedom of association are predicated on the claim that New Era management acted with hostile intent towards the Derby workers' exercise of the rights of association and toward the very existence of the Derby workers' union. In the United States law the term for such managerial state-of-mind is "anti-union animus".

This evidence is based on NRLB proceedings, arbitrations and settlements, New Era's own public statements, and the sworn and un-sworn testimony of many Derby workers. This evidence viewed together show a pattern of anti-union animus and patterns of managerial coercion, threats and refusal to bargain.

The preliminary report outlines a timeline of events from 1992 to 2001, which viewed together; demonstrate a violation of workers right to freedom of association and collective bargaining. New Era's pattern of threatening and coercive conduct includes, amongst many other actions enumerated in the preliminary report:

- ★ Repeated threats to close the Derby plant or withhold new efficient machinery from Derby workers in response to workers' support of the union.
- ★ Physically breaking a lock on union property to remove documents pertaining to safety violations in order to destroy the literature.

- ★ Physically menacing and screaming obscenities at female union supporters who had been ordered into a room designed for “disciplinary” action by male managers.
- ★ Using coercion and intimidation to unlawfully interfere with workers free choice of union representation at New Era’s Buffalo facility in 1998, as determined by a judge of the National Labor Relations Board.
- ★ Firing or transferring several union officials and activists during or immediately after the Derby workers’ campaign to affiliate with the Communication Workers of America in 1997.
- ★ Refusing to bargain with the Derby union over matters that are designated as mandatory subjects of bargaining by the collective bargaining agreement and the National Labor Relations Act.
- ★ Temporarily shutting down the plant in retaliation for an arbitrator’s order that New Era compensate workers who lost wages as a result of New Era’s violation of the collective agreement by the company’s refusal to bargain.

Initial Recommendations for Action

Based on the substantial credible evidence capsulized in the previous section, the WRC concludes that affiliated universities have strong grounds for concern that New Era may stand in violation of provisions of their Codes of Conduct governing occupational health and safety, freedom of association and rights of collective bargaining – and those provisions requiring licensees to comply with applicable domestic and international law.

For these reasons, the WRC issues two recommendations for action by New Era, as follows:

1. New Era should not remove machinery from the Derby facility or take other action that results in an irreversible shutdown of the facility, pending New Era’s provision of relevant evidence and completion of the WRC Assessment. As summarized above, substantial credible evidence supports the allegation that New Era has steadily disinvested, reduced employment, and reduced production at the Derby facility based on intense anti-union hostility and on a desire to rid itself of workers with work-related injuries. There is also substantial credible evidence that, in the current negotiating round, New Era made demands for drastic reduction of wages and drastic speed-up of work with the intent to create an impasse in collective bargaining that would predictably lead to a strike and at least temporarily shut down production at the CWA-unionized Derby facility but not at the non-unionized Alabama facility or the plant-unionized Buffalo facility. Until such time as New Era provides evidence justifying these actions, and until such time as the WRC Assessment Team makes its final conclusions of fact based on the totality of evidence, New Era should not take actions that make a permanent shutdown of the Derby plant a fait accompli. This Recommendation is in accordance with the WRC’s commitment to ensuring that companies do not “cut and run” in the face of actual or alleged labor abuses, but instead maintain employment while improving labor conditions.
2. New Era should immediately consent to provide documents and interviews supporting the company’s stated denial of the allegations in the Derby workers’ complaint, and otherwise enter into constructive dialogue with the WRC Assessment Team. On the basis of nine days of interviews, surveys and document gathering, the WRC Assessment Team has found substantial credible evidence supporting those allegations. The WRC Assessment Team has not, however, reached final conclusions of fact and remains committed to an objective, unbiased assessment of the totality of the record after completion of the still-ongoing evidence-gathering process.

During the strike, USAS students paired up with striking workers to produce a collection of worker testimonies to both educate college students about the reality that strikers were facing and build one-to-one relationships between students and New Era workers. The following testimonies are the product of that collaboration, and were distributed on campuses along with the set of USAS demands (see below second testimony).

New Era Cap Company Worker Testimony: Dawn Fachko

Interviewed by Dan Cross, the University of Buffalo

Dawn Fachko is married and is the mother of two grown children in the small town of Derby, New York. She has spent 13 years with the New Era Cap Co., working to embroider hats with various logos of baseball teams and Colleges and Universities. Recently, however, the Fachko household has come upon difficult times. First, Dawn had to quit working to receive massive surgery to treat carpal tunnel, aid her tendonitis, and scrape the bones on her elbows: all work-related ailments. Shortly afterwards, her husband willingly took a substantial pay cut because the factory at which he worked was in trouble. The Fachko family is willing to take a cut to help their employers through tough times.

The toughest blow, however, came six months ago, when the prosperous New Era Co. unveiled a new contract for its employees: a 30% increase in production while lowering its employees' pay, substantially, Dawn's day wage would have been reduced by almost seven dollars an hour.

It was then that this normally quiet, self-described "homebody" decided to act. Though she's never done any form of social activism or protest before in her life, Dawn has joined the strike line because, in her own words, "I couldn't bear to hear this company, which is doing well, making a lot of money, telling me 'You down there are making too much money.'"

Now, six months after the strike began, Dawn is still in a state of "limbo." Each day Dawn can feel the small town pressures of unemployment and of being socially outspoken.

Please support the workers of New Era. As University administrators, please review your contracts with New Era Cap Corporation so that they abide by collegiate codes of conduct. Duke University, George Washington University, Georgetown University and the University of Wisconsin-Madison have already postponed renewing their annual licensing agreements with New Era until the company responds to the labor-practice accusations. The University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill has similarly changed their contract renewal. As administrators, you have the ability to help right this wrong. Please act accordingly.

New Era Cap Company Worker Testimony: Carmella Kron

Interviewed by David Degnan, The University of Buffalo

Carmella Kron worked "middle," sewing the middle seam in hats at the New Era Cap Co. Derby, NY plant. Her wages were \$12.88 per hour, and by this April 2002 she will have worked at New Era for 14 years. Management decided to raise the workload to 60 dozen and lower her pay just prior to the strike on July 16, 2001. Kron calculated that after health insurance, her new pay would be approximately \$5 per hour. Kron would often say that she was there to work, and in most ways had no problem with the job. Before the strike, she worked as hard as she could to see if the 60 dozen quota was even feasible. She said that there was no way anyone could do it; she gave it her all and could produce 44 dozen.

As hard a worker as Kron is, she couldn't ignore four major problems. Her back injury and a torn muscle made Kron face the fact that employees on the compensation list were discriminated against. For each situation, Kron found some creative solutions but health insurance co-pay hikes were also forced through by upper management. The most constant insult to all employees were the monitored (unreasonably short) coffee breaks, and the quota lies. "I had been working since I was twenty, I started working here when I was twenty-eight, and I had never been sick before,"

said Kron. Then her back went out. Kron's doctor blamed the fact that her chair at work didn't rotate for the ruptured disk in her back. The disk ruptured with the repeated movement, rotating her upper body, that she was required to do. Sixty degrees of the disk were taken out. This happened after working at New Era's Derby plant for five years, in 1993. Kron has had five surgeries in the past seven years.

Kron praised lower management but said upper management imposed undesirable policies in unfair ways. New Era upper management said that the work-related ruptured disk couldn't be proven and blamed the way she got out of bed. At this time, however, management suddenly changed the stationary chairs to swivel chairs. They even measured the height of the tables and of the workers' legs.

In many ways, this strike has stressed the fact that families are being affected. Employee health insurance was \$75 per week for a couple. Kron asked management if she could take her husband off of the plan to lower her fee and he would be on his own plan, but management refused. With deliberate fairness, Kron weighed the pro's and cons. After working at New Era for five years there is a \$35 reduction in the health insurance fee and in January of 2000 the premium went down. However, the co-pay went up to \$10. The workers were told that when the premium rose, they would have to pay the higher premium. "I would be worse than where I started," Kron said. Kron disapproves of what will soon be a higher co-pay and higher premium than her original plan. The company introduced a 401K plan but it is out of her reach. Also, what the health plan covers has shrunk: it has gone from Independent Health gold to silver. She considered the fact the company expanded and the number of years she's worked there. Stating that conditions should have improved, "I just feel that it's wrong," she said.

New Era Cap Co. established certain standards of respect and attitude which Kron miraculously counter-acts with her own decency. "Personally, I have never had a problem with [lower] management, except during ten minute breaks they would follow us out and watch us." Half of the plant had so long to walk to the coffee machine that they took too long and got written-up. "They [management] would say we were out of work, take it [the work] next door, then say we were behind. I know we were ahead. Before I left work [to go] on strike back in July, we were doing work for November," said Kron.

(SAS) Students Against Sweatshops of (insert college/university's name here)'s makes the following demands of (insert administrator (s) here), to be carried out by (date):

1. Voice opposition to New Era Cap's unjust labor practices both directly to New Era management and publicly. In such statements, demand that New Era Cap eliminate its sweatshop practices by doing the following:
 - a. Negotiate a fair contract with the workers at the Derby, NY plant, improve the plant conditions in all of their factories to create and ensure a healthy and safe working environment, and end their policy of union-busting.
 - b. Cooperate with the Workers Rights Consortium investigation.
 - c. While continuing to outsource from the Pro Sports Ltd. Factory in Dhaka, Bangladesh, work with Pro Sports Ltd. to improve factory conditions and to guarantee that the human and worker rights of employees are respected.
2. Suspend the university's contract with New Era Cap Co. until New Era meets the provisions laid out in demand #1.
3. Demand that New Era participate in a public forum to answer any questions individuals and organizations may have about labor practices and the current strike in Derby.
4. Consult the Worker Rights Consortium report on the New Era Derby Plant, the United Students Against Sweatshops report entitled, "Money Made: Workers Forgotten," The

National Labor Committee report entitled, "Bangladesh: End the Race to the Bottom," and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration charges issued against New Era Cap on August 16th, 2001 in order to gain a fuller understanding of the situation between New Era Cap and its workers both domestically and abroad.

Thoughts from Student Activists on the New Era campaign

Thomas Cogswell

Central Michigan University, junior

I would have to say that this campaign was the most inspiring of any that I have ever worked on. It was a great opportunity to be able to meet several of the factory workers first hand on many occasions. I remember the second time Trina Tocco and I went to Derby to walk the picket line, the workers that day had planned a reception at a local hall just for USAS! It was amazing. After different student delegations to Derby (including the original fact finding, which was phenomenal) and the suspensions of

contracts began happening, I will always remember hearing from workers how they sang the school's fight song on the picket line that had recently suspended their new era contract.

Planning:

- ★ cooperation with the local CWA 14177 and the WRC were extremely important
- ★ conference calls with the union strengthened discussion on strategy
- ★ working with Jobs with Justice Coalition in Buffalo (CEJ), including Maria Whyte, as well as Ed Feigen, AFL-CIO, were great benefits.
- ★ Working with the international CWA was frustrating, representative wasn't used to working with students and was not overly helpful

Strategy:

- ★ the most difficult decision made was whether or not to push schools to cut contracts, the final decision to temporarily suspend was ultimately good because it could then be used as leverage
- ★ coordinated days of action, especially in the Midwest worked well
- ★ mock baseball games and golf games were used for publicity
- ★ letters and postcards to administrative officials to suspend contracts were important
- ★ worker testimonies gathered by students were "exceptionally" useful because it allowed students to talk with workers in Derby and they gave a personalized view of the situation to administrators
- ★ pressuring the FLA was useful and important

Sample Letter to the Administration

The sender's contact info

(address, phone, email)

The recipient's contact info

Dear recipient's name,

I am writing you as a representative of [your local economic justice/anti-sweatshop group]. Mid-March United Students Against Sweatshops, our national affiliate, was notified about a labor dispute at the New Era Cap Company factory in Derby, New York. A student delegation traveled to western New York to assess the situation from, 3/17/01-3/20/01. After a thorough investigation, the delegation found Chris Koch, CEO of the New Era Cap Co. to be a sweatshop employer. The full text of the delegates' report can be downloaded from www.usasnet.org.

The Derby plant has been located in the community of Derby since its founding in 1920. New Era CEO, Chris Koch has tried to maintain the "family-owned business" and "made in America" image for his clients which include 38 universities, including [the name of your university], Major League Baseball, the NFL, the NHL, and the NBA.

Workers at the New Era Cap factory in Derby, which is a rural community 40 minutes outside Buffalo, have been working without a contract since December 1, 2000. New Era is trying to implement drastic wage cuts, drop workers' four unpaid sick-days down to one, and continue to deny a them pension benefit. Since January 2001, New Era has laid off more than 125 workers, has temporarily laid off 70 workers, and plans another 100 lay offs in June 2001. This will bring the plant to one-third of its total in 1997 when the workers voted to affiliate their union with the Communication Workers of America (CWA), and form Local 14177.

Since the workers' successful vote of affiliation with the CWA, New Era management has been retaliating with worker intimidation, outsourcing, and downsizing. Freedom of association and collective bargaining is recognized in all international labor agreements as a core labor right. New Era lay offs point to a strategy of cutting and running from a successful organizing victory at Derby, destroying gains workers have made under Local 14177 and sending a message throughout the entire line of production, including the factories in Buffalo, NY, Jackson and Demopolis, Alabama, and sub-contracted facilities in export processing zones in China, Bangladesh, and Dominican Republic of how the company responds to workers' efforts to collectively assert their workplace rights.

Management illegally interfered with Local 14177's efforts to affiliate the Buffalo plant with the CWA. The day of the election, management rented buses and hired Vietnamese translators (the Buffalo workforce is 80% Vietnamese and Laotian), so that as the workers were driven to the polling location, management through the translators intimidated the workers to vote "no" on the ballot. The NLRB found New Era management guilty of illegal activity, but the case has been tied up in appeals for two years.

The student delegates interviewed over 30 Derby workers. All had repetitive motion injuries, most commonly Carpal Tunnel Syndrome. Carpal Tunnel results in chronic pain, and loss of dexterity and strength in affected parts. Many workers we interviewed were pressured not to file for compensation, most cases were stalled by New Era. Many of the current Derby employees have been working for the company for 10-25 years. Many workers are women in their 40-60s. New Era employs 45 married couples. Much of the workforce is related by blood or marriage. Lay offs, potential wage cuts, and the threat of Derby factory permanently closing have had and will have a devastating effect on the community's families and economy.

Currently the Derby workers earn a living wage, averaging \$12.40/hr. In stalled contract negotiations, management has tried to rationalize extreme wage cuts by implementing production quotas that even new, uninjured workers would have difficulty meeting. But it is virtually impossible for workers suffering from work-related repetitive motion injuries to meet these new

standards. Misleading reports from the company claim “inefficiency” of the workforce. These reports do not recognize the fact that management has been retarding production in Derby by outsourcing labor. The company decides which factories handle orders, it has chosen to shift production elsewhere and blames employees for low-production at Derby.

[Insert a paragraph about why your university is responsible to act...are they on the WRC? My school isn't so this is what I wrote: The Ohio State University administration has demonstrated its commitment to addressing the proliferation of sweatshops in the apparel industry by participating in a Labor Advisory Committee to establish a method of ensuring that OSU apparel is made “sweat-free.”]

[Your group] requires that *[your university]* reassert its commitment to the workers who produce *[your university]* apparel by showing support of the New Era employees.

As such, *[Your University]* must support the New Era - Derby workers' demands that New Era management:

- a. Halt further layoffs.
- b. Rehire recently laid-off employees.
- c. Abandon proposed wage cuts.

The *[Your University]* must urge the Company to:

- a. Claim responsibility for workers' repetitive motion injuries.
- b. Respect the freedom of association.
- c. Maintain a neutral relationship toward worker organizing in all of its factories, in the United States and overseas.

We ask that *[Your university]* write an official letter to New Era Cap Co. CEO, Chris Koch (8061 Erie Rd, Derby, NY 14047), and with copies to President Jane Howald, CWA Local 14177 (3719 Union Rd, Suite 122, Buffalo, NY, 14225) and *[Your group's name and address or to the group c/o sender]* Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely yours,

[sender's name and group affiliation]

SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE

*Please just use the following as a guide.

*Be very specific about information relative to your campus.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

INSERT DATE

For more information contact: INSERT LOCAL CONTACT PERSON—EXTREMELY IMPORTANT

Mary Beth Tschantz, United Students Against Sweatshops
Home 614-538-1761

Jane Howald, President of Local 14177
Work 716-947-0255 Home 716-947-4999

David Palmer, CWA District 1, area director
Cell 716-998-8067

Maria Whyte, Coalition for Economic Justice, director
Work 716-892-5877

Students Support Striking New Era Cap Company Workers in Derby, NY and Urge Their University to Demand New Era Management Address Major Violations to the University's Code of Conduct

On July 16, 2001, over 230 apparel workers in Derby, New York went on strike against their abusive employer the New Era Cap Company. The workers, represented by the Communication Workers of America (CWA) Local 14177 protest New Era's claim of an impasse in contract negotiations and have officially filed their grievance with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) charging that New Era has failed to bargain in good faith.

New Era management tore up their existing contract with Local 14177, this allowed them to end the workers' Cost Of Living Allowance (COLA) provision, cut their sick leave, cut the existing bonus program, and beginning the week of July 16, slash the workers' base wage by \$3, in effect destroying their living wage and tying their compensation to unrealistic production standards.

New Era produces caps for the National Football League and Major League Baseball. Other licensees include over 100 universities and colleges including INSERT YOUR UNIVERSITY. Students at INSERT YOUR UNIVERSITY protest New Era's abusive treatment of their workforce: their illegal union-busting tactics, their refusal to bargain in good faith with CWA Local 14177, their destruction of the workers' living wage, and their pattern of refusing responsibility for rampant repetitive motion injuries.

In keeping with INSERT YOUR SCHOOL'S NAME commitment to community excellence [...QUOTE YOUR UNIVERSITY'S MISSION STATEMENT, ETC—CHECK OUT YOUR SCHOOL'S WEBSITE] and Code of Conduct with apparel licensees, INSERT THE NAME OF YOUR LOCAL ANTI-SWEATSHOP GROUP demands that INSERT THE NAME OF YOUR UNIVERSITY administrators demonstrate their commitment to respecting the rights of workers by using their leverage as clients of New Era to demand that management bargain in good faith with CWA Local 14177.

ADD INFORMATION SPECIFIC TO THE ACTION YOU ARE TAKING LOCALLY WHETHER IT BE FLYERING AT SPORTS EVENTS OR DOING MASS WRITE-INS AND CALL-INS TO MANAGEMENT. IF YOUR SCHOOL IS AFFILIATED WITH THE WRC, DRAW ATTENTION TO THEIR REPORT ON THE SITUATION IN DERBY. INSERT A QUOTE FROM A MEMBER OF YOUR ANTI-SWEATSHOP GROUP.

On March 19, 2001 a delegation of affiliates of United Students Against Sweatshops issued a formal report on conditions affecting workers at the New Era Cap Company's Derby and Buffalo,

New York plants. Working with Buffalo-based Coalition for Economic Justice/Jobs with Justice and CWA Local 14177, the student delegation interviewed over 30 workers, attempted to tour the Derby and Buffalo factories and speak with management, and met with community members and politicians to compile the report.

The report has been used in congressional public hearings in western New York and by labor activists across the United States as they inform the public about New Era's abusive labor practices. A quote from the Report's conclusion reads:

It is clear to us that a sweatshop employer is one that has abused its workers, left them with irreparable injuries, refused to justly compensate them, threatened their union and their livelihood, and in the end is executing its threat. Every one of the named conditions is common among the sweatshops in the maquiladoras of Mexico and every one is present with these workers here in Western New York.

To read or download the full text of the report visit:
www.usasnet.org/campaigns/newera/report.shtml.

United Students Against Sweatshops, founded in 1998, is an international movement with students at more than 100 campuses fighting for workers' rights and sweatshop free working conditions. It has been very effective in demanding full public disclosure of university licensees, to ensure that clothing with university logos is manufactured under decent working conditions.

[Cut this story and include NY Times article instead—clip at WRC office, Allie has a copy]

AP Story Students Sent to Local Papers

Striking workers seek contract suspensions from New Era customers

By CAROLYN THOMPSON

Associated Press Writer

01/16/2002

Associated Press Newswires

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AMHERST, N.Y. (AP) - Six months into a strike at one of New Era Cap Co.'s four factories, union supporters on Wednesday vowed to convince universities and retailers to stop doing business with the baseball hat maker. Striking workers, backed by an anti-sweatshop group formed by more than 80 colleges, have accused New Era of running its Derby plant, outside Buffalo, like a sweatshop.

In an August report, the group, the Worker Rights Consortium, said New Era has mishandled an extraordinarily high rate of worker injuries and punished employees for joining a union by cutting their wages and shifting production to other New Era facilities. The AFL-CIO in turn urged its 13 million members to boycott New Era products.

"All these things are paralleling the sweatshop conditions that our students see in Mexico, Indonesia, in Honduras and throughout the developing south," said Amber Gallup of United Students Against Sweatshops, a student group which has taken up New Era's cause.

New Era, which supplies caps to Major League Baseball and a host of universities, denies the accusations. Spokesman John DeWaal noted workers at the company's Buffalo plant accepted virtually the same contract offered in Derby. The Buffalo employees are represented by a separate union.

At a news conference marking the six-month anniversary of the strike's start, strikers and their supporters promised to escalate an ongoing campaign to convince customers to suspend ties with New Era until the dispute is settled. Duke University, Georgetown University and the University of Wisconsin at Madison late last year postponed renewing their annual licensing agreements with

New Era until the company responds to the labor-practice accusations. The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill agreed to a 90-day renewal, instead of for a full year, with the same request.

Jason Koslowski, secretary of the Communications Workers of America chapter representing the workers, said there had been no face-to-face bargaining session since May. DeWaal said there had been a session in December, though both agreed there has been little progress.

DeWaal said asking for a boycott of New Era products amounted to "working against America." "New Era is the last major company that employs Americans when it comes to making the caps," he said. "Ninety percent of our product is still American-made where virtually all of our competitors use 100 percent foreign-made products ... They're saying they want people to stop buying the only American-made product on the market." It is those foreign competitors, who pay "pennies on the dollar for labor" compared with New Era's average hourly wage of \$12, that have driven New Era's push to cut costs and increase efficiency, DeWaal said.

DeWaal said the Derby plant accounts for about 10 percent of New Era's annual production of 15 million caps. Much of the work has been redistributed to the other factories, he said, while the rest is being done by the 80 or so workers who have crossed the picket line.

Section Four:

Campus Living Wage Campaigns



the national campus living wage campaign

Updated July 2005

What is a campus living wage campaign?

The people who make our schools run are routinely exploited: often, they face 90-hour work weeks divided among two or three jobs; they face days and months without seeing their children or spouses; they face medical emergencies without health care; and they face evictions and homelessness. No one should face these circumstances. Workers are fighting back, and we're there to support them. USAS began a national living wage campaign with our allies to support and coordinate student-supported campus worker struggles across the country. For USAS, a "living wage" campaign is defined as any struggle to ensure that workers on campus do not receive poverty wages, whatever the mechanism to remedy the exploitation – whether an organizing drive, a contract campaign, an effort to kick an egregious subcontractor off campus, or a campaign to win a wage floor that adjusts to the cost of living. And workers and students are winning living wage victories on dozens of campuses across the country, from Georgia to Connecticut to Indiana to California. Students and workers organizing together build powerful solidarity, and campus living wage campaigns to end poverty wages can be a moral force to resist the corporatization of education and the exploitation of workers.



This Spring, Students at Georgetown University held a nine-day hunger strike that resulted in a major victory for a three-year struggle for living wages at their campus. For the Fall 05 semester, they're taking the show on the road! The Living Wage Action Coalition will be touring campuses with living wage campaigns across the country for the next semester, and possibly beyond! Contact them about coming to your campus at: www.livingwageaction.org

Resources United Students Against Sweatshops can offer you:

- ★ Materials to do educational events on campus, such as videos, literature, and speakers.
- ★ Connections to labor and community organizations in your area who will be your allies in these campaigns, as well as connections to worker organizations around the world.
- ★ A whole network of students around the country who are running these campaigns and winning! USAS chapters have so much to offer each other in terms of strategy, advice, and student power.
- ★ Assistance from the charming and experienced USAS staff!
- ★ Let us know what else you need!

What schools are currently running campus living wage campaigns?

University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN

Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI

Stanford University, Palo Alto, CA

University of California San Diego, San Diego, CA

Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN...and many more!

six campus living wage campaign case studies



United Students Against Sweatshops is compiling case studies of campus living wage and worker solidarity campaigns to share among members, so that we can learn from each other's victories and, yes, mistakes.

Please let us know if these case studies are helpful. How can we improve future case studies? Are there particular kinds of schools you want to see a case study about? Can you do a case study of your own school? Please e-mail us at organize@usasnet.org

Campaigns were asked the following questions in preparing their case studies:

Contact Information: Who could a student interested in learning more about your campaign call or e-mail?

Current Status: Are you just kicking off the campaign, winning victories partial or total, or stalled a bit?

Background of campus group: Briefly describe your organization or coalition, including things like the name of your group, its mission, its history, its numbers, its demographic make up, average year in school, etc.

Allies: Who were or are your group's allies in the campaign? Please list other students, labor, community, and faith-based groups, etc.

Opponents: Those who worked actively against you but were not your targets.

Target: Who was/were the target/s of your campaign? Who was the decision-maker who could make the changes you fought for? The president of your school, the Dean of Students, the Board of Trustees, etc?

In a few paragraphs or more, please tell the story of your campaign, including

Tactics: what your organization and allies did to your target to demonstrate your power and force them to meet your demands

Things you would do differently: things that were not effective, things that seemed to backfire, or opportunities you thought of later

Things that were helpful to the campaign: things you thought you did well that helped move your school closer to victory

University of California, San Diego

Public school in Southern California with union workers

For more information, contact Jessica Lopez (sejucsd@riseup.net, 619/584-5744 x25)

Current Status

The subject of this case study is our victory in June of 2001, with non-union janitors fighting to be union. All of the formerly sub-contracted janitors who chose to reapply under the union contract were made direct university employees under the union of AFSCME with pay increases from \$6.75 to \$9-11/hr. and from no health benefits or vacation time to full health benefits, pension plan and two week vacation.

Following the gains, we began research to conduct a campus living wage campaign. Currently in 02-03 we have put the campus living wage on hold, and are working on the issues of non-union cafeteria workers and supporting the San Diego city living wage ordinance, both of which we are just in the process of kicking off, but hopeful to win by June 2003.

Background of Campus Group

Students for Economic Justice (SEJ) is a grassroots organization formed to mobilize with students, staff, faculty, workers, and community members in San Diego, around issues of social and economic inequality. SEJ emerged as an extension of a labor justice internship program with the Center on Policy and Initiatives. Members began meeting regularly in late February of 2001, and became an official UCSD organization in April. Founded primarily by students of color, SEJ has developed into the only large-scale multi-racial/multi-ethnic organizing space at UCSD. It is composed of approximately 30 core members, with hundreds of supportive students that vary in class, ethnic background and years at school from 1st year undergraduate to graduate levels.

Allies

Allies of SEJ included various UCSD student organizations such as MEChA, APSA, AASU, KP, Student Affirmative Action Committee (SAAC), and Green Party; student centers such as OASIS and the Cross Cultural Center; student co-ops such as the Che Café and Groundwork Books. Supportive community organizations include the Center on Policy and Initiatives and the Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice as well as unions like Hotel and Restaurant Employees Union local 30 and Service Employees International Union local 2028. Also supportive are professors such as George Lipsitz, Jorge Mariscal and Paula Chakravarty, (Chair of Cognitive Science Department, the dept. from which Alejandra was fired), and the Chair of the Academic Senate; and celebrity personalities such as Ozomatli, Jammin Z-90 radio DJs, Patch Adams, and local public officials.

Opponents

UCSD contract company Bergenson's, and UCSD public relations

Target

Chancellor Robert Dynes; Vice Chancellor of Business Affairs, Steve Relyea; Vice Chancellor, Rogers Davis; and Physical Plant Services, Jack Hug

Tactics

- short-term goal: Rehire fired worker, Alejandra Rodriguez
- intermediate goal: Union contract, including health benefits, living wage, sick days and pension plan
- long-term goal: That the university set higher standards for its contractors, by contracting with union contractors that 1. Pay the living wage of \$11.24/hour 2. Offer family health insurance, sick days, and holidays for all janitors 3. Respects

workers rights, including the right to organize, and is in compliance with all labor and employment laws.

A public campaign started at UCSD in mid February of 2001 and grew into a community movement to support the Bergensons janitors' demands for a union contract and respect on the job. After four months of constant pressure, UCSD administrators were challenged to enforce standards of conduct and fair compensation for its contractors. Bergensons janitors here on campus began meeting with Service Employees International Union (SEIU local 2028) on how to improve their living and working standards, and build a better future for themselves and their families. In April, Bergensons responded by firing leader Alejandra Rodriguez and threatening and interrogating others for their Union activity. After investigating evidence submitted by SEIU and the employees, the National Labor Relations Board has found the company guilty of these charges and is in the process of issuing complaints against them to seek remedies for these violations of the workers' legal rights.

SEJ applied pressure to the university administration by holding three major rallies and press conferences anchored by a civil disobedience, by obtaining strong support from community groups, professors and politicians to pressure the administration, by obtaining celebrity endorsement, and by active recruitment techniques.

SEJ kicked off its campaign February 17, 2001 by holding a rally in a La Jolla Shopping center contracted by Bergensons. The rally was composed of over 300 students and SEIU workers attending the UC-wide Student of Color Conference held at UCSD. In March and April we conducted research and we held two mini-campaigns. First we held our "Need Cash?" campaign in which we widely advertised for a job that paid poverty wages and described the conditions under which UCSD janitors were working. Second, during the same time that our school was holding elections for a controversial fee referendum to expand our student center, we held a mock referendum, including real ballots, asking students if janitors should be paid poverty wages.

We held our second rally on May 1st, International Worker's Day, in conjunction with an Ozomatli concert being held on our campus. During this month our efforts intensified as we focused on the unjust firing of Alejandra. Our mini-campaign was "Have You Seen Me?" Our flyers answered, "No, I've been fired," and it described the unjust conditions that janitors were facing. During this time we continued to table and recruit members, creating a large phone-banking sheet that we employed each time we held an action or an event. We also held a teach-ins; phone, fax, and letter drives; screened Bread and Roses, a movie about the Justice for Janitors; and participated in building visits with janitors. During a teach-in at a Chancellor's Associates meeting in which important donors to the university were present, the university staff including an administrator, reacted to SEJ members with physical violence, resulting in a very harmful public relations image for them. As a result of our May efforts the administration finally agreed to meet with us, and promised nothing as we presented our demands. One week after this meeting, on June 1st, we held a civil disobedience and rally, in which 15 students and workers blocked a nearby intersection and were arrested. The following day the administration damaged its public image again, when the story in the San Diego Union Tribune published that UCSD had called the INS on its own workers, in a tactic that is widely used to intimidate workers.

After several large demonstrations and increasing public awareness of the unwarranted manner in which the contracted janitors were being treated here, University administrators met with SEIU and AFSCME on June 13th. At that meeting, the University announced it would no longer contract out these jobs to Bergensons or any other company, but would instead bring them "in-house" as UCSD employees covered by their union contract with AFSCME. UCSD agreed to offer every affected Bergensons janitor who wished it – including Alejandra Rodriguez – one of these positions, and to "...make every reasonable effort to see that these employees have the opportunity to be successful as UCSD employees." SEIU organizers and SEJ members met with Bergensons janitors that same night. The workers were overjoyed to hear that their compensation would basically double with huge wage increases and first-ever benefits like paid sick days, holidays, and full family health coverage. Upon hiring, janitors will receive: \$9 - \$12 / hour (depending on training and experience), Special Training for Bergensons Janitors, Full Family Health Insurance,

12 paid holidays, 1 weeks paid vacation, and a Pension Plan of 14%. The janitors' main concern, of course, was that they be retained in the transition once Bergensons' contract expired. The workers were assured that this agreement was to be in writing, and that if there was any attempt to falter on the agreement-the same coalition that fought with them to win these improvements would fight again to enforce them. The contract began October 1st, 2001.

Things you would do differently

We should have made a strategy that included summer session.

Something that really hurt us was that we did not make a plan for the summer. We won the campaign just before school let out, and then we all went home or went on with our summer plans. This hurt the workers because Bergensons, the contracting company began a heavy scare campaign, and we were not there to help. The situation was later resolved, but the workers faith in the students was not as high as before.

We should have talked and organized more with the workers.

We took a passive stance toward organizing with the workers, and building relationships, and prioritized student organizing. While we went on various building visits, it was the SEIU organizers that had almost all the contact with the workers, and not enough was done in terms of worker education, base building, and leadership development. This made it extremely difficult for AFSCME to handle the move from non-union to union janitors.

We should have kept recruiting actively even after our win.

After the victory, we did research on a campus living wage ordinance for our school, and continued to be active in worker's issues, but we did not do a good job of simultaneously recruiting actively while we had no "hot" campaign. This mistake reduced our core membership to ten. Big Organizing no-no!

We should have done more internal leadership development.

We had many activists and few organizers.

1. we should have done more skills trainings.
2. the committee system could have been stronger.

Things that were helpful to the campaign

Assessing the effectiveness of our strategy and our tactics, we give credit to several factors including our ability to work with a full-time community organizer to help us develop and carry out our campaign. We also worked step-by-step with SEIU 2028, who strategized much of the campaign, and used their community networks, including their connections to politicians, to apply pressure on our targets. A few activist professors were able to mobilize the other faculty members across several departments and schedule key meetings with administrators. We were able to capitalize on the administration's mistakes, such as their violent reaction toward SEJ at the funders meeting, resulting in humiliation for UCSD. We had four committees: research, logistics, art, and outreach. We were also able to incorporate large events, celebrities and entertainment into our major actions, including a local radio DJ, Danza Azteca, speakers, a puppet, drums, and Ozomatli. We also were able to get Patch Adams to talk about the janitors and SEJ at the UCSD commencement speech

American University

Private school in Washington DC with union workers

For more information, contact Rebecca DeWinter (rdewinter@netzero.net, 202-364-3458) and Liz Tylander (gamehendge@aol.com, 202-885-8396)

Current Status

The Board of Trustees and the President are deciding whether to implement a living wage.

Background of Campus Group

AU Solidarity is a USAS affiliate that was started about 5 years ago. We began working on sweatshop issues and then moved on to a living wage campaign after AU signed on to the WRC and FLA. We are comprised of both undergraduate and graduate students and have about 15 active members, with a larger support base among other campus progressive student groups.

Allies

DC Student Labor Action Project, Metro Washington Council of the AFL-CIO, Progressive MD, Locals HERE 25 and SEIU 82, Fair Trade Student Association, The Movement

Opponents

No specific opponents other than some students who fear tuition increases, and members of the Cabinet and Board, as well as some professors

Target

President, Cabinet and Board of Trustees. They are the ones responsible for implementing a living wage.

Tactics

In 2000, the Washington College of Law students, after numerous conversations with workers on their campus, began a campaign to ensure that all direct and contracted workers earn a living wage. At the time, using figures from HUD, they recommended a living wage of \$10.51 plus benefits. The students collected a significant number of signatures in support of a living wage, and the Student Bar Association passed a resolution encouraging the implementation of the living wage.

In 2001, the campaign was picked up by AU Solidarity Committee – a student group of graduates and undergraduates working on local and global labor rights issues – and brought to main campus. In February of 2002, after extensive research and in-depth interviews of contracted workers, AU Solidarity issued a report endorsing the Living Wage Project Team's (see below) recommendations that all direct and contracted workers receive a living wage and benefits. Interviews revealed that the majority of contracted workers were struggling to get by and not able to pay for health insurance, child care, and adequate housing without taking on second jobs and relying on government or private assistance. Over the course of the past two years, AU Solidarity, through petitions, a rally, and various awareness raising events, has garnered widespread support for a living wage for all direct and contracted workers. Both the Graduate Student Association and Student Confederation have passed resolutions endorsing the living wage, twice President Ladner has received petitions with signatures from over 1,000 students in support of a living wage, the history department's faculty has unanimously stated it is behind a living wage, and both unions representing our contracted workers on campus, HERE Local 25 and SEIU Local 82, have written letters in support of the campaign.

In September 2001, President Ladner convened the Living Wage Project Team to examine the viability of a living wage for low-income workers. The Team, consisting of faculty from the economics and law departments, students from AU Solidarity and student government, and staff from the President's office, human resources, and finance, issued a report in February 2001 in

which the Team members unanimously supported a living wage of \$12.58 per hour plus benefits on par with AU direct employees.

President Ladner met with the Trustees in May to discuss the recommendations. At that point, the Trustees stated that they had a number of outstanding questions regarding such issues as the impact of issuing a living wage policy on contractual relations between AU, contracting companies, and the unions; the exact costs of implementing a living wage; possible sources of funding; etc. The President decided after last semester that the task of the democratically representative Project Team was completed and handed over the additional research to finance and human resources. The President was initially to issue an official position on the living wage in August, but due to scheduling conflicts, AU Solidarity was informed that a statement could be expected in early September, since the Trustees could vote on the issue without having to meet face to face. The latest we have heard from the President's office is that research is still outstanding and that no decision will be reached until the next Trustees meeting in November 2002.

AU Solidarity is continuing to pursue institutionalized channels of garnering support for a living wage. We have just handed in a student petition in support of the living wage with signatures from 10% of the student body. We are re-visiting with student government bodies to see if they will once again issue statements of support, and we are seeking endorsement of the campaign from student clubs and associations. We are solidifying our ties with workers and their unions. And we are seeking the support of faculty and staff through their respective representative organizations. In addition, since many of these steps of seeking institutionalized support have been undertaken once before with minimal response from the President's office, we will increase direct action such as a call-in and e-mail campaign and awareness raising events.

Valdosta State University

Public school in South Georgia with non-union workers

For more information, contact Kriston Simmons (vsulivingwage@yahoo.com, 229-269-6703) or Henry Calhoun (229/834-1192)

Current Status

Our campaign has been on now for close to a year and half. Partial victories include winning a 4% base pay increase for full and part-time campus workers and helping a fired faculty supporter win a \$100,000 settlement in her case against the university.

Background of Campus Group

Our organization was created to help build rank-and-file worker power on our campus. Increasing worker involvement and leadership in the campaign for a living wage are essential aspects of our work. For the first 6-7 months of our campaign, workers outnumbered student and other supporters by about 10-1. Today, with a lull in worker participation along with increased signs of student support, that ratio has narrowed to about 2-1. Support has always been strongest among people of color and women workers. Persons in leadership include: 1 African American male worker, 2 African American female workers, 1 white male student-worker, 1 white female student, and 1 white female professor.

Allies

USAS!! Unitarian Universalist Church of Valdosta, River Street Church of Christ, NAACP, Valdosta Project Change, People's Tribunal, South Georgia Central Labor Council, ACORN, Living Wage Campaigns at Emory, Agnes Scott, Morehouse and Spelman

Opponents

Director of Human Resources, Dean of Students, faculty advisor for Students In Free Enterprise, the office of Facilities Use

Target

VSU President, VP of Business and Finance, the Governor, Chancellor of the University System of Georgia, Board of Regents

Tactics

Headed by full-timers like Grounds Equipment Operator Henry Calhoun and Senior Secretary Linda Simmons, the Valdosta State living wage campaign has crafted a six-point list of demands calling for a living wage for all campus workers, an end to discrimination, affordable health insurance, and fair working conditions.

Solidarity protests helped fired faculty supporter Leigh Touchton win a \$100,000 settlement in her successful suit against the Georgia Board of Regents back in March of this year. Building on momentum from this achievement, the campaign successfully pressured the university president into conceding a 4% base pay increase for all full and part time employees effective October 1st 2002.

Our campaign has been legally and politically handicapped from the start. As Georgia public employees we are denied the right to a contract with our employers. State law also undermines union power through its "right to work" (for less) restrictions. Unions are weak in this state and the ones we have approached are reluctant to commit any time or resources into organizing university or other state workers.

Aside from these obstacles, our greatest challenge is simply maintaining the levels of enthusiasm and participation in our campaign among the rank-and-file campus workers. Maintaining a viable organization capable of building real political power among low-wage mostly female African American workers has proved a difficult task. How do you get people to meetings twice a month

when they work two or more jobs or have to take care of their kids after working all day? We didn't think enough about providing things like child care at our meetings or doing some sort of social event that would've allowed a much broader group of folks to get involved.

With a core group of dedicated activists, our campaign is gaining strength and support from the large numbers of students employed on campus as we continue to forge new alliances with faith-based community groups in the community.

Stanford University

Private school in Northern California with union and non-union workers

For more information, contact Clara Webb (cwebb@stanford.edu), Anna Mumford (alm@stanford.edu), or Leti Ramirez (ooletioo@stanford.edu, 650-315-6674) and visit www.stanford.edu/group/slac

Current Status

This is the second year of the direct action part of our campaign, before initiating the campaign we spent an entire year researching labor conditions on campus, creating our own living wage index, etc. We had two partial victories last year: an amended contract with a subcontractor at the Stanford Hospital that provided comparable wages and healthcare benefits to those of directly hired workers and a contract for the workers of a food vendor on campus that ensured wage parity with directly hired dining hall workers. Currently, our Code of Conduct campaign has stalled due to our administration's refusal to meet with us to discuss ANY labor issue on campus. This year, we supported Stanford Hospital workers, represented by SEIU Local 715 during their one-day strike. Their contract was resolved with the majority of their demands being met. We are now planning a large-scale action for the spring in support of our Code of Conduct.

Background of Campus Group

The Stanford Labor Action Coalition (SLAC) is a student group that believes in economic justice and the rights of workers to earn a livable wage and have a voice on the job. We recognize that economic inequality is linked with other forms of social injustice such as racism, xenophobia, language discrimination, sexism, and homophobia, and we are committed to challenging these systems in the work that we do as well as within our organization. We believe that our university should be a visionary and responsible leader for social change and stand in solidarity with worker campaigns on campus. The group was established in 1998 after students hosted a labor conference on campus. Since then the group has spread awareness about labor issues on campus, in 1999 supported SEIU Local 715's campaign to organize hospital workers, and participated in the Justice for Janitors campaign on campus in 2000.

During the Fall of 2001, SLAC initiated a Code of Conduct campaign. As a result, we formed an on campus coalition named the Coalition for Labor Justice with people of color, social justice organizations on campus. The Coalition is made up of all the following groups: Asian American Student Association, Black Student Union, Caribbean Student Association, Movimiento Estudiantil Chicana/o de Aztlan, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Pilipino Association of Stanford University, Students for Environmental Action at Stanford, Stanford American Indian Organization, Stanford Community for Peace and Justice, and the Students of Color Coalition.

SLAC has a diverse core of 15 undergraduate students, mostly seniors, and the Coalition for Labor Justice has about 10 active members who assist in the decision making of the campaign. The coordinators for both groups are all female and over half are people of color.

Allies

SEIU Local 715, SEIU Local 1877, United States Student Association, Student Labor Action project, United Students Against Sweatshops, South Bay Labor Council, the organizations in our coalition, the current student government president and several student government senators

Opponents

We have not had any organized opposition.

Target

Stanford University President John Hennessy, Stanford Hospital VP of General Services Lou Saksen, and most recently, the Board of Trustees. Overall we have always targeted the president because he can make the decision to implement a Code of Conduct.

Tactics

In the beginning of the 2001/02 year, SLAC began its Code of Conduct campaign to regulate the practices of subcontractors on campus, to protect the right of workers to organize, and to provide educational opportunities to all workers. Our first major action for the campaign to stop the subcontracting out of housekeeping positions at the hospital was a non-violent sit-in that led the arrest of six Coalition members. We felt it was necessary to take a serious action because of the negative response we received from hospital administrators and because of President Hennessy's refusal to meet with us. After the arrests, we had two meetings with President Hennessy.

In February 2002, President Hennessy announced his proposal for a living wage policy. We were angered by this announcement due to many reasons. Firstly, workers and students were not consulted in the drafting of the administration's proposal. Secondly, the policy itself is extremely limited and we believe it will only affect less than 100 non unionized workers who work for subcontractors. Lastly, the actual amount chosen as a living wage is much lower than what other living wage organizations and we have calculated to be and is not representative of the cost of living for the majority of workers who live near Stanford. Since then we have put out flyer series, editorials in the school newspapers, and held town hall meetings and rallies at events like Parent's Weekend to protest the policy and demand the Code of Conduct instead. Although Hennessy has not agreed to our demands, our actions have delayed their implementation of the flimsy policy and the administration has been scrambling to get approval from the student government (which won't give their approval because they support SLAC this year).

Things you would do differently

One frustration has been the lack of response from administrators and we may have wasted too much time meeting with lower level administrators such as the Vice Provost of Student Affairs and, most recently, the head of Public Relations who have tried to act as buffers between students and the president. We are not trying to plan more face-to-face time with decision makers in a way that shows our strength and numbers.

Things that were helpful to the campaign

Last year Stanford held a series of large fundraising events across the country. We obtained a list of the alums who were invited, found an alumni directory, and did a mass mailing that played on the theme of the fundraising event ("Think Again about Stanford") and asked for their support in improving labor conditions. We also showed up at the event to get postcards signed. This was a successful tactic in that the administration was totally unprepared and had to scramble to do damage control during the event. One of our most successful tactics was a 3 day sleep-out for wage parity in a contract between subcontracted food service workers and their employer Bon Appetit. We set up a large circle of tents in front of the President's office in the Main Quad. The sleep out was timed to take place a few days before a huge fundraising event that was going to happen right where our tents were set up. We had about 50 to 60 students sleeping out every night and put up large banners and displays; we held cultural and music performances every evening; we organized actions like a candlelight vigil to the President's house and a march to confront administrators; and we had broad participation from our coalition groups and campus workers. The union won the wage parity they were asking for and we know that the administration met with Bon Appetit during negotiations, so the action was a huge success in the end. Tactics that targeted Stanford's image and money and have involved our coalition members have been the most successful.

Swarthmore College

Private school in Pennsylvania with non-union workers

Check out our website at www.swatlivingwage.org or e-mail us at swatlivingwage@yahoo.com

Current Status

The Swarthmore College Living Wage and Democracy Campaign has been working for four years to increase the wages of our lowest paid employees. Two years ago our work brought the wage from \$6.66 to \$9. Now we have won another victory with the base wage being increased to \$10.38 plus a means tested health care benefit for children and spouses!

Background of Campus Group

We are the Swarthmore Living Wage and Democracy Campaign (SLW&DC). We grew out of a campus group concerned with sweatshops and other international labor issues. An administrative assistant here approached the group about tackling local labor issues, and after some initial interviews with campus workers, we decided to start a living wage campaign. Student and staff involvement has fluctuated- at this point we are a dozen students who meet in the evenings, and a few staff members who meet with students during the daytime. Plus other folks from across the community who support us and help out, but do not attend most meetings.

Allies

The faculty has been our biggest ally (they voted to form a committee to study implementing a living wage “in accordance with the principles of the living wage campaign”). Alumni are also huge allies, and they regularly impress us with their desire to support the campaign however they can.

Opponents

The occasional student or economics professor writes an editorial or two in the student paper, and supervisors have expressed opposition. Our strongest opposition comes from the Human Resources department.

Target

The president (Al Bloom) was our main target, because we have the most access to him and the much more power over him than over our Board of Managers. It is his job to make recommendations to the board, and they usually agree to the things he really supports. Once the college has a recommendation for how to implement a living wage, the board will become a more central target.

Tactics

We put pressure on our target by presenting him with a petition with 1,100 signatures, getting pledges of support from student groups, which included the student council, holding a rally of over one hundred people that was in both local papers and the Philadelphia Inquirer, writing to and calling the Board of Managers at home to talk about Living Wage, and interrupting a Board of Managers meeting to demand to be put on their agenda. Our faculty allies put pressure on the president by forming their own Living Wage study committee. We also try to meet often with the president to make sure he is aware of the Living Wage Campaign's stance on his actions.

On several occasions, we have used the college's own rhetoric against it. Our school used to be a Quaker institution, and continues to have a strong, positive relationship with some the tenets of Quakerism. This aspect of the school, as well as our school's image and rhetoric as a school interested in both service and social justice, have helped us to frame the living wage as something which just makes sense for Swarthmore.

We largely worked within the processes set up by the college, participating in all committees and discussions that may have an effect on living wage work, and in the last year we have increasingly begun to seek ways to continue that "insider" involvement while putting pressure on from the

outside. Our direct action at the Board meeting is one example of this, but we're still working on striking that balance.

We have also worked to educate our campus more generally, running regular teach-ins (one per school year), doing publicity blitzes, and getting covered regularly in the student publications. We are about to begin working on staff testimonials, which will be great a few ways: they will provide a space for staff voice, which is often lost on the larger school community; they will be a great tool in whatever our future communications with the administration and Board are, because they will help to close the gap in communication between workers and higher-ups; and they will be a good organizing tool for both students and staff.

Things you would do differently

At our end-of-the-semester wrap up we felt that we need to improve on following through with plans we come up with, not losing contact with active staff members, doing a more equitable distribution of work among campaign members, integrating new campaign members and using their strengths, and keeping our overall vision in mind so that we are constantly strengthening our campaign.

More generally, we would make sure not to become consumed with the college's formal processes to the point that we lose a sense of how to work outside the system, or a sense of how important grassroots-type organizing of staff and students is. Lucky for us, we now have a second formal process in the works, so we can put that lesson into practice this time around.

Things that were helpful to the campaign

We are doing a good job of providing support for staff and students on the college's Living Wage study committee, so that they are able to speak up and represent their constituencies. We had a cool alumni panel with alums who are progressive economists, and those alums agreed to consult with the college about implementing a Living Wage.

University of Tennessee Knoxville

Public school in Tennessee with union workers without collective bargaining rights

For more information, contact Jay Tucker,

Chair of Progressive Student Alliance (865-673-8791, hopeutk@utk.edu)

Current Status

We kicked off a campaign to implement an “Employer Code of Conduct” in Fall of 2002. The goal of the Code is to guarantee ten fundamental rights for every worker on campus. The first provision is a Living Wage, but the Code addresses other issues such as the right to organize and protection from privatization/outsourcing. Also in the Fall of 2002, the independent campus workers union that PSA helped to form - the United Campus Workers - affiliated with the Communication Workers of America. The union is currently developing a massive outreach plan to begin in Spring of 2003. (The long-term goal of the UCW-CWA is to establish a public sector workers union for the entire state of Tennessee.) In addition, our organization is actively building to have an anti-war presence on campus, working with allied groups both on campus and off.

Background of Campus Group

The Progressive Student Alliance was founded in 1997 as a homeless advocacy group. Over time members came to adopt an economic and social justice orientation. In 1999, group members began systematically talking to campus housekeepers about poverty-level wages and other workplace problems. Over time, leaders began to emerge who would eventually go on to form an independent workers union - the United Campus Workers. PSA members' key contribution to this effort was to know when to step back and let workers take the lead. Over the years, PSA has participated in numerous other efforts, ranging from solidarity with the Charleston Five to efforts to stop anti-Muslim bias and hate crimes.

Allies

In addition to the United Campus Workers - CWA Local 3865 - we work with other local unions including UNITE!, Knoxville-Oak Ridge Central Labor Council-AFL-CIO, UE 150 (North Carolina Public Sector Workers Union), etc; community groups such as Jobs with Justice, the Tennessee Industrial Renewal Network, and the Sincere Seven, as well as various churches on campus and in the community; and faculty and student organizations such as the Muslim Student Association and Black Student Alliance.

Opponents

Certain members of the UT administration.

Target

Our primary target is Dr. John W. Shumaker, the president of the University of Tennessee system. Our secondary targets are members of the Board of Trustees.

Tactics

On-going tactics have included setting up information tables on campus, letters to the editor, petitioning, local radio and television broadcasts, door-knocking in dorms, marches and rallies (with beating drums and papier-mâché props, etc). We also put on multiple informational forums such as teach-ins, living wage workshops in classrooms, and worker speak-outs. Our recent efforts to meet with the President been rebuffed, so future tactics may include some ruckus-making in order to get his attention.

Things you would do differently

We are always critiquing our efforts, but two big things that stick out are (1) apply for university funding; and (2) spend more time working with national networks such as USAS, in order to learn from other groups and avoid feelings of isolation.

Things that were helpful to the campaign

Our greatest strength is our relationship to the workers here on campus. The UCW is willing to take the lead on issues and really helps to keep us on track. This sort of relationship helps to avoid the sorts of class chauvinism issues that can really hamper student-worker solidarity movements. The key to whatever modest success we have had is the realization that the ultimate goal of our organizing efforts is not a Living Wage or any other issue, but rather to build working and oppressed peoples' power.

Section Five:

Ethical Purchasing Campaign



campaigns to demand ethical contracting policies

Updated July 2005

What is an ethical purchasing policy?

Through years of activism, USAS has helped revolutionize global garment production and bring workers' rights to the forefront of licensing deals. Now, the surge of multinational corporations and the increased globalization of production have created a situation in which the manufacturers of many different products are facing the same atrocious conditions, poverty wages, and health and safety violations that plague the global garment industry. Campaigns to demand ethical purchasing policies work to ensure that all products purchased by our educational institutions are manufactured under conditions that respect the basic rights of workers. This includes everything from computers and vending machines to food products and furniture. These campaigns have taken many forms; some USAS affiliates have pressured their administrations to adopt ethical purchasing guidelines (similar to the codes of conduct originally adopted under the Sweat-Free Campus Campaign), while other schools have chosen to target specific companies (such as Coca-Cola in response to violent union busting in Colombia, and Taco Bell due to the egregious violation of the rights of its agricultural workers in Immokalee, Florida). The latter campaigns most often include demanding that schools stop doing business with these abusive employers. USAS students across the country are currently working hard to flush out national and local strategies in order to make this campaign more coordinated and successful.



Resources United Students Against Sweatshops can offer you:

- ★ Materials to do educational events at your school, such as videos, literature, and speakers.
- ★ An organizing manual to help you formulate campaign strategy.
- ★ Connections to labor and community organizations in your area that will be your allies in these campaigns, as well as connections to worker organizations around the world.
- ★ A whole network of students around the country who are running these campaigns and winning! USAS chapters have so much to offer each other in terms of strategy, advice, and student power.
- ★ Assistance from the charming and experienced USAS staff!
- ★ Let us know what else you need!

What schools are currently running ethical purchasing campaigns?

University of California-Berkeley, Berkeley, California

University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan

Hofstra University, Hempstead, NY

DePaul University, Chicago, Illinois

University of Massachusetts-Amherst, Amherst, Massachusetts

Macalester University, St. Paul, MN

Case Study for Ethical Purchasing Code of Conduct

The University of Michigan

Intro

The University of Michigan USAS affiliate, SOLE (Students Organizing for Labor and Economic Equality), was the driving force for the establishment of a Code of Conduct and outlined procedure to deal with the University's non-licensed business relationships and their relationship to workers rights and human rights. SOLE members succeeded in helping develop this Code of Conduct and establishing a committee, on which there are two student seats, to review code violations and make recommendations to the President of the University. The following outlines our campaign and how we intend to make use of these new tools.

How it Began

The campaign started when we were contacted by a union organizer at UNITE! for a Toledo local that represents workers at industrial laundries. She told us about the workers' struggles at Morgan Linen Services with health and safety issues, a union busting manager and CEO, various NLRB violations, and their current stalled contract negotiations. We went down to Toledo a couple times to meet workers and the union organizers and find out more about what was going on and how we could help. The campaign moved from there and we contacted the departments using the laundry service, we contacted many administrators, held demonstrations, signed petitions, wrote to the CEO, appeared at a Regents meeting, signed table cloths, invited two workers to meet with us with the U of M General Counsel and presented him with the table cloths, flyered the buildings using the laundry, held a "wash-in" on the president's lawn, and made a lot of press including an editorial in our school paper. A large problem to all these tactics was that we were pressuring different people each time. We didn't know who was in charge and each time we targeted someone within the University, they claimed that the system was so decentralized and they did not have the power to make any decisions. After countless hours spent in meetings with the Dean of Students, we finally got a letter that said that the University would wait for the business agreements to expire and they would not approve any long term contracts with Morgan Linen. The University would also create a task force to create a code of conduct.

Limitations

This was not exactly what we wanted. We wanted to terminate the agreements. We wanted direct and immediate pressure on Morgan Linen, both financially and publicly in the newspapers. But some of the contracts didn't expire for two years and what little press there was focused on the creation of the task force and establishing a code of ethics towards purchasing. We were also unsure that the University would actually stop doing business with the company because it was very hard for us as students to keep them honest when we had very little access to that information and the people who knew it.

Why it is Useful

But we were still optimistic about the task force, and still are about its progress. The result of the initial task force, being a code of conduct and a body called the dispute review board to deal with possible violations of the code, has the potential to solve some of our earlier problems. First and most important, the dispute review board does have the authority to deal with these issues, so there will be no run-around (or at least less run-around, we are not that optimistic). Also there is potential for the University to act more strongly towards businesses violating the code rather than passively waiting for the agreement terms to run out. Because the vendors all become aware of the code before making any agreement the University has less grounds to be sued, more authority to, and more reason for us to demand terminating an agreement or acting more publicly and assertively. One of the reasons that the University gave for not acting more towards Morgan Linen was because of the "lack of institutional guidelines that address purchasing relationships".

So at least they can't use that one again. And lastly, student input is institutionalized into issues of worker's rights and human rights dealing with business relationships at the University.

Disclaimer

This, of course, is only one small step and is not going to make it all easy and give students a huge voice. But it is just one tool that students can use to leverage their power in the system. It is by NO means an alternative to direct action and other external forms of protest, but is instead a tool for internal pressure. SOLE was just plain lucky in a lot of cases, the director of the task force and almost everyone on it, was committed to making a useful code of conduct and our voices were not drowned out, but rather agreed with. In many cases committees and task forces are used to stifle student voice, and we all should be wary of that, but in our case it was worth the work.

What does the Code of Conduct look like?

The Code is broken up into mandatory and preferential standards. It was originally derived from the WRC code of conduct but is missing parts about banning prison labor and any special mention of women's rights. Included in the primary standards are: nondiscrimination, affirmative action, freedom of association and collective bargaining, labor standards: wages, hours, leaves, and child labor, health and safety, forced labor, and harassment or abuse. The preferential standards include: living wage, international human rights, environmental protection, and foreign law. Both these standards are not in every contract, but are internal University documents that vendors can ask to see and is posted on the U of M purchasing website. The only thing that is in every contract says that "Vendor and vendor's subcontractors shall comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations . . ." and a clause that does allow for termination of agreements because of a violation of the mandatory standards or any other reason that seems legitimate to the University. This clause is called the "at will termination" clause. The preferential standards, however, hold no real weight other than that it can be used to pressure the University or individual departments to switch companies. It is useful in the sense that the University took a stand on these issues, but for either grouping of standards the University will not actually change its actions without pressure from activist groups.

More Limitations

The University is very reluctant to make decisions when the NLRB is deciding on a case, saying that there are already viable institutions to protect workers in this country and the University must allow for due process. Also the code of conduct does not say anything that isn't already in state or federal law. Everything that can be used as a point for termination of a contract is a reiteration of law. This code and procedure is nothing radical, in fact the committee's report says that even if this is the first purchasing code of its kind at any university, it is a very modest and cautious step.

How the code can be used

The Dispute Review Board will hear complaints against vendors, whether there are worker-based or student-based. They will conduct an investigation to the best of their capacity, evaluate and politic, and make a recommendation to the President. We will see if it is at all useful to groups (environmental or labor) who are pressuring the University based on preferential standards like fair trade issues. But we think it can be useful for campaigns like CINTAS or possibly Coke.

Questions

Many USAS'ers raised questions at the workshop we gave at the Atlanta USAS conference about how to ensure that this is a positive thing for student activists. How can we ensure activist students are on the committee? How can we make the investigations effective? How can we make this a popular tool, so that students and workers are aware of it? People responded (in order of the questions asked) that the student government could conduct interviews for the committee, or even better, if the committee was created because of your group- why not have complete ownership of it? Some people suggested the possibility of the WRC performing some of the investigations (they were already asked to investigate CINTAS by a couple schools- is that the best path to take?) Should the WRC then expand to include purchasing made at school districts to include the high

school activism scene and push for codes of conduct at high schools? We need to replicate or expand the WRC instead of teachers and students doing investigations to really make these codes effective and bring to light the violations that our current “due process” and labor law is neglecting. Also students and workers and unions need to be aware of this for it to be utilized and effective. People suggested mailing copies of the code and an explanation to unions and workers. But the more schools that have them, the easier it will be to use them and the more people that will know about them.

More Questions?

Soon (at the start of this school year) this information and more will be on our website at www.umich.edu/~sole

You can reach SOLE at sole.maintain@umich.edu

Or call me Lauren Heidtke at 231 342 4408

In solidarity,

Lauren

Task Force on Purchasing Ethics and Policies**Code of Conduct
for University of Michigan Vendors**

From http://www.umich.edu/pres/committees/tf_code.html

Task Force on Purchasing Ethics and Policies membership>>

Report and Recommendations (March 22, 2004)

General Principles

The University of Michigan has a longstanding commitment to sound, ethical, and socially responsible practices. In aligning its purchasing policies with its core values and practices, the University seeks to recognize and promote basic human rights, appropriate labor standards for employees, and a safe, healthful, and sustainable environment for workers and the general public. Any Agreement between the University and a vendor providing it with goods and services shall contain the following provision:

Compliance with Law. Vendor and vendor's subcontractors shall comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations in providing goods and services under any Agreement with the University. Vendor and vendor's suppliers and subcontractors must further comply with all applicable University rules, regulations, and ordinances when on University premises.

In addition, the University shall make every reasonable effort to contract only with vendors meeting the primary standards prescribed by this Code of Conduct. Vendors are encouraged to provide evidence of their compliance with these standards. The University's Purchasing Services is committed to providing a Total Quality acquisition process to support the members of the University and business communities in the achievement of their respective objectives in education, research, and service, and in business success.

PRIMARY STANDARDS**Nondiscrimination.**

Vendors shall not subject any person to discrimination in employment, including hiring, salary, benefits, advancement, discipline, termination, or retirement, on the basis of race, gender, color, religion, nationality, ethnic or social origin, age, disability, marital status, reproductive or familial situation, Vietnam-era status, height, weight, sexual orientation, or political opinion.

Affirmative Action.

Each vendor shall be an equal employment opportunity employer and during the performance of any Agreement, it will comply, if applicable, with Federal Executive Order 11246, as amended; the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; Public Law 101-507 for the benefit of socially and economically disadvantaged individuals; the respective regulations issued thereunder; and the Michigan Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act of 1976, as amended.

Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining.

Vendors shall recognize and respect the rights of employees to freedom of association and collective bargaining, including, if applicable, the rights set forth in the National Labor Relations Act, as amended; the Michigan Labor Mediation Act, as amended; the Michigan Public Employment Relations Act, as amended; or such other labor relations laws as may be applicable.

Labor Standards: Wages, Hours, Leaves, and Child Labor.

Vendors shall recognize and respect the legal rights of employees concerning minimum and prevailing wages, wage payments, and maximum hours and overtime; legally mandated family, childbirth, and medical leaves and return to work thereafter; and limitations on child labor; including, if applicable, the rights set forth in the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act, the Federal

Davis-Bacon Act, the Federal Family and Medical Leave Act, and any state laws defining such labor standards.

Health and Safety.

Vendors shall provide a safe and healthful working environment to prevent accidents and injury to health, including reproductive health, arising out of, linked with, or occurring in the course of work or resulting from the operation of the vendors' facilities. During the performance of any Agreement, all products, services, use of equipment, working conditions, employee training or licensing requirements, and activities performed by the vendor or the vendor's subcontractors shall be in full compliance, if applicable, with the Federal Occupational Safety and Health Act, the Michigan Occupational Safety and Health Act, and all other applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, regulations, and ordinances, including but not limited to the environmental safety and health requirements set forth in 29 Code of Federal Regulations, 40 CFR, and 49 CFR.

Forced Labor.

Vendors shall not use, or purchase supplies or materials that are produced by using, any illegal form of forced labor.

Harassment or Abuse.

Every employee shall be treated with dignity and respect. No employee shall be subject to any physical, sexual, psychological, or verbal harassment or abuse. Vendors shall not use or tolerate any form of corporal punishment.

PREFERENTIAL STANDARDS

Living Wage.

The University recognizes that maintaining the dignity and meeting the essential needs of employees and their families require a reasonable living wage. Basic needs include food, shelter, clothing, health care, education, and transportation. The University shall strive to do business with vendors that provide a living wage for their employees, which is the net compensation sufficient to meet basic needs. Compensation standards will be adjusted periodically based on experience and increased knowledge concerning local labor markets and living conditions. Vendors are encouraged to provide evidence of their payment of a living wage.

International Human Rights.

Human rights constitute a core value of this institution. The University shall strive to avoid doing business with vendors that substantially contribute to or benefit from systematic violations of well-recognized international human rights and labor standards, such as those set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Environmental Protection.

Safeguarding the environment for the benefit of all peoples now and in the future is a matter of increasing concern in the academic community as well as in society generally. The University shall strive to do business with vendors that show leadership in environmentally responsible practices and production methods and that meet well-established certification standards. Specific factors to be considered include but are not limited to the minimization of waste products, use of post-consumer recycled materials in the production of finished products and the recyclability of finished products, energy efficiency, and the durability, biodegradability, and reparability of the products purchased by the University. Vendors are encouraged to provide evidence of their adherence to such recognized norms of environmental quality.

Foreign Law.

Vendors and vendor's suppliers operating under foreign law shall comply with all foreign laws applicable to the subject matter of this Code insofar as they are consistent with the provisions of this Code. Such vendors or suppliers shall also comply with all provisions of this Code insofar as

they do not violate applicable foreign law. The University shall strive to avoid doing business with vendors that, for whatever reason, do not or cannot comply with the provisions of this Code.

COMPLIANCE PROCEDURES

University-Vendor Partnership.

The ideal University-vendor relationship is in the nature of a partnership, seeking mutually agreeable and important goals. Recognizing our mutual interdependence, it is in the best interest of the University to find a resolution when responding to charges or questions about a vendor's compliance with the provisions of the Code. Such charges shall be brought to the Purchasing Dispute Review Board, consisting of no less than five members, including the Director of Purchasing or designee from Purchasing Services, faculty, and students. No charge or complaint may be filed with the Dispute Review Board except pursuant to a resolution adopted by an organization recognized by the University. The first step would be a gathering of facts relating to the nature of the complaint. All stakeholders with respect to the complaint will be identified. All parties will be interviewed and an assessment will be made as to whether the charge or complaint is valid. Alternative courses of action will be recommended, including no required action, suspension (during this interim period the vendor can correct specific issues and work to comply with the Code), nonrenewal of a contract, or termination of a contract. A failure by the vendor to cooperate with the investigation will also be grounds for similar actions. The recommendations of the Dispute Review Board will be forwarded to the Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer of the University. All efforts will be made to provide a speedy resolution of any disputes. In addition, confidential and proprietary business information will be respected throughout the dispute resolution process.

Case Study for the Lake Forest USAS Coke Campaign

Context for the Campaign: As you are all aware, because of Coca-Cola's union busting tactics, serious violations of human rights at their facilities in Colombia, and their refusal to protect their workers, there was an official call for a boycott of Coca-Cola and all its services from SINALTRAINAL (Colombian Food and Drinks Workers' Union). There has been a tremendous amount of support from college campuses and at least one high school campus that are working to cut contracts with Coca-Cola until they change their labor practices and protect their workers.

Background of campus group: Lake Forest College is a small, private, liberal arts college north of Chicago. The Lake Forest USAS affiliate was established in the fall of 2002. At the time of our campaign (Spring 2003), LFUSAS had about ten active members, and over thirty students on its mailing list.

Current Status: Victory! Our food service provider cut its contract and no longer serves Coca-Cola products in the cafeteria or in any other facility on campus.

Coalition Strategy: The League of Environmental Awareness and Protection (LEAP: the school environmental group) was our main ally. While trying to raise awareness and support for the campaign we also did outreach to Amnesty International and Latinos Unidos.

Opponents: Conservative students who tend to identify as the College Republicans and also tend to oppose much of LFUSAS' efforts. They wrote letters to the editor announcing their objection to the change and talked about holding a forum as well as petitioning to bring Coke back on campus. Fortunately, they're all talk and no action.

Target: Our primary target was the school cafeteria (Aramark) manager, Bill.

Tactics, Timeline, & Coalition Strategy: In 2002 (late Fall semester), LFUSAS brought Colombian trade unionist and former Coca-Cola worker Louis Adolfo Cardona to speak on campus through the Colombia Action Network. Prior to his coming, LFUSAS posted fliers and tabled outside of the cafeteria and invited other campus student groups, such as LEAP, Amnesty International and Latinos Unidos to attend Cardona's talk. The Stentor, the school newspaper, was informed of Cardona's visit to get media coverage.

Louis Cardona's talk about Coca-Cola's grievous human rights abuses motivated people to take action. Immediately afterwards, a student leader of LEAP put caution tape over the Coca-Cola dispensers in the cafeteria and an article appeared in the school paper about Louis Cardona and the Coca-Cola campaign.

Second semester (Spring 2003), a committee of six LFUSAS students was created to gather information about the Coca-Cola campaign, build ties with other groups who expressed interest in the campaign (LEAP), and work closely with the administration and Aramark to kick Coke off our campus. The posting of fliers, newspaper articles and general discussion of Lake Forest College ending its contract with Coke continued until the cafeteria manager approached two members of LFUSAS. He told them that Aramark would conduct a survey of the student body, and if the student body favored the change from Coke, then the contract would be cut and Pepsi would be served the following school year. The student body favored kicking Coke off campus and by the beginning of the 2003/2004 school year the cafeteria was providing Pepsi.

Things that were helpful to the campaign: Having more than just one student group on board for this campaign was extremely helpful. Louis Cardona's talk was also a primary motivator for this campaign, and LFUSAS strongly urges students who are trying to get Coke off campus to invite him to come and speak.

Building for the long haul: LFUSAS should have been prepared to offer a better alternative than Pepsi to replace Coke. We should also have prepared the student body for the change during the upcoming year. The next school year the returning student body was extremely disgruntled with all the changes that had taken place, because Starbucks was also replaced with a Fair Trade coffee vendor. We quickly moved into action with fliers explaining the changes and urged

students/friends/allies who were not actively in LFUSAS to write letters to the editor supporting the changes.

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Boot the Bell Campaign

University of Chicago Case Study

Ella Hereth

Background

The Anti-Sweatshop Coalition (ASC) (USAS affiliate) at the University of Chicago had existed for about 3 years when we began the Boot the Bell campaign. The U of C is a traditionally conservative or apathetic campus that is the home of a legendary neo-classical economics department. We are not a member of the Workers Rights Consortium. We have faced considerable road blocks to progressive organizing in the past. ASC had a few small victories (like getting the medical school to cut a contract with a striking laundry), but for the most part we were focussing on building the group, on growing membership and doing education. We were a young group. Most of our members and leaders were first or second years. We had about 15 core people and a mailing list of 200 or so.

The Beginning

We kicked off the campaign on the Student Labor Day of Action which is April 4th, 2002. We had brought Romeo from the CIW and Brian Payne to campus a few months before. On April 4th 1968, Martin Luther King Jr. was killed in Memphis, Tennessee organizing sanitation workers. King was in Memphis building for what he called the Poor People's Campaign which was aimed at connecting civil rights to economic justice. Students across the country celebrate King's legacy by standing in solidarity with workers. We tabled all day long in front of the Taco Bell and did street theatre in the dining area where people usually ate their food from Taco Bell. We also hand delivered tomatoes with notes attached to them to all of our administrators. The notes talked about how it was the anniversary of Martin Luther King's death and to honor him, we should pay attention to the conditions farmworkers in Florida were facing picking our tomatoes today. The notes also asked for a meeting with members of the Anti-Sweatshop Coalition and the administrators responsible for the contract with Taco Bell. Administrators responded to our notes very quickly and set up a meeting almost immediately.

Meeting with Administrators

It's relatively easy to get meetings with administrators on our campus. We have relationships with some of the deans. We began meeting with administrators almost immediately in our campaign. In general, administrators at the UofC don't mind meeting with students. I think they like the students to think that they are getting close to winning. It's easy to get meetings, but it's hard to force administrators to act. The administrators we were meeting with were the Dean of students in the college and the Dean of Housing and the administrator of the Reynold's Club which is the student center that Taco Bell was in. We devoted the first meetings to getting answers from the administrators about what they wanted to see us do to kick Taco Bell off campus. In retrospect, we should have documented what they were telling us. The hardest aspect of our campaign was getting the administrators to hold true to their promises. We should have figured out a way to document these meetings...whether it was via tape recorder or having a campus reporter present at every meeting. At a public symposium this year, the administrators admitted that they made mistakes during the campaign (read lied to students). Even without documenting it, it was useful for us to get a list of things from the administration that we needed to do to get Taco Bell off of campus. Here are some of the things they told us to do:

- ★ Get an endorsing resolution from the Inter House Council (represents students in dorms that have meal plans that can be used at Taco Bell) (we did this)
- ★ Editorials in campus newspapers (we did this too!)
- ★ An open-community forum where folks can voice support or opposition (also this)
- ★ Have the Taco Bell Boycott become a part of campus dialogue. (and this)

- ★ Get endorsements from large student organizations. (and most importantly, this.)

They told us that affecting the sales of the Taco Bell would be useless. They also told us that the Calvin Report did not apply (the Calvin Report is a University of Chicago document that states that the University will not take political stances in business negotiations). The Calvin Report was written to justify not taking a stance during the Vietnam War and has been used to justify not divesting from South Africa during Apartheid and not joining the Worker's Rights Consortium. In general, it has been used as a way to block the campaigns of student activists and not as a model or code of conduct.

Center of National Campaign

At a Taco Bell Boycott meeting in Washington DC during the April 20th 2002 mobilization, we, CIW representatives and student and community activists decided to make the University of Chicago the center of the national student campaign, "Boot the Bell." I think that we have to acknowledge that our victory came so quickly because of the work that Maribel and Sebastian from the Mexico Solidarity Network and Brian and Julia from the Student Farmworker Alliance did to support our campaign. Many thanks.

Here are some highlights of our campaign:

Coalition Building

We kicked off our Taco Bell Boycott Campaign at an important time in the history of University of Chicago activism. Progressive student groups were beginning meetings with cultural student groups and people of color organizations about building progressive student coalitions and solidarity. It was an exciting moment. We were all talking a lot. We were talking about taking over the student government, about challenging the Calvin Report. Progressive faculty were meeting to talk about challenging the Calvin Report (initially passed by the faculty senate so they thought they had some power there.) Rank and file worker movements in the hospital were gaining strength and a radical edge. It was exciting times. We ran a progressive student of color slate for student government and they won. They endorsed the Taco Bell campaign. We worked closely with the Organization of Black Students and MEChA on the campaign. We got endorsements from most of the cultural student organizations (especially the big ones, the Organization of Black Students and the Organization of Latin American Students.) We got endorsements from all of the progressive student organizations, from academic organizations like the Debate Team. I think that we helped to begin to build solidarity and power in these organizations. The effects lasted. Traditionally white student organizations (like USAS) began talking about intentional anti-racism work. We had discussions about gender roles and homophobia. Important steps in sustainable organization building began to happen. We also worked with the organized labor on the campus. We got workers on campus and in the hospital to put up our fliers and to endorse our boycott.

High-Profile Events

Methodman came to the University of Chicago in the middle of our campaign. We were able to use friends and allies we had within the Major Activities Planning Board to slip him a press packet about the Taco Bell Boycott. He talked about the boycott from stage and said that he supported it. We also used other high profile campus events to attract attention. We also have this weird UofC thing that happens every spring called the scavenger hunt. Students living in housing form teams that are given a weird and bizarre list of things they need to do or find. Again the Taco Bell Boycott infiltrates UofC institutions. Many of the items on the list were related to the boycott. One item was to get the Taco Bell kicked off campus.

Community Forum

We had the community forum. 250 students, professors and allies came to voice support. Representatives from endorsing organizations gave statements of solidarity. It was beautiful. To stand there and watch representative after representative, from cultural organizations, from academic organizations, Graduate student organizations, campus unions, environmental organizations, feminist organizations, religious organizations, all echoing support for the campaign. 250 people voiced support. One person came to speak out against the boycott.

Table Tents

We used table tents in the dining area beside Taco Bell. These are so easy and simple, but I think they were really effective. Imagine eating your taco bell tomatoes while you read about slavery in the fields. Not so pleasant anymore.

Community Support

We had a huge amount of support from the surrounding community. We had a long list of endorsing community organizations and they turned out to our events. They also helped us with press work and publicity. We specifically worked to get support from the neighborhood our university is in. The University of Chicago has a legacy for bad community relations. They are working really hard to turn that legacy around right now. They don't like to look bad to the community. They get really nervous about it. Though they kept telling us that this community support didn't make a difference, I know that it scared them.

There are many more ideas. We have a packet of information including material we wrote and used (much of the information is included in this Boot the Bell kit).

Set Back and Come Back

At the end of the 2002 school year, administrators said that even though we had met their list of demands, they would not consider removing Taco Bell. Contrary to what they originally told us, they said that we needed to affect sales and that the Kalvin Report applied. We were a little put back for a while, some of us had taken incompletes or dropped classes just to work on the campaign. We decided that we would just keep fighting and try to come back strong in the fall. We were confident that we would win eventually. We began the school year in late September 2002. We planned a teach-in with a worker from Immokalee at the very beginning of the year. We needed to figure out a way to try to hold the administration accountable to the promises they had made and broken in the spring of 2002. We planned a spirited Halloween march across campus on Halloween (some people credit Nicole's tomato costume as the real source of our victory) and we hand-delivered open letters to the administration. We were planning on publishing these letters in the campus newspapers and posting them all over campus if the administration did not address our concerns. We had a meeting the week after that. At that meeting the administration announced their plans to remove Taco Bell and to set up a student committee to choose a replacement vendor. The Anti-Sweatshop Coalition would have two seats on the committee, student government would have two, and two would be chosen from other student organizations.

Hunger Fast

Though it was after our victory, we planned a 24 hour hunger fast in solidarity with the hunger strike. 35 students fasted for twenty four hours in front of the Taco Bell on campus while we tabled about the hunger strike that was happening on the steps of the Taco Bell Headquarters in Irvine.

Victory!

We didn't expect to win so soon. We have never really had a student victory like this on our campus as far as I know. We expected to need to escalate. I remember, I couldn't go to the meeting with the administration where they told us we won, but Nicole called me right afterwards and left a message on my phone. She was so excited I couldn't even understand her. People didn't believe us when we tried to tell them. In my three years at the UofC, I've seen the student body in the college become way more progressive and politically aware. I've seen progressive coalitions form with students of color. I've seen traditionally white groups stop and analyze their racism. It's exciting. I don't really know why, exactly, except that maybe this national student movement thing is taking off and maybe we should take this a sign that we are winning. Keep up the fight!

Section Six: Building Alliances through Anti-Oppression

Alliance Building Committee Mission Statement

The Alliance Building Committee strives to help USAS avoid falling into the patterns of privilege through caucuses; to ensure that caucuses are given adequate time and space to be heard as empowered national bodies, to meet at national and regional USAS conferences and to meet independently during the school year to develop an agenda; to ensure they are empowered to influence USAS' program and the way the program is implemented.

The Alliance Building Committee strives to ensure representation of all the students in USAS in the Coordinating Committee, as Regional Organizers, in committees of the Coordinating Committee, in leadership roles nationally and regionally and at national and regional gatherings; to make these spaces as accessible and safe as possible for all students.

The Alliance Building Committee strives to educate the students of USAS about the caucus structure, the ways in which caucuses function, and why they are necessary; to collect and distribute literature on racism, sexism, heterosexism, classism and being an ally; to incorporate this education into USAS' program.

The Alliance Building Committee seeks to build alliances with other organizations fighting racism, sexism, heterosexism and classism; to support and encourage individual caucuses to work in coalition with other organizations with a shared mission.

USAS Anti-Oppression Definitions

This glossary is a work in progress, compiled from many sources (see end of document). It is intended to help make some commonly used language clearer and more accessible, and not everyone in USAS agrees or has to agree with them. These concepts are complex so these definitions only begin to raise some of the issues that come up when we organize – hopefully they will be helpful rather than limiting. This is a tool to be used alongside other forms of education and action because we understand that definitions alone do not constitute anti-oppressive organizing. Please send comments and feedback about to organize@usasnet.org.

Oppression: Oppression = prejudice + power. Oppression is the acts and effects of domination, including ideological domination and institutional control. In the US there are many forms of often interlocking systems of oppression: racism, imperialism, patriarchy, heterosexism, ageism, ableism, etc. These are interlocking societal, economic, moral, and religious values that keep many groups of people down to ensure the power and advantage of a few groups or one group of people.

Prejudice: A set of negative personal beliefs about a social group that leads individuals to prejudge people from that group or the group in general, regardless of individual differences among members of that target group.

Power: “Power” is a relational term. It is a relationship between human beings in a specific historical, economic, and social setting. It must be exercised to be visible. Power usually implies access to systems, groups, and individuals which own and control the resources of the state. Sometimes defined as “the capacity to make and enforce decisions.” Power can also be defined as individuals or groups’ “creative capacity to act.” (From CWS Workshop)

Privilege: Situations where one group has advantages that others do not receive based on their membership in a societal group. Also, a right, advantage, or immunity granted to or enjoyed by one societal group above and beyond the common advantage of all other groups. Privilege is often invisible to those who have it.

Ally: A person who actively works to eliminate the oppression and marginalization of people within an identity group of which they do not self-identify. This includes educating oneself and others, providing support to individuals, and challenging oppressive remarks, behaviors, policies, and institutional structures.

Collusion: Thinking and acting in ways which support systems of oppression. Using racism as an example, both white people and people of color can collude with racism through their attitudes, beliefs, and actions. Based on the concept that working against oppression must be active whereas supporting systems of oppression can be “active” or “passive,” just as privilege can be visible or invisible.

Multiple Identities: The concept that a person's identity does not rest on solely one factor, e.g., sexual preference, race, gender, etc. Hence, no single element of one's identity is necessarily supreme, although certain identities can take precedence over others at certain times. (From SOA-Watch)

In Alphabetical Order:

Ableism: Discrimination and oppression against people who have mental, emotional, and physical dis/abilities. Deeply rooted in the belief that people whose physical, emotional, cognitive, or sensory abilities fall outside the scope of what is currently defined as socially acceptable cannot be productive members of society. Gives power and privilege to temporarily-able-bodied people.

Ageism: The pervasive oppression of people based on their age – privileges middle-aged adults at the expense of youth and seniors. Discrimination comes from the societal myth that older and younger people cannot perform certain cognitive or affective standards in the same way simply because they are younger or older.

Assigned Sex: The sex (female, male) assigned at birth based on the appearance of genitalia.

Capitalism: An economic and social system that creates mass poverty by taking away resources from many people (often people in groups kept down by other systems as well) and concentrating them in the hands of a few people. This system grants power to those who own the resources, while punishing those who don't.

Class: Class is an artificially constructed classification of people due to their real or perceived economic and/or social status and/or background. Factors that influence class can include income, economic background, education, geographic location, and cultural factors.

Classism: Personal and institutional discrimination against people because of their real or perceived economic status or background. Puts power and privilege in the hands of middle class and economically wealthy people at the expense of working class and poor people; places higher value on particular art forms, educational systems, etc. that come from and benefit the upper classes.

Gender Binary: A system of oppression that requires everyone to be raised either male or female, and masculine or feminine. Privileges males and masculinity over females and femininity. Eliminates the possibility for other gender expressions, and gives power to people whose genders do not break gender norms at the expense of transgender and intersex people.

Gender Expression: The way one presents themselves to the world, as either masculine or feminine, or both or neither.

Gender Identity: How a person thinks about themselves in terms of gender, as opposed to what others observe or think about them. This can include identifying with masculinity, femininity, both, or neither. Gender identity is also often conflated with sexual orientation, but this is inaccurate. Gender identity does not cause sexual orientation – for example, a masculine woman is not necessarily a lesbian. Gender identity can also change over time.

Gender Oppression: Oppression of women and transgender people because of the gender binary system, gender roles and norms. Privileges non-trans men, people who appear to be men, and people raised as men. Sexism and transphobia are two forms of gender oppression.

Gender Roles: Cultural norms dictating how “men” and “women” are supposed to behave and look in a society. Expects people to have certain personality characteristics, act, and dress a certain way based on their assigned sex. Labels these behaviors as either masculine or feminine.

Gender: Gender refers to what a society deems “masculine” or “feminine.” Gender identity refers to an individual’s self-identification as a man, woman, transgender person, or other identity. Gender is socially and culturally produced/constructed, as opposed to being fixed, static, and coherent.

Genderqueer: A person who redefines or plays with gender norms, or who refuses the gender binary altogether. A label for people who bend/break the rules of gender and blur the boundaries.

Gender-variant: Displaying gender traits that are not normatively associated with one’s assigned sex. “Feminine” behavior or appearance in a male is gender-variant as is “masculine” behavior or appearance a female.

Heterosexism: A system of oppression that gives power to straight people at the expense of queer people, by saying that heterosexuality is the only form of healthy sexual expression. Includes societal, cultural, institutional, and individual beliefs and practices that assume that heterosexuality is the only natural, normal, and acceptable sexual orientation. Can manifest itself as homophobia.

Homophobia: The fear, hatred, or intolerance of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer people or of any behavior that is outside of the boundaries of “traditional” heterosexual roles and relationships. This can range from fear of association with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer people, to telling jokes about LGBTQ people, to physical violence against people thought to be LGBTQ.

Intersex: Intersexuality is a set of medical conditions that feature congenital “anomaly of the reproductive and sexual system.” That is, intersex people are born with “sex chromosomes,” external genitalia, and/or internal reproductive systems that are not considered “standard” for either male or female. (Gathered from The Intersex Society of North America, www.isna.org)

MTF/FTM or M2F/F2M: Terms for gender identity, gender presentation, and/or sex of Male-to-Female and Female-to-Male transgender or transsexual people.

Queer: A reclaimed word from the derogatory context meaning “strange” or “peculiar.” Usually used in two different ways: 1. As an umbrella term for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and other people who are marginalized on the basis of sexual orientation. 2. As a political identity, to self-identify with a radical politics of sexuality, including but not limited to LGBT identities.

Race: A specious classification of human beings created by Europeans (whites) which assigns human worth and social status using ‘white’ as the model of humanity for the purpose of establishing and maintaining racism, power, and privilege. Thus, race is socially constructed but has real impacts on people’s everyday lives.

Racism: Racism = Race prejudice + Power. The systematic, unfair distribution of power and opportunity in the hands of ‘white people’ at the expense of ‘people of color’ and multiethnic people. Occurs through institutionalized practices, policies, and procedures as well as cultural norms, values, and expectations. Manifestations of racism range from denial of opportunities to extreme physical violence.

Religious oppression: The oppression of individuals and groups based on their religious beliefs or culture. Power is in the hands of Christians and Christian customs and traditions are normalized and ingrained in many aspects of society (e.g. swearing on the Bible in court).

Sexism: Sexism = power + prejudice against women and people perceived as female. Within the gender binary system, sexism refers to the oppression of women by men in a patriarchal society.

Tokenizing: The action of making a member of a marginalized and/or oppressed group a spokesperson for that entire group, usually for the benefit of a larger, more privileged group.

Transgender: Transgender is an umbrella term for people whose gender identity differs from the social expectations for the sex they were assigned at birth. Depending on who you ask, this may or may not include genderqueer people, transsexual people, genderfuck people, crossdressers, non-gendered people, bi-gendered people, gender-variant people, passing women, passing men, drag queens/kings, and people who identify as neither female nor male or as neither a man nor a woman. It is important to acknowledge that while some people may fit under this definition of transgender, they may not identify as such. Transgender is not a sexual orientation.

Transphobia: Discrimination, fear or hatred of people who blur traditional gender lines that results from the gender binary system. Often comes from non-trans-identified people’s own insecurity about being a “real man,” or a “real woman.”

Transsexual: Refers to a person who lives, plans to live, or desires to live as the gender opposite the one assigned to them at birth. Transsexuals sometimes undergo medical treatment to change their assigned sex to match their sex identity through hormone treatments and/or surgically. Not all transsexual people are able to have, can afford to have, or desire to have surgery.

More Resources:

“Non-ruling class white people in the U.S. are both oppressed and privileged. They are oppressed most significantly on the basis of class, gender, and sexual orientation and also on the basis of religion, culture, ethnicity, age, physical abilities, and political expression. At the same time they are all privileged in relation to peoples of color.” – Challenging White Supremacy Workshop

“Never use the prefixes “bio” or “genetic” to differentiate between people who are trans and people who are not trans. For example, never say “I know a girl, she is a bio-female” or “I know this guy, he is a genetic male”. Instead say, “I know a non-trans girl” or “I know a non-trans guy”. We use the term “non-trans” because as trans people we are

“bio”logical and we are genetic; insinuating otherwise takes away from our rights as humans.” – strap-on.org

“Never uses the phrase “female bodied” or “male bodied” to point out that someone is trans. Don’t talk about people’s bodies unless you have their permission. Whether someone is “female” or “male” is something that only that person has the right to discuss. Feel free to call yourself “male bodied” or “female bodied” if you want to. If you are talking about someone else and you want to say that they were labeled female or male at birth and have since then come to identify as a different sex, just say “female assigned” or “male assigned”.” – strap-on.org

School of the Americas Watch Anti-Oppression Working Group has a long list of definitions: www.soaw.org/new/article.php?id=629.

Sources: The People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond; United States Student Association; School of the Americas Watch Anti-Oppression Working Group; Challenging White Supremacy Workshop; RESYST; Oberlin College Multicultural Resource Center; and USAS members.

The USAS Guide to Caucuses:

Why we have them, What they do.

Sexism, racism, heterosexism, and classism are all realities in our society and elsewhere. We cannot deny that certain groups of people lack the power and privileges that other groups benefit from every day. In order to create a sustainable, real movement against economic oppression, whether in sweatshops abroad or unjust labor practices here, it is our responsibility to examine how all forms of oppression are interconnected and how they work with and in economics, society, and our own organization to further exploitation and oppression. This guide will explain, in part, how USAS addresses these issues.

Historically, the leadership of the mainstream social justice movement—including USAS—has tended to be mostly white, mostly male, and mostly people of affluence, which leaves out some of the groups of people most affected by economic injustice, like communities of color. Racism, sexism, classism, and heterosexism (among other forms of oppression) pose a threat to the work of USAS just as the pose a threat to justice everywhere. Oppression separates us and prevents certain people's voices from being heard. As part of our commitment to uprooting injustices, USAS incorporates Caucuses and Allies into its structure.

What is a Caucus?

USAS defines a caucus as a space to address the oppression of minority and marginalized groups within society and often even within social movements. Simply put, a caucus is a safe space for people facing different forms of identity-based oppression—sexism, racism, heterosexism, or classism—to meet and discuss how this oppression affects them both within and outside of USAS. Membership in a caucus is self-defined. No one should feel the need to prove their identity; however, it is important that everyone respects the need for marginalized groups of people to have safe spaces. As difficult as it may seem, this means that if you are white, you should not join the People of Color Caucus even if you believe in color-blindness and celebrating diversity. You should respect the right of people of color — or womyn/genderqueer, queer, and working class folks — within USAS to create their own safe space.

On the national level, USAS has four Caucuses: the Womyn/Genderqueer Caucus, the People of Color Caucus, the Queer Caucus, and the Working Class Caucus. Each caucus elects a representative to the Coordinating Committee (the student leadership/decision making body) who is accountable to the caucus.

Caucuses have scheduled meetings at national gatherings and regional conferences. All information shared in a Caucus meeting is private, unless its members agree to share it with the larger group. The group should decide by consensus on what to report back during a unity meeting (meeting of the allies and caucus), though individuals should feel free to share their own contributions.

What is an Ally or Allie's meeting?

Central to fighting all forms of oppression is recognizing that they aren't just issues for oppressed peoples to fight. Think about it: would it be possible to end racism if white people weren't involved in the struggle and challenging other white people to do the same? Wouldn't it be pretty hard to end classism if only the poorest folks were fighting? For this reason, USAS has Allies' Meetings that correspond to each of its caucuses. The purpose of an allies' meeting for its members to discuss the role that they play in both ending oppression and perpetuating it. The allies meet in relation to each caucus, and are open. This means that a person of color is welcome to attend an allies' meeting, while a white person is not welcome in the safe space of a caucus.

Like caucuses, all information shared in an ally's meeting is private, unless members agree to share it. The group should decide whether to report their discussion back to the large group, but individuals, of course, can share their own contributions at will. Allies are as important as

caucuses in terms of fighting oppression. It is important that allies take themselves seriously and not treat their meetings as optional or as an opportunity to socialize and relax.

What are we supposed to talk about, anyway?

Though we need to recognize the role that oppression plays in our society as a whole, an important purpose of USAS's caucuses and allies is to explore how oppression works within our organization. This may include blatant forms of oppression like hate crimes, rape, and racist language, or more subtle (yet more pervasive) forms, such as meeting dynamics, leadership, representation, misuse of power, and so-forth. In most cases, the Coordinating Committee representative to the caucus will facilitate a discussion and training and a corresponding discussion will be facilitated for the allies.

Caucus and allies meetings can focus on other things, too. Members could decide to meet and talk about a campaign they want USAS to endorse or a project that they would like to undertake. They may design presentations or information to make available to other members of USAS. In the spring of 2003, members of the Womyn/Genderqueer Caucus meet to discuss its mission and define itself. The structure, scope, and agenda of caucuses and allies are ultimately decided by the USASers who are part of these groups.

If we're supposed to end oppression together, why are we meeting separately?

Though it is very important for everyone to fight oppression, oppressed groups of people need to have a space to discuss issues that they may not feel comfortable sharing with the whole group and to organize around issues that affect them the most. Often, it is best if there is a safe space in which they can talk about these things with people who share their experiences.

It is important for the caucuses and allies to have a discussion after they meet separately. Often, there are issues that need to be brought to the attention of the whole group. These group discussions may also be a useful place to discuss concrete action for combating oppression. At national gatherings, there is a unity meeting where we can all report back and discuss the issues raised all together. The talk shouldn't end there, however. We need to incorporate what we realize in our separate meetings into our strategy sessions, our workshops and our discussions over lunch. Oppression doesn't end with meeting; we need to continue the work.

So, do Caucuses and actually do anything but talk?

It is up to the caucus or allies to answer that question, and hopefully the answer will be YES! Caucuses and allies' meetings are a space for action, not just reaction!

One of the most critical functions of Caucuses is insuring that members of the caucus are represented in USAS's regional, national, and grassroots leadership. Each caucus has an accountable leader on the coordinating committee, but representation shouldn't end there. All caucus members are encouraged to take active roles in USAS leadership; apply to be an RO, get involved with national committees, or run for the CC

Members of caucuses and their allies also make really important changes together. Recently, USASers from the Alliance Building Committee the job of drafting a statement in support of Affirmative Action and took action to support the DREAM Act to support immigrant students.

Could my local group organize Caucuses and Allies too?

Sure! Caucuses shouldn't just happen at national gatherings. These identity groups are formed when members decide that it is necessary to start them, and when the rest of USAS makes them feel empowered enough to do so. If you would like to see your local group start Caucuses, we'd be happy to help you with advice, materials, and resources. Just contact USAS's National Office to request materials or to get in touch with people that can help you out.

Starting caucuses and allies in your local group is no simple task. It's important that everyone in the group understands the importance of fighting oppression and how that connects to ecological

issues before you decide to hold caucus and allies' meetings. People may be opposed to the idea of caucuses. After all, confronting oppression isn't always fun or comfortable. The important thing to remember is to be patient and stay dedicated. Challenge people to see the effects of oppression on their own lives and on the lives of others.

What about other issues of oppression? Why aren't there caucuses to address them?

USAS recognizes that oppression doesn't end with race, gender, sexuality, and class. While it can be difficult to create Caucuses and Allies based on less blatant forms of oppression, it isn't out of the question. The most important ingredient needed to start something like this is YOU! If you are interested in working to address other issues of oppression, contact USAS's Coordinating Committee or Alliance Building committee. There may be a caucus that incorporates the particular oppression that you wish to address, or there may be a need for a new caucus.

How do I get involved with USAS's Caucuses and Allies?

Glad you asked! If you are interested in taking an active role in USAS's Womyn/Genderqueer Caucus, People of Color Caucus, Queer Caucus, Working Class Caucus, or their allies, please get on the caucus' listserv, or contact the coordinating committee member representative (the most recent info can be found on our website). They'd be happy to help you! USAS's caucuses and allies are always in need of strong leadership. So, if you are committed to working for a more just society, take action! Work to make USAS's Caucus structure reflect this vision.

Is that the end?

Hope this explains things. If you have any questions or would like help in starting your own Caucuses, contact USAS staff and student leadership at organize@usasnet.org, 202-NOSWEAT, visit www.studentsagainstsweatshops.org or send some old fashioned mail to the national office in DC:

1150 17th St. NW Suite 300
Washington, D.C. 20036

(much borrowed from SEAC: <http://www.seac.org/about/caucus.shtml> Thanks, SEAC)

Privilege

by an anonymous author

Privilege is simple:

going for a pleasant stroll after dark,
 not checking the back of your car as you get in, sleeping soundly,
 speaking without interruption, and not remembering
 dreams of rape that follow you all day, that wake you up crying, and
 privilege is not seeing your stripped, humiliated body
 plastered in celebration across every magazine rack,
 privilege is going to the movies and
 not seeing yourself terrorized, defamed, battered, butchered
 seeing something else

Privilege is

riding your bicycle through town without being screamed at or run off the road,
 not needing an abortion,
 taking off your shirt on a hot day in a crowd,
 not wishing you could type better just in case – not shaving your legs,
 having a good job and expecting to keep it,
 not feeling the boss's hand up your crotch,
 dozing off on late-night buses,
 privilege is being the hero in the T.V. show, not the dumb broad,
 living where your genitals are totemized not denied,
 knowing your doctor won't rape you
 privilege is being
 smiled at all day by nice, helpful women, it is
 the way you pass judgement on their appearance with magisterial authority,
 the way you face a judge of your own sex in court and
 are overrepresented in Congress and are not assaulted by the police
 or used as a dart board by your friendly mechanic, privilege
 is seeing your bearded face echo through the history texts
 not only of your high school days but all your life, not being relegated to a paragraph every other
 chapter the way you occupy entire poetry books and more than your share of the couch
 unchallenged,
 it is your mouthing smug, atrocious insults at women
 who blink and change the subject -- politely –
 privilege is how seldom the rapist's name appears in the paper
 and the way you smirk over your Playboy

it's simple really, privilege
means someone else's pain, your wealth
is my terror, your uniform
is a woman raped to death here or in Cambodia or wherever
wherever your obscene privilege
writes your name in my blood, it's that simple,
you've always had it, that's why it doesn't
seem to make you sick at the stomach,
you have it, we pay for it,
do you understand?

Racist Activism 101

[or "How to be a Completely Clueless and Aggravating White Activist", or again "How to Get on Nadine's Personal Shit List"]

This article was originally written for the Concordia Student Union Handbook by Nadine

DISCLAIMER: This is far, far FAR from being an exhaustive checklist. Sure, this is my opinion and mine only, but run it by your comrades of colour [I'm sure you've got tons of 'em] and chances are...

Anyhow. Moving on the to the main topic.

Tactic #1: Learn (and talk) as much as you can about issues affecting a few choice people of colour: Mumia is a good place to start. Quote Che Guevera if you can, and drop references to the Black Panthers in every other sentence. But, UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCE WHATSOEVER shall you:

- ★ learn about the histories of local communities of colour;
- ★ challenge racism in your activist group;
- ★ work with local activists of colour who aren't directly in your group. If you do, make sure that they're invited into an already set activity, where you've already made all important decisions and arrangements. We can't forget who's boss!

Tactic #2: Tell me about your trip to Costa Rica / Ghana / Pakistan where you dug a well / taught English / started a revolution. Tell me how backwards the patriarchal system is there, how the cops there are just so undemocratic, and how astounded you were that the people just accepted this shit. Change the story if you went to Chiapas: those Zapatistas!!!

Tactic #3: Show me how much you appreciate my culture by sporting dreads and stitching patches of Angela Davis onto your clothes. Rebel against Christianity by learning "voodoo" [books will do], and better yet: explain to me exactly how alienated I am because I still keep my "slave name". If the primitive pagan/animistic don't do it for you, try Asian spirituality.

Tactic #4: Try doing this as often as possible (simulated conversation):

Me: "Hi, I'm Nadine."

You: "Oh, I know you. We've already met."

Me: "Uh, I don't think so."

You: "Yeah, we met at Josh's place, at the potluck last week. He introduced us."

Me: "I don't know anyone named Josh, and I was in Haiti last week." You: "Oh, I could have sworn it was you."

You know why you could have sworn it was me? Cuz: we all still look alike to you. Admit it. At least to yourself, if not to me.

Tactic #5: Prove your own lack of racism by explaining how you were raised to believe everyone is equal and therefore you can't be racist. Cement the argument by counting off the number of multicultural endeavors you've embarked on (including the "Reclaim the Streets" fair where people were invited to come in native garb).

Tactic #6: Be really surprised when I tell you I plan to leave Canada and live in a nice Third World country wracked with civil strife, violent crime and 75% rate of unemployment. Wonder why someone would want to leave this racist, capitalistic and consumerist holy land.

I'm kinda bitter. You might even call me a [gasp!] reverse racist. But lemme quote Lonnae O'Neal Parker: "I believe white folks would know if blacks were ever to really reverse racism."

ten ways to tokenize or alienate a non-white person around you

(or, ten examples of the racism we witness on a regular basis)

by basil and billie--with a little help from our friends.

- 1- walk up to that black girl you barely know in the co-op and say "what do you think of the new (insert hip-hop artist here) album."
- 2- ask one of the only arabs in your community to write the article for your newspaper on the situation in palestine.
 - 2a- then, after they write it, take their research, re-write the article and sign your name to it.
- 3- in a big group of many activists, say "how can we bring more people of color into our struggle."
- 4- in a big group of many activists, say "black people don't have the time to care about trees".
- 5- go up to the Makah woman at the unlearning racism workshop and say "I saw a program about Crazy Horse on PBS, he did alot for your people."
- 6- act like the only people of non-white ancestry in your community are the ones visible to you. 6a- assume that light skinned people around you are white without ever knowing their ancestry.
 - 7- talk about race as if the only groups are black and white.
 - 7a- talk about race as if the only groups are black, white and hispanic.
 - 7b- talk about race as if the only groups are black, white, hispanic and asian.
 - 7c- talk about race as if the only groups are black, white, hispanic, asian and native american.
- 8- picture a violent, irrational arab every time the word "terrorist" is mentioned. ignore the arabs who do not fit into this stereotype.
- 9- look to a non-white person in the room every time racism is brought up.
 - 9a- make sure they have the last and most defining word on the subject.
 - 9b- sympathetically and silently agree with everything they say.
 - 9c- thank them profusely.
- 10- fearfully avoid assertive non-white people in your community.

Strategies for Being an Effective Ally

1. Assume that other people in your group also want to be allies to people in oppressed groups. You are not the exception to the rule. Assume you will always have something to learn on how to be a more effective ally. Have confidence in your ability to be an effective ally and to help others be more effective as well.
2. Assume you have the perfect right to be concerned with other people's liberation issues, and that it is in your interest to do so and to be an ally.
3. As students in higher education we all have some measure of privilege in this society, and as such we have the ability to be allies to non-privileged groups. Think about the privileged groups you belong to, recognize privilege where you have it.
4. Recognize that membership in an oppressed group(s) does not absolve you of the responsibility of being an ally to members of an oppressed group to which you do not belong.
5. Assume that people in the oppressed group want you and members of your group as allies but that their experience of oppression, and previous experiences with members of your group, may make them reluctant to accept you as such. Recognize that considering the history of mistreatment and mistrust between some groups, often actions speak louder than words.
6. People from oppressed groups are the experts on their own experience, and as an ally you have much to learn from them.
7. Recognize that as a member of a privileged group you know best how to use your privilege to interrupt oppressive attitudes and behaviors among members of your own group. Recognize that as an ally it is your responsibility to work to improve your ability to do this, and develop other allies by sharing strategies that have worked for you.
8. Take responsibility for learning about oppressed groups history of struggle and resistance, as well as the history of how allies have engaged in struggle with oppressed groups. Learn as much as you can about issues affecting an oppressed group(s). Seek out information sources (books, magazines, films, courses, other media) that are authored by people from that group. Create opportunities for learning about these issues/ histories for members of your own group through invited speakers, films, forums, book clubs, etc.
9. Begin to act as an ally now, as best you know how, but be open to criticism and learning. Do not allow the fact that you "do not know enough" be an excuse. Everyone always has more to learn, we learn as we go.
10. Realize that members of the oppressed group can spot "oppressor-role" conditioning (behavior that perpetuates privilege and oppression). Realize that as a member of a privileged group, often times you do not. Do not try to "convince" them that this conditioning did not happen to you. Don't attempt to convince members of an oppressed group that you "are on their side"-- just be there, and do work.
11. Do not expect gratitude from members of the oppressed group. Remember, being an ally is a matter of choice for you, being oppressed is not. If you are committed to social justice being an ally is a responsibility.
12. Be a 100% ally, no strings. Ex: "I'll oppose your oppression if you oppose mine." Everyone's oppression needs to be opposed unconditionally.
13. "Being an ally" is an action, not a status. If you are not doing something you are not an ally.
14. Unlearning oppressive behavior is one step towards building a stronger, more inclusive movement for progressive social change; it allows us to communicate and work together better so we may collectively fight oppression better. It is NOT so you can learn to be less

personally or overtly prejudice, or to assuage the guilt you may feel as a member of a privileged group.

Ten Things to Remember: Anti-Racist Strategies for White Student Radicals

by *Chris Dixon*

(<http://colours.mahost.org/org/whitestudents.html>)

After many years as a white student radical (in high school and then college), I'm reconsidering my experience. I made a lot of mistakes and was blind in many ways, particularly as a white person. What follows are some lessons that I am learning, some strategies for reflecting on, interrogating, and disrupting racism in our lives.

Transforming the world means challenging and changing institutions and ourselves. Systems of oppression are ingrained in both and, accordingly, must be confronted in both. More than once an activist of color or an actively anti-racist white person has confronted me: "Why are you always rushing off to do solidarity actions with people in other parts of the world when you don't even make time to deal with your own shit?" They're right. As white student activists, we are in fact notorious for protesting injustices across the globe, yet neglecting to confront systems of oppression on our campuses, in our communities, and in ourselves. Being an effective student activist means making priorities, and at times we must prioritize slower-paced, not-so-flashy work over dramatic actions that offer immediate gratification. Being an effective white student activist means prioritizing daily dismantlement of white privilege--creating and participating in forums for whites to grapple with racism, allying with struggles that people of color are engaged in, constantly remaining open to our own mistakes and feedback from others.

Predominantly white activist organizations are built within society as it is and, as a result, are plagued by racism and other forms of oppression. We can minimize or deny this reality ("we're all radicals here, not racists") or we can work to confront it head-on. Confronting it requires not only openly challenging the dynamics of privilege in our groups, but also creating structures and forums for addressing oppression. For instance, two experienced activists I know often point out that, sadly, Kinko's has a better sexual harassment policy than most activist groups. Workers are accountable for their actions and victims have some means of redress. With all of our imaginative alternatives to capitalist and hierarchical social arrangements, I have no doubt that we can construct even more egalitarian and comprehensive ways of dealing with sexism, racism, and other oppressive forces in our organizations. And we must start now.

We absolutely should not be "getting" people of color to join "our" organizations. This is not just superficial; it's tokenistic, insulting, and counterproductive. Yet this is the band-aid that white activists are often quick to apply when accused of racist organizing. Mobilizing for the WTO protests, for example, I had one white organizer reassure me that we didn't need to concern ourselves with racism, but with "better outreach." In his view, the dynamics, priorities, leadership, and organizing style, among other important features of our group, were obviously beyond critical scrutiny. But they shouldn't be. We must always look at our organizations and ourselves first. Whose voices are heard? Whose priorities are adopted? Whose knowledge is valued? The answers to these questions define a group more than how comprehensive its outreach is. Consequently, instead of looking to "recruit" in order to simply increase diversity, we, as white activists, need to turn inward, working to make truly anti-racist, anti-oppressive organizations.

We have much to learn from the leadership of activists of color. As student organizers Amanda Klonsky and Daraka Larimore-Hall write, "Only through accepting the leadership of those who experience racism in their daily lives, can white students identify their role in building an anti-racist movement." Following the lead of people of color is also one active step toward toppling conventional racial hierarchies; and it challenges us, as white folks (particularly men), to step back from aggressively directing everything with an overwhelming sense of entitlement. Too often white students covet and grasp leadership positions in large campus activist groups and coalitions. As in every other sector of our society, myths of "merit" cloak these racial dynamics, but in reality existing student leaders aren't necessarily the "best" leaders; rather, they're frequently people who have enjoyed lifelong access to leadership skills and positions--largely white, middle-class men. We

need to strengthen the practice of following the lead of activists of color. We'll be rewarded with, among other things, good training working as authentic allies rather than patronizing "friends"; for being an ally means giving assistance when and as asked.

As white activists, we need to shut up and listen to people of color, especially when they offer criticism. We have to override initial defensive impulses and keep our mouths tightly shut, except perhaps to ask clarifying questions. No matter how well-intentioned and conscientious we are, notice how much space we (specifically white men) occupy with our daily, self-important jabber. Notice how we assume that we're entitled to it. When people of color intervene in that space to offer something, particularly something about how we can be better activists and better people, that is a very special gift. Indeed, we need to recognize such moments for what they are: precious opportunities for us to become more effective anti-racists. Remember to graciously listen and apply lessons learned.

White guilt always gets in the way. Anarcha-feminist Carol Ehrlich explains, "Guilt leads to inaction. Only action, to re-invent the everyday and make it something else, will change social relations." In other words, guilt doesn't help anyone, and it frequently just inspires navel-gazing. The people who experience the brunt of white supremacy could care less whether we, as white activists, feel guilty. Guilt doesn't change police brutality and occupation, nor does it alter a history of colonialism, genocide, and slavery. No, what we really have to offer is our daily commitment and actions to resist racism. And action isn't just protesting. It includes any number of ways that we challenge the world and ourselves. Pushing each other to seriously consider racism is action, as are grappling with privilege and acting as allies. Only through action, and the mistakes we make and the lessons we learn, can we find ways to work in true solidarity.

"Radical" doesn't necessarily mean getting arrested, engaging in police confrontations, or taking to the streets. These kinds of actions are important, but they're not the be-all and end-all of effective activism. Indeed, exclusively focusing on them ignores crucial questions of privilege and overlooks the diverse, radical ways that people resist oppression every day. In the wake of the WTO protests, for instance, many white activists are heavily focused on direct action. Yet in the words of anti-capitalist organizer Helen Luu, "the emphasis on this method alone often works to exclude people of colour because what is not being taken into account is the relationship between the racist (in)justice system and people of colour." Moreover, this emphasis can exclude the very radical demands, tactics, and kinds of organizing used by communities of color--struggling for police accountability, occupying ancestral lands, and challenging multinational polluters, among many others. All too frequently "radicalism" is defined almost solely by white, middle-class men. We can do better, though; and I mean we in the sense of all of us who struggle in diverse ways to go to the root--to dismantle power and privilege, and fundamentally transform our society.

Radical rhetoric, whether it's Marxist, anarchist, Situationist, or some dialect of activist speak, can be profoundly alienating and can uphold white privilege. More than once, I've seen white radicals (myself included) take refuge in our own ostensibly liberatory rhetorical and analytical tools: Marxists ignoring "divisive" issues of cultural identity and autonomy; anarchists assuming that, since their groups have "no hierarchy," they don't need to worry about insuring space for the voices of folks who are traditionally marginalized; Situationist-inspired militants collapsing diverse systems of privilege and oppression into obscure generalizations; radical animal rights activists claiming that they obviously know better than communities of color. And this is unfortunately nothing new. While all of these analytical tools have value, like most tools, they can be used to uphold oppression even as they profess to resist it. Stay wary.

We simply cannot limit our anti-oppression work to the struggle against white supremacy. Systems of oppression and privilege intertwine and operate in extremely complex ways throughout our society. Racism, patriarchy, classism, heterosexism, able-ism, ageism, and others compound and extend into all spheres of our lives. Our activism often takes the form of focusing on one outgrowth at a time--combating prison construction, opposing corporate exploitation of low-wage workers, challenging devastating US foreign policies. Yet we have to continually integrate a holistic understanding of oppression and how it operates--in these instances, how state repression, capitalism, and imperialism rest on oppression and privilege. Otherwise, despite all of our so-

called radicalism, we risk becoming dangerously myopic single-issue activists. "Watch these mono-issue people," warns veteran activist Bernice Johnson Reagon. "They ain't gonna do you no good." Whatever our chosen focuses as activists, we must work both to recognize diverse forms of oppression and to challenge them--in our society, our organizations, and ourselves.

We need to do all of this anti-racist, anti-oppressive work out of respect for ourselves as well as others. White supremacy is our problem as white people. We benefit from it and are therefore obligated to challenge it. This is no simplistic politics of guilt, though. People of color undeniably suffer the most from racism, but we are desensitized and scarred in the process. Struggling to become authentically anti-racist radicals and to fundamentally change our racist society, then, means reclaiming our essential humanity while forging transformative bonds of solidarity. In the end, we'll be freer for it.

Ain't Gonna Let Segregation Turn Us 'Round: Thoughts on Building an Interracial and Anti- Racist Student Movement

by Amanda Klonsky and Daraka Larimore-Hall

(<http://colours.mahost.org/articles/amandaraka.html>)

This article was originally published in WireTap Magazine and The Activist (November 3, 2000)

In the summer following his junior year of college, together with nearly one thousand other Northern college students, Andy Goodman traveled to Mississippi to participate in Freedom Summer 1964. Organized by the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), Freedom Summer was a call to Northern white college students to join black Mississippians in the drive to register black voters in the South. SNCC staff members last reported seeing Andy, along with his friends Mickey Schwerner and James Cheney, alive on June 21st, 1964. The three activists were found dead weeks later. Lawrence Rainey, then Neshoba County sheriff, was one of seven men later convicted, not of murder, but of "conspiracy to deprive the dead men of their civil rights" (pg. 115, *In Struggle*, by Clayborne Carson). Andy Goodman made a heroic decision and cast his fate with the Black Freedom Struggle in the Jim Crow South. He became one of many martyrs; a symbol for people working towards racial justice in the United States.

If you believe what you read in the press, both mainstream and left, the recent rise in political activism has been composed solely of white people who oppose globalization. While the coverage of political activism tends to ignore the rich and inspiring work that goes on in communities of color, it is true that white students are on the march, and largely overlooking questions of domestic racism in favor of internationally flavored anti-corporate activism. People of color (as well as the mainstream media) have noticed with some distaste the overwhelming whiteness of the protests in Seattle and D.C. (See for example Elizabeth Betita Martinez's article "Where Was the Color in Seattle?") The activist causes and organizations receiving the most attention, funding and support on campuses are predominantly white anti-corporate and anti-sweatshop groups, while organizing in communities of color has been routinely ignored.

While it is tempting to simply obsess over the whiteness of campus anti-corporate activism, we believe that such obsession makes us miss the most important point. Both on a practical level, in terms of building good relationships with campus-based organizations of color, and on a political level, in terms of making an anti-corporate vision meaningful, white students have to take up the fight against racism in a serious way. This means, if you are a white activist, incorporating anti-racism into your own work, and doing work against racism that you do not yourself lead.

The leadership of many predominantly white student organizations have begun to discuss how the white portion of an expanding student movement can adopt an explicitly anti-racist agenda. Some of these organizations, such as the Direct Action Network and United Students Against Sweatshops, are beginning to discuss how to confront racism with their activist work.

The coalitions mobilizing protests at both the Republican and Democratic National Conventions have focused their attentions on issues facing Black and Latino communities, and have begun to reach out to activists within those communities. Despite their good intentions, however, these efforts have not gone far enough. To succeed, we must transform more than our slogans and symbols; committing for the long haul to fighting against, for example, the proliferation of the prison industry, or fighting for equitable funding of public education. While this is the beginning of new direction and dialogue, we still have a long way to go.

We do not claim to have forged a magic bullet, but we would like to raise some questions which may point our organizations in the right direction. In considering the role of white students in opposing racism, we should remember the story of Andy Goodman and his sacrifice. Let us ask ourselves what the equivalent of Freedom Summer is today. Where are the spaces for white students to act in solidarity with the struggles of people of color; to assist in building an anti racist movement led by people of color? Where are our Mississippis, and who is going down to help?

White students cannot answer this question alone. Only through accepting the leadership of those who experience racism in their daily lives, can white students identify their role in building an anti-racist movement.

As a white woman, I (Amanda) have been very much a part of the anti-sweatshop movement at the University of Wisconsin. The growing anti-sweatshop movement is fundamentally good, and it has been a powerful force on our campus. Many students who have never participated in social justice work before have gotten involved, breathing new life into campus activism.

While it is right to organize in solidarity with exploited workers of color in the Third World and at home, as the anti-sweatshop movement grows, we have a responsibility to make sure that we take on local racial justice issues as well as international ones. On campuses like UW Madison, white students have too often ignored this responsibility. Because such an overwhelming majority of most college campuses are made up of white students, it is very difficult for students of color to make gains without white support. This is especially true around such issues as increasing recruitment and retention of students of color or the creation of a long sought after Chicano Studies Department.

This is not to say that anti-sweatshop organizing in Madison should end; but simply that we must take another step forward, connecting the work we are doing to oppose discrimination around the globe with that which is happening in our own communities for students and faculty of color. For example, in prior years at the UW, white students, as part of an interracial coalition assisted in a successful campaign led by people of color to strengthen the University's ten year affirmative action plan.

Let's work so that our anti-sweatshop organizations are explicitly anti-racist, and build a committed and long standing relationship with the communities affected by oppressive labor standards; namely immigrants and women. This work will bring issues of racism to bear on what has been seen, incorrectly, as a "white" organizing issue.

The Color Line Divides America, As Well As The Student Movement

Because racism is such a powerful force in our economic and social systems, it is ridiculous to think the student movement could somehow be immune or disconnected from the legacy and consequences of racism. Social justice movements in this country have at many other points in history been divided along racial lines. This has happened both because of white racism, and because of the legitimate desire on the part of activists of color to build independent organizations.

It's a mistake to feel like every student activist organization should look like a Benetton ad. We should not approach this whole question with the goal of simply "diversifying" our organizations. This article is not a guide to "shopping for minorities." It is a call to action for white students to put real work behind the fight against racism.

White students should respect the expressed need and desire for separation by student of color activist groups. Of course, none of the "predominantly white" student movement organizations out there are exclusively white, and there are some practical things that white activists can do to make their organizations a better place to work for people of color. All white people enjoy the fruits of racism, both historical and contemporary, psychologically and spiritually as well as politically and economically. White people need to break down the structures and change the institutions which give them privilege. If we are truly committed to building an inter-racial movement, then white people must constantly assess their privileged position in society.

We think that the most important thing white students can do to build an interracial and anti-racist movement in this country is to stand in solidarity with people of color who are organizing against racism. Concretely, this will require white students to take direction and leadership from people of color, but it also means that white students have a special duty to exercise leadership amongst white people, fighting racism in our own communities. This is no simple task; there are no rules or formulas for being a good white ally, and standing in solidarity with people of color has meant many wildly different things throughout history. It is likely that in twenty years, we will look back and laugh at the positions we are taking in this very article. Let us seek guidance in the

history of anti-racist organizing in this country; becoming students of the interracial and anti-racist movements that have come before us.

Practical Suggestions

Here are some steps that white students can take to begin the process of building an anti-racist movement:

Include racial justice issues in your organizational discussions and analysis.

Commit to doing serious work against racism as part of your organizing and to forming meaningful, principled alliances with people of color organizations in your communities.

Make sure that your agenda isn't set before considering the goals and demands of activists of color. Too often, white activists think of the issues that they are working on as "universal" and approach activists of color asking them to join their "big tent". Why aren't white activists holding themselves accountable in the same way and viewing racism as a universal concern?

Take steps to create a more tolerant culture within your own organization. Sometimes, white culture is "invisible", meaning that methods of work, choice of music, food, ways of communicating, etc., are thought of as "progressive" ways of doing things, instead of "white progressive" ways of doing things. One way should not be held up as "authentically progressive", especially when that cultural form is typically or historically white.

Consider the needs of people of different backgrounds than your own. Can people with jobs attend your meetings? What about people with children? What email list or social scene do you have to be a part of, to hear about meetings?

Work to build long term, authentic and trusting relationships with organizations led by people of color in your community. As we stated above, white activists are prone to "shopping" for minorities. Too often, when it comes time to host a conference or chose speakers for a rally, white activist organizations are out looking for brown faces, when they haven't supported the daily work of anti-racist organizations all year long.

Speak up when people of color in your community are being attacked! Don't wait for the Black Student Union on your campus to write all the letters to the editor of your student newspaper. It is time for white people to police their own communities around these issues - after all, whose responsibility is it to fight racism in the white community?

Listen harder, and better. Too often, white activists try to be the savior - instead of the ally. One of the legacies of the early Civil Rights Movement's organizing style, which came from people like Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer and Bob Moses of SNCC, was the deeply rooted belief that there is no one who knows more about the experience of oppression than those who are oppressed themselves. Simply put, go to meetings of people of color organizations, find out what they are up to, and help out. Period.

Working in an interracial coalition can be a difficult and humbling experience, but also a sweet one. The most important things we should take with us on this winding road are a willingness to be vulnerable, to make mistakes and be self critical, and to listen to each other. We have a lot to learn, and we need all the brains and hands we can gather. Within the movement, as in the civil rights movement of the 60s, we need a "division of labor," in which the special responsibilities of various groups are recognized. Andy Goodman was one of the many who acknowledged his own responsibility and sought to accept leadership from African American activists. To broaden and deepen today's movement, we need to learn from that spirit of listening, uniting and acting with courage.

Intersections: Organizing All the Oppressed To End All Our Oppressions

by Malik Guevara, courtesy of Freedom Road

(<http://colours.mahost.org/articles/guevara.html>)

What I hope to do in this presentation is to underscore a number of points that have already been made, to elaborate a bit on them, and to add a few new ones. The several points I wish to discuss are as follows:

- ★ the need for us to grasp, theoretically and politically speaking, the intersection and interpenetration of multiple principles of social organization such as race, gender, sexuality and class, in US society;
- ★ the fact that oppression and abuse are basically identical in their effects upon human groups and individuals in US society;
- ★ the reality that patriarchy is not only about how men treat, and mistreat, women and girls; but also about how males treat other males; and
- ★ the necessity to remember that if we are to truly be/come revolutionaries, we must learn how to organize all our oppressed to end all our oppressions.

I will try to make my remarks as brief and substantive as possible given our time constraints. I'd like to touch on each of the above issues in turn.

The Interconnections between Oppressions

There are at least two crucial points to be made regarding the meaning of "intersectionality," or "simultaneity," as the concept was originally articulated during the 1970s by the African-American feminists of the Combahee River Collective. First, the concept of simultaneity, or intersectionality, refers to the fact that multiple principles of social organization operate within the same social and institutional spaces [1] in which we live and work in this country. The second point is that none of these principles of social organization (which can also be understood as forms of oppression and principles, or poles, of identity formation) operates independently of the others, but, rather, each operates interdependently [2] with all the others. Another way of conveying the same meaning is to say that race, class, sexuality, and gender never exist in society or social situations in isolation from one another. Instead, the impact of each principle or form is always influenced or shaped by all the others. Let us consider these two points more closely.

When we usually think about slavery in the United States, many of us (perhaps even most) think of it as a terrible and multi-faceted reflection of the myriad ways in which race served as a foundational principle for conceiving, creating, and maintaining peculiar kinds of societal arrangements. Despite the fact that social science scholars and social activists alike have often underestimated the role of race in the United States [3], we nonetheless regard race as central to the dirty business of buying, selling, and using certain groups of human beings to benefit other groups of human beings. Yet in all of our careful analysis of slavery, we often overlook and underestimate the fact that slavery was not merely a consequence of calculations based upon race. Slavery also established standards, conventions, structures, processes, and ideals that were expressions of gender, sexuality, and class. The establishment of relations of oppression that were raced, gendered, sexualized, and classed occurred simultaneously, within and often through the same or similar structures, social processes, and stereotypes! Even if the varied expressions of discrete principles of organization occurred with unequal prominence within particular social contexts, these expressions occurred interdependently--shaping, and shaped by, one another.

The fact that we do not customarily "see" this complex intersection and interaction of types of domination should not be taken to mean that the interdependence does not exist. We continually fail to clearly see this intersection and interdependence largely because of our institutional conditioning, and the partial and narrow ways that we sometimes apprehend social reality.

Looking closely at our own lives, we can see that our own racial identities cannot be understood in isolation from our identities as classed, gendered, and sexualized beings in this social order.

Many of us have evolved politically during the past several decades holding to the notion that oppression is most usefully understood as rooted in a single principle of social organization--class--and that everything else that undermines our humanity flows from the operation of this single principle of stratification. This is a very problematic notion that has been repeatedly addressed by numerous activists within civil society. Some have been Marxists. Others have not. Yet there is much that we can and should learn even from a number of writers who have not been Marxists--if we are serious about "Left Refoundation." In fact, if Left Refoundation means anything at all, one of its requirements is that those who intend to use Marxism to make revolution within the United States must expand our understanding of the terrain of oppression and resistance within which that revolution must be grounded.

The past three decades or so has witnessed considerable investigation and analysis by feminists--especially feminists of color--in the United States [4] that provide us with new points of departure for understanding more fully the complex ways in which oppressions operate. Many of us are quite unaware of these contributions, largely as a consequence of the theoretical, political, and organizational narrowness of the different organizations and movements from which we have emerged. Yet the fact that many of us may as yet be unaware of the contributions of feminists in this country does not render those contributions meaningless or irrelevant. We might also want to take a moment of humble reflection to remember that in the absence of conscious struggles to understand and embody feminist insights, many of us have unwittingly reinforced the very kinds of structures, processes and ideals that feminists have been trying to critique! Provided that we are willing to "see" the privileges of gender and sexuality (and of race and class) from which we unwittingly benefit, there is much that we can still learn from certain feminist analyses of oppression about how to advance a politics inclusive enough to help us connect more deeply and broadly with the masses of our people with whom we must make the revolution.

We must now rethink the silences and exclusions that have characterized "radical" organizations of the Left for so long. We must be honest (and yes, self-critical) about the fact that a number of willing fighters have left organizations--including this organization--or declined to join their ranks. And we must honestly and carefully acknowledge that a number of comrades have moved on, not because they have been counter-revolutionary or divisive, but because the theoretical grasp of oppressions so often set forth by numerous contemporary movement organizations[5] has not adequately acknowledged the conditions of their lived experiences. And if our theoretical grasp has not enabled us to adequately acknowledge and illuminate certain experiences, then it is understandable that our day-to-day politics of movement-building have not been capable of reflecting and informing the lives of a number of people.

We must therefore ask ourselves how we could have expected to advance political plans and projects that reflect the needs, hopes, and visions of those so continually excluded and/or marginalized. Undoubtedly, a number of sincere people have not seen any way to bring all of themselves into this organization, or the movements we have been trying to build. How can anyone be expected to willingly enter, or remain within, an organization or movement-in-formation which requires (consciously or unconsciously) that s/he downplay or ignore or reject certain "unacceptable" aspects of her/his lived experience to become a "comrade"?

Here we will do well to ask ourselves why it is that the received wisdom of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Mao, and others has seldom adequately addressed the ways in which race and gender and sexuality have shaped class experience, while also being shaped by it? It is at least partly because our revolutionary forefathers have seldom acknowledged the importance of considering the theoretical, and thus the political, centrality of understanding the intersection of multiple forms of oppression.[6] This brings us to a very important concern that is currently troubling a number of us.

A number of comrades are concerned that if we begin to acknowledge the intersectionality of race, gender, sexuality, and class, we will be sliding down a slippery slope of making these principles of social organization and oppression equally significant. Moreover, if these forms of oppression are

equal in their presence and power in our lives, how can we possibly think, speak, or act to address what we have for so long interpreted as "the principal contradiction"? Perhaps we should pause here to distinguish between the significance of given forms of oppression (as forces that shape and damage people's lives) and the salience of these forms (as reflections of how oppression works) in particular societal circumstances and encounters.

Numerous feminists during the past three decades have tried to underscore the fact that while ALL experiences of oppression are significant, given their destructive effects on people's lives; all forms are not equally salient or prominent under all conditions. African-American feminist Deborah K. King addresses this point in her essay "Multiple Jeopardy, Multiple Consciousness: The Context of a Black Feminist Ideology." Consider, for a moment, the following insights from that essay:

<extract>Unfortunately, most applications of the concepts of double and triple jeopardy have been overly simplistic in assuming that the relationships among &...various discriminations are merely additive. These relationships are interpreted as equivalent to the mathematical equation, racism plus sexism plus classism equals triple jeopardy. In this instance, each discrimination has a single, direct, and independent effect on status, wherein the relative contribution of each is readily apparent. This simple incremental process does not represent the nature of black women's oppression but, rather, I would contend, leads to nonproductive assertions that one factor can and should supplant the other... Such assertions ignore the fact that racism, sexism, and classism constitute three, interdependent control systems.[7] </extract>

Even as King acknowledges the interdependent interaction, of multiple forms of oppression and discrimination within specific social spaces, she acknowledges that each form is not equally salient.

<extract>The importance of any one factor in explaining black women's circumstances thus varies depending on the particular aspect of our lives under consideration and the reference groups to whom we are compared... In the interactive model, the relative significance of race, sex, or class in determining the conditions of black women's lives is neither fixed nor absolute but, rather, is dependent on the socio-historical context and social phenomenon under consideration. These interactions also produce what to some appears a seemingly confounding set of social roles and political attitudes among black women.[8] </extract>

One of the things that Marxists can learn from feminists emerging from social movements treated as "outside" the boundaries of working-class movements[9] is that when we underestimate the revolutionary potential of certain groups (that is, the potential of their experiences of oppression to move them toward radical action); we hinder our abilities to appreciate their ways/means of resisting. We thus can lose opportunities to join with them in expanding the ranks, reach, and theoretical unity of revolutionary struggle. Too many of us have for years operated against our best intentions of "uniting all who can be united" because our organizational and personal understanding of revolutionary tasks have generally dismissed gender, or sexuality, or patriarchy as "significant" theoretically. In our evolving-yet-still-narrow efforts to build broad social and political movements, we have embraced notions of revolutionary theory and practice that have taken these "other" forms of oppressive experience to be "secondary" to class.

In turn, by viewing the lived experiences of many as being of "secondary" importance, we have looked askance at their potential contributions to actions that could lead to social reforms even as we continue to struggle for complete social transformation. We have all too often overlooked the fact that in the United States, class is lived in many diverse ways within a populous and complex working class. Can we safely conclude that with such muddled thinking we can cogently argue that the faltering of revolutionary experiments has had absolutely nothing to do with failures to theoretically and politically grasp different experiences of oppression? Are we really willing to assume that we can conclude, despite the failure of many of us to really engage in a careful examination of failed and faltering experiments, that what feminists have discovered about them, or that what we don't know about them, is irrelevant?!

The Similar Effects of Oppressions

Here we can underscore the significance of our second point for consideration: the relative similarity between the effects of oppression and abuse on our lives and those of other human beings. Quite often within organizations purporting to make revolution we find some comrades who become uncomfortable or uneasy when questions and criticisms of sexism and homophobia arise. Comrades who raise these taboo subjects are made the targets of dismissive and derisive remarks about how they have confused "personal" with "political" matters. The assumption is then made that since the focus of a "radical political" organization is issues of politics and not personal concerns (personal "stuff" being important, perhaps, to individual people but not really pertinent when measured against the really weighty matters of politics); the discussion should table the "personal," to address the "political." This kind of dismissive dynamic has had a very corrosive force in the historical and contemporary development of social movement struggles in this country.

A particularly troublesome matter in all of this is the very distinction that so many well-intentioned comrades make between personal and political. First of all, this familiar rationalization ignores the momentous struggles of women in the United States during the late 1960s and 1970s to reveal connections between their personal experiences of oppression and the political character of gender and sex as principles for organizing social life. The unequal relations of power that have been socially constructed have generally privileged males at the expense of women, while also privileging heterosexuals at the expense of human beings who are lesbian, gay, and/or transgendered.

Yet the distinction between personal and political has also helped to obscure the basic similarities between ways in which large groups of human beings as well as individual persons are categorized, robbed of dignity in society, and dominated for the ends of others. This is a simple, but profound, point that can be lost amidst the intoxications and seductions of various forms of privilege that characterize the social interactions of movement organizations and society in general. Too often many of us assume that because we have come together in order to make radical social change, we have shed all our "isms" at the door, like so many dirty clothes. But there is no great divide isolating any of us from the oppressions that characterize this social order. And once we recognize the similar ways in which human beings are disempowered and devastated by others--whether through systemic oppression of a social group, or the repeated physical, emotional, and mental devastation of individuals subjected to forms of abuse--we will be less inclined to be duped by simplistic assertions about the need to "just get over" personal stuff and maintain our focus on political matters.[10] If we are on a mission to generate and nurture revolution and liberation, we conscientiously try to avoid actions, arguments, and assumptions that reinforce and recreate domination, pain, and alienation within the ranks of the very movements in which we purport to engender new forms of community and citizenship.

The problem of patriarchy is at last being brought home to us. The women who have labored to bring this crucial matter into view in revolutionary organizations deserve our gratitude (as well as our attention) for their unflagging zeal and unflinching courage in repeatedly pushing us, individually and collectively, amidst enormous resistance, to seriously address this matter. That we have reached a juncture at which males in this organization have now become willing to take up this question of patriarchy should not be taken as any evidence that those males are now "the good guys." Even as White comrades must continuously strive to remain vigilant in their pursuit of an inclusive and humane anti-racist politics; men who aspire to be more than petty patriarchs must continuously work to develop understanding and practice that enable us to see how patriarchy positions us for privilege even as it provides for our oppression. Allan G. Johnson offers some very instructive insights in his book, *The Gender Knot: Unraveling Our Patriarchal Legacy*:

<extract>In short, we ignore and take for granted what we can least afford to overlook in trying to understand and change the world. Rather than ask how social systems produce social problems such as male violence against women, we obsess over legal debate and titillating but irrelevant case histories... If the goal is to change the world, this won't help us. We need to see and deal with the social roots that generate and nurture the social problems that are reflected in the behavior of individuals. We can't do this without realizing that we all participate in something larger than

ourselves, something we didn't create but that we have the power to affect through the choices we make about how to participate.

That something is patriarchy, which is more than a collection of individuals (such as "men"). It is a system, which means it can't be reduced to the people who participate in it... We are not patriarchy, no more than people who believe in Allah are Islam or Canadians are Canada. Patriarchy is a kind of society organized around certain kinds of social relationships and ideas. As individuals, we participate in it. Paradoxically, our participation both shapes our lives and gives us the opportunity to be part of changing or perpetuating it. But we are not it, which means that patriarchy can exist without men having "oppressive personalities" or actively conspiring with one another to defend male privilege. To demonstrate that gender oppression exists, we don't have to show that men are villains, that women are good-hearted victims, that women don't participate in their oppression, or that men never oppose it. When oppression is woven into the fabric of everyday life, we don't need to go out of our way to be overtly oppressive in order for an oppressive system to produce oppressive consequences. As the saying goes, what evil requires is simply that ordinary people do nothing.[11] </extract>

The foregoing means that it is not enough for us to focus on changing behaviors that privilege men and disadvantage women. Such changes can be helpful, but if men in this organization regularly organize childcare, and cook for gatherings such as this one, those welcome activities will not guarantee that the political development of anti-patriarchal women (and men) will become permanent priorities of our work! For our organization to nurture the political development of women as well as men, all of us--and not just the women--must work to create an environment, an organizational and movement culture, in which each of us considers the possible ways in which we may be contributing to the reproduction of patriarchy in all aspects of our work.

How Males Treat Other Males

If we are to really confront patriarchy, we must also consider how it ensnares men in our relations with one another. A very clear example can be drawn from the varied ways in which we tend to emphasize certain characteristics as "natural" and "normal" features of masculinity. What is more, we need to become better at distinguishing how patriarchal positioning of males changes under specific historical conditions.

Let's take a minute to consider how this focus on patriarchy might influence our work against empire. How many of us have stopped to reflect on the many ways in which the attacks of 9/11 have contributed to an intensification of aggressive expressions of what we might call "John Wayne" masculinity? How many of us have noticed, and questioned, the ways in which notions of the aggressive, hyper-sexed masculine male are being played out as the build-up for imperialist war has moved into full gear?! And how many of us have considered the possible value of having conversations with friends and loved ones about the connections between the strivings of young males to be "more manly" and their falling prey to the drums of the recruiters for war?

Admittedly, having such difficult discussions will not be enough to stop the maiming and killing of imperialist aggression. Yet if we were to listen to the counsel of feminists who have been articulating a vision of masculinity and citizenship that does not require human beings to become fodder and beasts in the service of US imperialism, what might we learn about new ways to intervene politically in the lives of those we love? We can also see terrible consequences of aggressive sexist and heterosexist masculinity in the continuing violent attacks experienced by women and men of varying sexual orientations. A precipitous increase perceived in violent attacks has most recently been noted within communities of color as well. As revolutionaries, we have some responsibility to find ways to concretely address this climate. A number of comrades may well scoff at such a thought. Yet let us be careful about the smugness with which we dismiss interventions that we have neither considered nor tried. Being Marxists does not mean that we have to arrogantly assume that we know all that we need to know. The state of social reality should clearly dispel such foolish thinking.

Organizing All the Oppressed

The last point I want to make is very simple indeed. Many of us have been trying for years to advance agendas of work that could move larger and larger numbers of people into radical social movement. Yet all too often, no matter how deliberately, thoughtfully, and artfully crafted, those well-intended action agendas have been based on narrow social bases, on the experiences and needs of woefully small sectors of the working class and the US body politic. Our agendas have reflected the conditions and visions of some, yet they have been silent and exclusionary on the conditions, experiences, needs and capacities for resistance of too many more! We can do better than we have done, and our revolutionary ranks can be increased! But we must be willing to become more inclusive and more conscientious in our efforts to connect with many who are different from us. And this requires change of us.

If we really want to transform this society, we must find ways to win and join with as many oppressed human beings as possible in this vast country, especially those of the working class, to struggle against all forms of oppression. We may think that if we carefully craft new principles and bases for unity--grounded in our current thinking and practice--we can make it clear to those who want to join us that they are "welcome." "But just don't raise this set of questions, and just don't try to bring that aspect of your life into this organization, 'cause we are revolutionaries and we don't deal with that kind of apolitical, personal, emotional, bourgeois stuff!"

Or we can try something different. We can try to examine our existing ways of thinking and doing things. We can be honest about the reasons some comrades have left, and we can work to not create conditions that will reproduce similar exits. We can return to those honest comrades (have all of those who left been "opportunists"?) and try to see if they can help us understand where we may have faltered in our theory, our organization, and/or our political initiatives. We can try to learn things that we may not have even considered worth knowing. We have the road before us. But, as two very effective architects of social change and mass education, Myles Horton and Paulo Freire, might say: "We must make the road by walking!"

Conclusion

Walking an unfamiliar road can be dangerous, especially when that path is one that twists and turns amidst dense forests, hidden ditches, rocks, and holes criss-crossing with busy freeways. We need to consider possible dangers as we try to make sense of the challenges we must undertake in light of our current conversations. One such danger will be that some of us will assume that all this talk of inclusion and "diversity" is quite nice to some extent, yet it really is not very instructive for some of our most important work, such as developing the programmatic political unity in moving toward establishment of a revolutionary party. This is an understandable sentiment and reaction, given the unenlightened way in which many of us have tried so hard to turn partial analyses into revolutionary agendas for so many years. This is not intended as a snide criticism! A number of very committed and thoughtful comrades have unwittingly operated without sufficient insight into our patriarchal legacy, and some of our work has suffered from a lack of inclusive vision.

What is required now is that we begin to see more clearly that if we have had a limited understanding and a contradictory practice within our organization, we really need to tread thoughtfully as we are moving forward to join with representatives of other organizations. If we don't try to apply new insights and new theoretical questions (at least "new" to a number of us) to our practice, how can we ensure that the work is not going to exclude and marginalize as we have done previously? The ugly and quite predictable reality is that we can't.

If, for example, we are interacting with other revolutionaries from a different organization with different views regarding patriarchy, how will we conduct discussions about our collective experiences in addressing this matter practically? Will we look askance at their efforts to address sexism, heterosexism, and patriarchy in their daily work? Will we be honestly self-critical about the extent to which our theoretical and organizational culture has proven problematic with respect to the links between class and race and gender and sexuality? Or will we quietly caucus amongst ourselves about the need to keep discussions of patriarchal practice and blindness on the down-low

so as not to disrupt the really significant discussions of programmatic unity? Do we still not see that there are very definite connections between what we think, how we act (both inside our organization and outside) and what we decide to do to move forward?

We have much to learn about how revolutionary work has been impeded in the past and present. To say this does not mean that we stop all work so we can have sensitivity sessions and gaze at our navels. It means that in all aspects of our work, we must try to see what has been invisible to us in the past. We need to consider at every turn the ways in which our thinking and action may be influenced by the positions of relative privilege from which we normally benefit. We need to search out connections and contradictions and address them before they become elephants in the room that we must then pretend we do not see, simply because we don't have time to stop for "that kind of discussion right now." We can and must move forward, as individual agents of change, as an organization, and as one of a number of organizations earnestly seeking align to seriously advance socially transformative struggles. Yet how do we walk a new road to freedom if we assume that we already know the way?

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Notes

[1] For many who would be Marxists, the very notion of simultaneity or intersectionality seems untenable, since it challenges the reductionist and monist tendencies to view only a single principle, or form, of oppression as primary--in most cases, for traditional Marxists, class. Historically and contemporarily, this way of thinking about oppression has often made the work of feminists seem a distraction from a "revolutionary" understanding of class. Numerous activists and scholars have tried, in recent years, to underscore the foundational roles played in the construction of US oppression by principles of social organization other than class. Omi and Winant, for example, have sought to develop an adequate theory of race. Many feminists, most notably socialist feminists of color, have tried repeatedly to develop an adequate theory of how gender and sexuality operate interdependently with race and class. One of the concrete suggestions to be gleaned from our current conversations should be the need for more systematic study of radical analyses previously ignored.

[2] The importance of this second point is that we must not only acknowledge that there are multiple principles and forms of oppression that exist in society and social spaces, but that the ways in which different people and groups experience oppressions reflects the diverse ways in which these oppressions influence one another and become salient in different ways within different contexts.

[3] This extremely important point has been repeatedly emphasized in contemporary times by scholars such as Robert Blauner (1972) and Michael Omi and Howard Winant (1994).

[4] In truth, there is a wealth of feminist analysis and intervention from the Third World, or the global South, from which revolutionaries in this country might learn. For one brilliant example, consider the work of the Zapatistas in Mexico. This model of revolutionary change is certainly not without its problems, limitations, and missteps. Yet consider the profound transformations being generated with respect to gender amongst men and women by the Zapatista model!

[5] We are now confronting what a number of movement veterans have rightly defined as weaknesses or limitations of social movement culture(s) within the United States. We can thank scholars and activists such as Charles Payne, Barbara Ransby, Barbara Smith, and Curtis Muhammad (to name only a few) for such insights.

[6] The work of a number of socialist feminists, such as Lise Vogel and Zillah Eisenstein, and Nancy Hartsock can prove very instructive on this matter.

[7] A most useful resource is the volume entitled *Black Women in America: Social Science Perspectives*, edited by Malson, Mudimbe-Boyi, O' Barr, and Wyer (1990). See p.270.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 272.

[9] All too often we are confounded by the notion that "working-class movements occur over here," while "racial movements and/or feminist movements occur over there." We forget that in a number of instances, people in social movements have multiple characteristics and ways of identifying! There is, as Robin Kelley has suggested, no necessary distinction between waging class struggle and being feminist, or being a representative of a racial-ethnic group that is not white. We need to consider the extent to which a number of us still view "working-class reality" through the lens of whiteness!

[10] Feminist scholar and activist Aurora Levins Morales has made this point quite eloquently and effectively in her relatively recent book, *Medicine Stories: History, Culture, and the Politics of Integrity*.

[11] *The Gender Knot: Unraveling Our Patriarchal Legacy*, Allan G. Johnson, 1997, Temple University Press, pp.77-78.

Confronting Classism

From Handbook for Nonviolent Action, published by the War Resisters League

We live in the wealthiest country in the world, but the greatest percentage of that wealth is in the hands of a tiny percentage of the population. It is environmentally and technically possible for everyone to enjoy a good standard of living if wealth were redistributed, exploitation ceased and the arms race abandoned. The inequitable distribution of wealth prevents the whole society from enjoying the full benefits of people's labor, intelligence and creativity and causes great misery for working class and poor people.

Classism is the systematic oppression of poor people and people who work for wages by those who have access to control of the necessary resources by which other people make their living. Classism is also held in place by a system of beliefs which ranks people according to economic status, "breeding," job and level of education. Classism says that upper class people are smarter and more articulate than working class and poor people. It is a way of keeping people down, it means upper-middle class and wealthy people define for everyone else what "normal" or "acceptable" is. Many of us have come to accept this standard as the norm and many of us have bought the myth that most of the country is middle class.

Criteria for determining class identity is subject to debate, being variously defined by origins, workforce status, income and/or outlook. For example, some consider all who derive their income from wages members of the working class; others exclude that percentage of the workforce which constitutes the professionals and managers whose incomes are high enough to provide a stake in the capitalist system. **Depending on the breadth of one's definition, 70-85% of the population can be considered working class.** This is true despite the fact that the individuals themselves might identify as or with the middle class. These individuals, however, are not beneficiaries of middle class privileges.

Class affects people not only on an economic level, but also on an emotional level. Classist attitudes have caused great pain by dividing people from one another and keeping individuals from personal fulfillment or the means to survive. Consequently, the process of rejecting such attitudes and their accompanying misinformation is an emotional one. Since people tend to hurt each other because they themselves have been hurt, and since most forms of oppression are accompanied by economic discrimination, class overlaps with many other social issues, all of which move as we unravel how we've been hurt.

The stereotype is that poor and working class people are unintelligent, inarticulate and "overly emotional." A good ally (a non-working-class committed supporter) will contradict these messages by soliciting the knowledge and histories of poor working class people, being a thoughtful listener, trying to understand what is being said, and not criticizing how the message is being presented or responding with automatic defensiveness. Distrust despair and anger are common consequences of oppression; it is the test of a true ally to remain undeterred when these flare up and to refrain from withdrawing support at such points. When targets of oppression believe the lies about ourselves, we are "internalizing our oppression." To begin to undo the damage caused by classism, it is useful for everyone to examine our own feelings about money, education, privilege, power, relationships, culture and ethnicity. This advice applies to organizations as well.

For general discussion:

As a movement, who are we and who are we trying to reach in terms of class? How? To whom do our literature and events appeal? How are poor people's needs being met in our organizing? What steps are being taken to change people's attitudes about classism? Are poor and Third World people invited to participate in organization planning? What is being done to reach and involve organized and unorganized workers? What are we doing to support poor, working-class and people of color in their struggles?

The situation for poor and working-class people in our movement and organization:

Is classism evident in who does what work in the organization? Are poor and working-class people facilitators, spokespeople and/or media contacts and leaders, and not just relegated to cleanup crews and collating mailings? Are organizing expenses paid upfront, or promptly reimbursed?

Meetings and events:

Make meetings and events known and accessible to poor and working-class people. Be aware of how the length, time and frequency of meetings affects full-time workers, especially those who parent. Arrange for transportation. Routinely provide childcare and sliding scales. Ask people what they need to be able to attend meetings and events. How does income-level and class composition affect the development of resources, the dates of demonstrations, the levels of commitment and power working people can have, the events sponsored? What are the cultural offerings? Who are the speakers and entertainers?

Process:

Make sure that process isn't actually being used to tell poor and working-class people how to behave by "proper" etiquette. Is consensus being used so that decisions favor those who can stay the longest, or who are used to getting their own way and will block to do so? Watch that group hugs and rituals are not imposed--allow people to interact with each other in whatever ways feel comfortable to them.

Civil disobedience (CD):

Does class determine who is able and who is unable to commit civil disobedience? How can we make it economically possible for those who want to commit CD to do so? How do we keep CD from being a movement privilege, with activists who can afford to tally arrest counts granted subsequently more political prestige? How do those who are arrested relate to the regular prison population (taking into account how class figures in their treatment)?

Be aware of how police are dealing with people of color, gay, lesbian, and known movement people during arrest situations. Be prepared to come to the aid of anyone who has been singled out by the police and may be receiving harsher treatment than others. Realize that during the booking process questions that are being asked to determine whether or not people can be released on their own recognizance, are particularly discriminatory. These questions concentrate on your economic, social, sexual and prior arrest standing. Realize that bail is the most blatant example of classism. Those who have money get out of jail--those who don't stay in.

—from articles by Donna Warnock and Laura Briggs

Also, check out:

Class Matters: <http://www.classmatters.org>

Author Betsy Leondar-Wright, wrote a book called *Class Matters: Cross-Class Alliance Building for Middle-Class Activists* (New Society Publishers, April, 2005). She interviewed 40 diverse activists, and snippets of some of those interviews can be found here.

Being An Ally For Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) People

These are some guidelines for people wanting to be allies for LGBT people. In today's world, LGBT issues are being discussed more than ever before. The discussions taking place in homes are often highly charged and emotional. This can be a scary topic and confusing to people on a very personal level. Being an ally is important, but it can be challenging. This list is by no means exhaustive, but provides a starting point. Add your own ideas and suggestions.

Don't assume heterosexuality. In our society, we generally assume that everyone we meet is heterosexual. Often people hide who they really are until they know they are safe to come 'out'. Use gender neutral language when referring to someone's partner if you don't know the person well. In general, be aware of the gender language you use and the implications this language might have. Educate yourself about LGBT issues. There are many resources available, reading lists and places to go for information. Don't be afraid to ask questions.

Explore ways to creatively integrate LGBT issues in your work. Establishing dialogue and educating about LGBT issues in the context of your other work can be a valuable process for everyone regardless of sexual orientation. Integration of LGBT issues into work you are doing instead of separating it out as a separate topic is an important strategy to establishing a safe place for people to talk about many issues in their lives.

Challenge stereotypes that people may have about LGBT as well as other people in our society. Challenge derogatory remarks and jokes made about any group of people. Avoid making those remarks yourself. Avoid reinforcing stereotypes and prejudices. Examine the effect sexual orientation has on people's lives and development. Identify how race, religion, class, ability and gender intersect with sexual orientation and how multiple identities shape our lives.

Avoid the use of heterosexist language, such as making remarks implying that all people of the same gender date or marry members of the other gender.

Respect how people choose to name themselves. Most people with a same sex or bisexual orientation prefer to be called gay, lesbian, or bisexual rather than homosexual. 'Queer' is increasingly used by some gay, lesbian or bisexual people (especially in the younger generations), but don't use it unless you are clear that it is okay with that person. If you don't know how to identify a particular group, it's okay to ask. Don't expect members of any population that is a target of bias (e.g. gays, Jews, people of color, women, people with disabilities) to always be the 'experts' on issues pertaining to their particular identity group. Avoid tokenizing or patronizing individuals from different groups.

Encourage and allow disagreement on topics of sexual identity and related civil rights. These issues are very highly charged and confusing. If there isn't some disagreement, it probably means people are tuned out or hiding their real feelings. Keep disagreement and discussion focused on principles and issues rather than personalities and keep disagreement respectful.

Remember that you are human. Allow yourself to not know everything, to make mistakes and to occasionally be insensitive. Avoid setting yourself up as an 'expert' unless you are one. Give yourself time to learn the issues and ask questions and to explore your own personal feelings. Ask for support if you are getting harassed or problems are surfacing related to your raising issues around sexual orientation. Don't isolate yourself in these kinds of situations and try to identify your supporters. You may be labeled as gay, lesbian or bisexual, whether you are or not. Use this opportunity to deepen your understanding of the power of homophobia and heterosexism. Make sure you are safe.

Prepare yourself for a journey of change and growth that will come by exploring sexual identity issues, heterosexism and other issues of difference. This can be a painful, exciting and enlightening process and will help you to know yourself better. By learning and speaking out as an ally, you will be making the world a safer, more affirming place for all. Without knowing it, you may change or even save people's lives.

This article is reprinted from the School of the Americas Watch website:
http://www.soaw.org/new/print_article.php?id=722

What is Heterosexism?

Assuming that everyone you meet is probably heterosexual.

Being outspoken about gay rights, but making sure everyone knows that you are straight.

Thinking that you can “spot one.”

Feeling that a lesbian is just a woman who couldn’t find a “real” man; or that a gay man just couldn’t find the “right woman.”

Stereotyping lesbians as “man-haters,” separatists, or radicals. Using those terms accusingly.

Feeling repulsed by public displays of affection between people of the same sex but accepting the same type of affection as normal and charming between people of the opposite sex.

Looking at lesbians/gays/bisexuals and automatically thinking only of their sexuality, rather than seeing them as whole, complex people.

Failing to be supportive of a lesbian/gay/bisexual friend who just had a quarrel or breakup with their partner.

Changing your seat in a meeting because a lesbian/gay/bisexual person sat in the chair next to yours.

Not asking about a friend’s same-sex lover, despite your regularly asking how others’ opposite-sex partners are.

Kissing an old friend, but being afraid to even shake hands with a lesbian/gay/bisexual person.

Thinking that if (for women), a lesbian touches you she is making advances, (for men) if a gay man touches you, he is making advances.

Wondering which one is the “man”/”mother” in a lesbian relationship.

Avoiding mentioning to your friends that you are involved in a woman’s organization because you are afraid that they will think that you are a lesbian.

Not confronting heterosexist/homophobic comments for fear of being identified with lesbians or gays.

Heterosexual Privilege is the right to...

Marriage

Kiss/show affection in public

Have in-laws

Family support

Be validated by your own religion

Have children without any questions

Custody of children if partner dies

Show pain openly if partner dies

Be open a bout apartment hunting with a significant other

Be socially accepted by neighbors, neighborhood

Feel comfortable in children’s school, with children’s teachers, and school activities

Dress without worrying about what it represents

Share holidays with lover and families

Openly discuss politics without fear of someone reading between the lines

Have children be comfortable with bringing their friends home

Have access to sitcoms, songs, books with your affect ional preference the basic core of the plot

Health insurance through spouse/partner's employment/health plan

Be legal guardian in the event of a disabling accident/illness (Sharon Kowalski)

Purchase items with a partner and experience no-questions-asked attitude. Example: cars, houses, property.

Be sexual with your partner and not break the law

Legal advocacy: equal division of property when a relationship ends/visitation/court assistance/assistance with abusive partner/access to court systems for Order of Protection, sexual assault, medical attention

Visitation of partner/spouse when hospitalized

Be seen as a whole person, rather than defined/judged by your sexual orientation

Openly display artwork significant to your relationship

Not question your normality

Not explain your sexual orientation

Not be nervous about "coming out" to friends/family

Not feel compelled to disprove the myths of your own heterosexuality

Not hide friends and social activities geared to the same sex

Not resent media for heterosexual reference bias (or feel excluded)

Not have systems that feel fear there own sexuality

Not fear that your sexuality may become a major point in a smear campaign that may affect the custody of your child, the job you want, the house you would like to buy, the way you are treated by neighbors, friends, family

Living in rural America and having access to libraries, art, institutes, radio stations, movies, etc. with all heterosexual plots

Public recognition and support for an intimate relationship (e.g. receiving gifts, cards, or phone calls celebrating your commitments to another person)

Paid leave from employment when grieving the death of your spouse

Having positive media images of people with whom you can identify

Expressing pain when a relationship ends and having other people notice and tend to your pain

Dating the person of your desire in your teen years

Not being identified by your sexuality/culture ("You know, the gay one.")

Being employed as a teacher in a preschool through high school without fear of being fired any day because you are assumed to corrupt children

Being able to openly serve in the military

Adopted from Confronting Homophobia and PFLAG, Los Angeles Chapter (1992)

Section Seven: Fundraising Resources

ADDING SOME FUN TO FUNDRAISING!

Some Helpful Hints on Where to Start and Who to Talk to

It has become one of the necessary things in order to get to conferences, delegations, and helping our fellow brothers and sisters in our struggle to work in solidarity with them. This whole money thing gets in the way far too often and so hopefully this will give students some ideas on how to obtain money at a local level since it has been proven time and time again that the local unions have more money to give out to people who do our kind of work.

1. Basic Fundraising Tips:

- ★ Give people a number. When you're asking a person, group or organization to help fund an activity or whatever, you need to ask for specific amount. Leave room for them to give more if they really want to or less if they want to help but don't have pockets quite as deep as you'd hoped.
- ★ Overestimate. Don't make the sum of what you're asking for the exact amount that you need - that's a surefire way to come up short. It's usually a safe bet to assume you'll get one third to half of what you ask for.
- ★ Call back. If you email, fax, mail or call a person or group for money make sure to follow up with them. Call them to see if they have any questions, to make sure that your request for funding reached the right person, and that person got all the information they need. If you don't follow up you ensure that you won't get money. It is also harder to say "no" to someone in person.
- ★ Give them what they need. Don't make it hard for people to give you money. In any request you make for funds make sure you include information like who they should make checks out to, where they should send checks, how they can contact you, and what the money is for. Some people/organizations will need more information than others about how you're using the money. You should find out about the people/organizations' particular needs when you make follow-up calls.
- ★ Get help. Fundraising is a difficult task and hard for one person to do alone. Getting more people involved from the beginning only guarantees a better outcome in the end. Dividing the work up on your campus can help too. (IE one person to approach unions, one to do on campus fundraising and one to organize an event)
- ★ Self interest. It is critical to make sure person/organization you're requesting money from is aware of all the potential benefits to their organization from the event or activity you are trying to get funding for. People don't give you money because they think you're so nice, they give you money because they see how their interests are served.

2. Raising Money on Campus:

- ★ Student government. On many campuses student governments have a ton of money. Writing a bill for funding and bringing it before your student government is often a relatively easy way to get money. Pointing out to your student government all the ways in which the event or activity will help student organizations develop will make them all the more interested in helping fund the training. You will need to find a senator to support the bill and allow time for the bill to go through committees and full senate. Also if you are granted money, make sure you do all the right paperwork.
- ★ Sympathetic faculty/professors. Yes you can ask them for money. A simple letter explaining your organization and what you're doing printed on nice letterhead can work wonders. Stick one in every mailbox on campus and you might even get a few surprises. Call the professors you know to make sure they got your letter. Some faculty are given discretionary funds by their departments and others might surprise you with a personal check.

- ★ Departments. Sometimes you will find sympathetic faculty members that don't have money to give themselves, but support you and are willing to help you get money from departments they work in. Departments that often support student activism include: Sociology, Labor Studies, African American Studies, Women's Studies, History, Philosophy, Social Work, etc.

3. Approaching Labor Organizations:

- ★ Meet and greet. Developing a relationship with local unions is very important. Students have time and energy that many workers don't have, and unions have resources many students don't have. Combined with a similar mission this makes for a great partnership. So go meet the folks at all the Union halls in your town. Tell them what's going on at your campus, and there are events or activities coming up that you will be involved in that concern labor issues. After they know what's up most unions are more than happy to help fund a group of students getting trained to join the struggle for workers' rights.
- ★ Councils. Central Labor Councils can also be a place to look to for support. Most will be more than happy to help you find funding for you, and if they won't or can't for some reason give you money, getting a statement of support from the CLC can help you lobby other unions. Labor councils generally meet on a monthly basis though so you need to get in touch with them pretty far in advance. CLCs often have a pretty good idea what which locals will be supportive and have contact info for all of them. You can go to the AFL-CIO website at <http://www.aflcio.org/unionand/statefed.htm> to find links to your state's CLCs.
- ★ District and Regional. Contacting district and regional offices of unions can also be worth your while. Fax is usually the best way to put in a request for funds. Since you know exactly when they get it you can make your follow up call a couple of hours after sending the fax to make sure it got in the right hands and see if they need any more information. It is always best to start with a contact that you know first at the district and regional offices.
- ★ Don't wait until the last minute. When asking a Union for money sooner is always better than later. In some cases a local will have to vote before a substantial amount of money will be granted and that can take a few weeks, not to mention the time it takes to actually get a check cut.
- ★ Let 'em speak. Offer the Labor organizations an opportunity to get the word out about a struggle happening locally, or talk about something they are doing or just set up a table with their information.

4. Approaching Other Organizations:

- ★ Approaching other community groups that you consider allies might help fund you. After all, they too have a vested interest in the presence of well-trained, experienced organizers in your area. Offer to let them set up an informational table, or give a presentation during lunch one day in exchange for a donation.

5. Other Ways to Raise Money:

- ★ Events. Ask "progressive" acts, (ie bands, poets, performance artists) in your area, to do a freebie and let your group have the door money. It's usually not too hard to find a club, pub or bar that's willing to let you have a benefit night. Then just make sure everyone you know shows up and have a blast.
- ★ Pass the hat. Take up a collection for the group at your meetings (five or more people discussing your group is considered a meeting). It's a great way to give a little at a time and to actually have money for when you need it.
- ★ The list goes on. You can do anything from having your own walk-a-thon to a yard sale, just remember to BE CREATIVE AND HAVE FUN!!!!!!!!!!

[enjoy this sample letter!]



united students against sweatshops

1150 17th St. NW Suite 300 Washington DC 20036; tel: 202-NOSWEAT; fax: 202-293-5308
www.studentsagainstsweatshops.org

Dear Professor Progressive,

I'd like to take the time to tell you about a very unique movement that has swept across campuses in the United States, and literally around the world. You may already know about it.

The student movement against sweatshops, largely made up of a national network of thousands called United Students Against Sweatshops, has galvanized student organizing like no other issue since South African apartheid in the 1980s. And sweatshops go beyond the meaning of the word: USAS activists are organizing campus worker living wage campaigns, farmworker solidarity campaigns, and doing many other things to eliminate global inequality.

At this university, we've participated in a number of ways. [List the number of ways, and don't forget to put them in a positive light.] We're proud of what we've accomplished here and what USAS has as a whole, making real gains in workers' rights, in the collegiate apparel industry, and on our own campuses.

This January, USAS will be holding its fifth national organizing conference in Los Angeles, CA, the sweatshop capital of the United States. There we will be marching with L.A. garment workers to protest Forever 21, a company which the L.A. Garment Workers Center has been protesting for sweatshop abuses right here in the US.

This is a very important conference as many new and young USAS activists are coming together for the first time to share in fun, skills-building, and strategizing for the upcoming years. Now, more than ever, it is important that we, as students, get serious about organizing for social change. These are unprecedented times for the global economy and no one knows the next disaster that is around the corner!

We are raising money locally for our group to travel to this conference, as travel expenses are a little higher than usual for this particular event. We also think it is crucial that we attend: students have so much more power when we can support each other from campus to campus. We are asking you for a \$100 to \$200 donation towards our expenses. Your donation will go a long way towards supporting one the most important student movement in recent years.

I'll be calling you soon after you receive this letter to discuss your thoughts on student organizing and to ask for a contribution. Please consider donating to our group very seriously. Thank you very much.

In solidarity,

Student Radical

Section Eight: Tools for Building Your Group, Building USAS Strength

Outline for USAS Workshop about Organizing Chicago, Summer 2005

GOALS:

- ★ Getting folks to start out thinking in terms of power, campaigns and campaign organizing-- that's what we do, and that's what they're here for.
- ★ Help folks think about sustainability and recruitment for their groups, and for USAS as a whole

(5 min) Introductions- name and what you are working on

(15 min) What is power and what does it look like on campus?

The goal here is to get groups thinking about power and doing a power analysis.

- ★ Introduce this section by saying we want to talk about what power looks like on campus, different ways that different folks have it

What is power?

- ★ Offer definition of power: The ability to make someone do what you want, when they wouldn't ordinarily do it.
- ★ Have folks brainstorm different constituencies on campus. They should come up with the following list: students, workers, faculty, administrators, and community
- ★ Bring up difference between tenured and non-tenured faculty; and how students and professors of color, working class students, women, & trans students and professors often have less access to support resources and/or are listened to less by admin.

USAS and student organizing tries to change these relationships by running campaigns!!

- ★ Offer definition of campaign: A campaign is leveraging power toward a clear goal. A campaign is not education, not mobilizing not protesting – these are good things too, but they are not campaigns. Connect to power discussion: it is about building and leveraging power on a target.

(25 min) GROW Strategy Chart

Get groups thinking about how to plan out a campaign.

- ★ Say, “So, usually, when we think about campaigns, we think in terms of tactics. But before we start talking about tactics, we should talk about the broader strategy you might want to use in your campaign.” (If people don't understand the difference between strategy and tactics, help them figure that out.)
- ★ Give out GROW chart
- ★ Ask: How many of you have seen a GROW chart before? Does someone want to briefly explain why GROW charts are useful? (If no one has, just say, they help to organize your campaign so it can most effectively leverage power on your campus towards your goal, and they help you figure out what concrete steps you can take to make that happen).
- ★ Say, “So now, let's fill out this chart with a sample campaign.” Ask for a volunteer from the group to use their campaign as an example. Get whoever volunteers to describe a little bit about their campaign, just a basic overview. Then, explain that the rest of the group is going to fill in a GROW chart for that campaign, and that they might not have all the specifics, but that's ok—from now on, the campaign is just what the person said it was, and

we can make up any of the missing information (so that it doesn't get into a thing where the person is repeatedly defending their campaign and telling other people what the "right" way to do it is).

- ★ Some important notes to remember as you fill this out with the group:

Goals: What's a long term goal, intermediate, short term—goals have to be concrete, and your short term and intermediate goals have to lead up to your main goal, everything has to be done with the goal in mind. Talk about the importance of mini-victories along the way.

Resources (organizational considerations): It's important to be specific. List what you have, what you want, and any problems your organization might have. The what you want part should figure out how this campaign can strengthen your organization.

Constituents, allies, and opponents: Who can you work with on this campaign? Differences between constituents and allies, differences between opponents and targets. Talk a bit about coalition building, ask about people's experiences with it, what's worked, etc. Say that there's information on different models of coalitions in the USAS organizing manual, and that there will be a training on it in a skill-building session later on.

Targets: A target is a person who can give you what you want. It is always a person. A secondary target is a person or group of people who have power over your target, but don't have the direct power to give you what you want. Often, you have more power over them than your primary target

(10 min) Tactics

We're going to spend a little bit longer on tactics and do a tactics brainstorm. This should transition easily.

Before you brainstorm tactics, brainstorm a list of what tactics should do. The list could include:

- ★ Give people a sense of their own power
- ★ Build intensity!
- ★ Be within the comfort zone and experience of your group but
- ★ Outside the experience of your target!!
- ★ Process that reflects values
- ★ Acknowledge everyone's work (e.g. folks who speak at an event should be ones who did more work rather than those who are necessarily the best public speakers)
- ★ USE EVERY TACTIC to show POWER!!
- ★ Be fun
- ★ Make sure it's media-worthy

Have people brainstorm tactics, talk about tactics they've used on their campuses (this should be fun!)

(20 min) Sustainability and Recruitment

Here, we're trying to make sure groups think about how to sustain themselves and their campaign, organizationally

Tell the group that we're going to shift gears a little, from talking about running a campaign to talking about how to run a group. Say that one of the biggest problems with groups is sustainability, and recruiting new people to make the group sustainable.

Ask: How many people are in your groups? How many seniors? How many first-years?

Try to judge to what extent groups need help with sustainability and recruitment. Have groups with a lot of people, especially a lot of new people, advise groups that are struggling a little more.

Ask questions: (pair up for 5 min) When was a time you saw good recruitment? Is there a common thread among good recruitment stories?

Report back: What is the key to getting people to join groups? What makes people stay in groups? How can you make sure you have an effective group, even when the seniors/people who know what they're doing graduate? Who does what tasks in your group (in terms of year, gender, race, social position within group, personality)?

Write down and go over these points

1. Recruitment of young people is important!
2. Groups need to undertake leadership development, transition knowledge and skills. Have older people advise younger people, or come up with other strategies. (This is important for delegate and rest, #4, too.)
3. What brings people in, and makes them stay, are victories and excitement. People don't like meetings!
4. Take care of yourself! Eat, sleep, rest, delegate and don't get burned out
5. Make sure movement you're building is diverse (but not tokenizing). Prioritize leadership of people traditionally underrepresented in groups. Be welcoming to various groups of people. We'll talk about this more in anti-oppression sections!

How to Facilitate- hand out this sheet and go over it. Facilitating might seem scary- but it is really about getting other folks to speak up and making sure that you are moving along the process. It often means summarizing things that have been said and helping to the group to make a decision once everyone has voiced their opinion.

(10 min) How national networks (like USAS) can strengthen campaigns

Here, we want to show students what national networks like USAS can accomplish in terms of their campaigns on campus

- ★ Tell the group, "So now we want to talk a little about what we, as a network, can do to help each campaigns on each campus."
- ★ Ask questions like: Why do we operate as a network? Why are we meeting here this weekend? Brainstorm what a national network like USAS can add to a campaign.
- ★ Things that should come up:

Power—more students operating together, in concert, are scarier to admins. Mention get-active software.

Tactics—groups can share tactics, do same tactic (like sit-in, rally) all at once to show more power

Resources—we can share materials and information

Skills—we can teach each other what's worked on our campus and what hasn't

Media—to get national media attention, it helps to have a national campaign. But even local media is more likely to turn out if they hear other students are doing similar things; it shows a trend and media reports on trends.

Leadership and Sustainability—campuses with well-established groups can act as leaders for new groups, a national network makes sure campaigns continue, and can provide institutional memory from past campaigns

(5 min) Closing

Do a go-round on one thing you're going to bring back to your campus from this.

The Lovely USAS Facilitation Guide

Or...

Seven Steps to Painless Meeting Facilitation

1. Ensure that everyone gets a chance to speak.

A facilitator has to play referee, ensuring that we don't just have folks shouting stuff out and speaking out of turn. The most common, and possibly most effective, way to make this happen is by taking stack.

When you take stack, meeting participants signal to the facilitator when they have something they'd like to add to the discussion. The facilitator writes their name down, and then goes through the list calling on people. That's just what taking stack is—we're going to talk a lot more about how folks can use stack too further the other goals for the group.

So now let's go back to the goal of giving everyone a chance to speak and think about exactly what that means. We're talking about creating a space for folks who normally aren't big talkers to step up and say their piece. Part of that is getting those folks who tend to dominate meetings, either through the way in which they communicate or how frequently they speak, to take a big step back. So what is this actually going to look like for you as the facilitator? Well, in the context of one meeting, it might make sense to just ask someone their thoughts, remind the whole group about step up/step back, or giving them preference on the stack. The third idea, of giving them preference on the stack means that if they signal to you, you would bump someone to the top of the stack who hasn't spoken yet, or bump someone to the bottom of the stack if they're talking a whole lot.

If you're facilitating a small meeting, you might not need to actually write down a stack—but try to keep a stack in your head, and keep track of who has been talking and who hasn't been and call on people accordingly.

2. Ensure that all voices are heard.

Although you're going giving everyone a chance to speak, that doesn't necessarily mean that they're going to be heard. Often times, people who don't speak as much at meetings, or folks who are simply not male enough don't get their voices heard. It's important that for you as the facilitator to go back and ensure that ideas don't just get lost in the discussion because of who presents them.

One effective tactic for ensuring that voices are heard is saying something like “gee, that's a really good point, Allie, and I think it fits in really well with Camilo's idea to do X.” The idea is to bring the discussion back to the idea that a person brought up. If that doesn't work, it might be a necessity to flat out say that someone's idea is being forgotten, or talked over, and that it's crucial to come back to it. This sort of thing happens a lot with discussions of group dynamics.

3. Empower group members

It's important that someone feels like what they say matters and that they're given credit for it. It's the job of a good facilitator to ensure that ideas aren't co-opted by group members whose voice carries more weight. When a person is given credit for an idea, and the idea is put into action, they feel empowered. They become invested in the group, and feel as though their contributions matter, so they will contribute more. It's important to capture and foster these moments in the meetings, because that's where a lot of the formal empowerment and development of leaders happens.

4. Assign tasks

The purpose of a facilitator is not to dictate orders. So when an idea comes up, it's not the facilitator's job to say you do X, you do Y, and you do Z. As the facilitator, your job is only to encourage group members to step up and get stuff done.

Your other role in the assigning tasks game is going to make sure that the division of labor is fair and reflective of our principles of unity. Make sure that you don't just have the same folks always doing the empowering work, and make sure that you don't have the same folks doing all the onerous work. Also, check the race and gender dynamics of the work breakdown and don't be afraid to point out how things are not reflective of our principles of unity.

5. Frame the discussion in the context of a bigger picture.

Often times at our meetings, we can neglect to hit on the big picture of our work, and get caught up in a series of small tasks. It is important, both for keeping the group excited and committed, as well as to keep the group committed to the broader goals of the organization.

To keep things in perspective, it often times helps to keep a list of the organizations goals. It can be helpful and effective for us to reference those goals and frame our work in their context.

6. Finish in a timely manner

Another problem that meetings have, especially meetings with dumb old liberals, is that they can drag on indefinitely, with one or two dummies blabbering on about this or that. It's important for us to assign times to agenda items at the beginning of every meeting. You don't have to firmly stick to these times, but it's important to at least use them as a guide. In the event that things start dragging on, you can institute a one-minute rule for speaking, so that folks can only say what they've got to say in a minute.

It's imperative that we respect time constraints of folks at meetings, because we want to keep them coming back. We're already asking folks to make a pretty substantial commitment to our work, and to violate their other commitments by having meetings that drag on is obscenely disrespectful.

7. Ensure that folks walk away from the meeting feeling good about the work that they just did.

Sometimes meetings will get pretty heated, especially if folks don't feel like they got to say their piece, or if they feel like a decision got railroaded through them, or if there was just a hot argument. It's important to keep folks in a positive mood for the meeting so that they keep coming back.

One way to make sure that this happens is to not let the discussion get to a point that it starts being destructive. For example, if folks are jumping on each other, and not even finishing their sentences, it makes sense to require a 2 second break between one person speaking and the next. If a few fucked up and destructive things get said, then it might make sense to have folks take 15 seconds to reflect on the conversation that's been happening.

At the end of the meeting, if things have been intense, it's a good idea to have folks do a go-round of something good and something that could be improved about the meeting.

That's all folks...good luck facilitating!