Unions DA

1. Uniqueness – Labor Unions are in sharp decline in the squo, but they can return with new coalitions and social policies. **Wolff 13**[[1]](#footnote-1)

Organized labor's decline in the US over the past half century is well-known; what drove that decline, less so. The New Deal's enemies – big business, Republicans, conservatives – had developed a coordinated strategy by the late 1940s. They would break up the coalition of organized labor, socialist and communist parties: the mass base that had forced through the 1930s New Deal. Then each coalition member could be individually destroyed. One line of attack used anti-communist witch-hunts (McCarthyism) to frighten socialists and labor unions into dissociating themselves from former communist allies. Another attack targeted socialists by equating them with communists and applying the same demonization. Still another attack, the 1947 Taft-Hartley Act, directly weakened labor unions, their organizing capability and their alliance with the left. Business and political leaders, mass media and academics cultivated a paranoid anxiety among Americans: suspect anything even vaguely leftist, see risks of "subversion" everywhere, and avoid organizations unless religious or loudly patriotic. Legal, ideological and police pressures rendered communist and socialist parties tiny and ineffective. Destroying unions took longer. The unionized portion of private sector workers fell from a third to less than 7% now. Since 2007, conservatives used crisis-driven drops in state and city tax revenues to intensify attacks on public employee benefits and unions. Both were denounced as "excessive and unaffordable for taxpayers". That plus public worker layoffs reduced public sector unionization. Nor did labor unions or the left find or implement any successful strategy to counter the 50-year program aimed to destroy them. To reverse organized labor's decline and to rebuild the left requires either reviving the old New Deal coalition or forming a new comparably powerful alliance. That means confronting and outwitting the long demonization of unions and the left. It requires a strategy that engages and wins struggles with employers. More importantly, it requires a strategy to reposition labor unions and their allies as champions of broad social gains for the 99%. To escape the label of "special interest" unions must work for far more than their own members. Advertisement The needed strategy is available. It proposes a new alliance among willing labor unions, community organizations and social movements. The alliance's basic goal is a social transition in which workers cooperatives become an increasing proportion of business enterprises. The increasingly used term workers self-directed enterprises (WSDEs) stresses democratic decision-making.

1. Living wage campaigns give unions a social objective, increased power, and membership. **Keddy**[[2]](#footnote-2)

Living wage campaigns typically consist of a combination of three types of groups. Labour organizations, community organizations and religious groups are the predominant groups that advocate for and participate in living wage campaigns. Community organizations and religious groups often perform similar roles in campaigns and work in conjunction with one another throughout the planning and organizing of the campaign. Successful campaigns have typically resulted from the involvement of all three of these groups (Levi et al., 2002; Nissen, 2000; Zabin & Martin, 1999). While it is usually community organizations or religious groups that initiate the discussion of a living wage, labour organizations often support and join a campaign at the early stages. Campaign organizers focus on getting support from labour unions or local labour councils, who represent multiple unions, during the early part of the organizing process. They bring with them considerable political clout and are often influential to the decisions made by city councils (Bernstein, 2005). They also bring financial support that can be substantially more than what community and religious groups can offer. Depending on the size of their membership, they can also bring a formidable number of their members out to rallies or council meetings to advocate for living wages. However, unions do have limited resources and must consider trade offs between advocating for their members and organizing in a living wage campaign (Levi et al., 2002). This is why it is essential for other organizations to be involved that can dedicate more of their time and energy actively campaigning. Labour unions have largely been supportive of living wage campaigns for a number of reasons. City contracts that require employers to pay living wages make it less competitive for unionized companies to bid on them because they typically already pay higher wages than nonunion companies. This levels the playing field when comparing labour costs to other non-union companies bidding on the same contract (Bernstein, 2005). In many cases, living wages will raise the wages of unionized workers that are already contracted by the city. The campaigns also offer avenues of communication with low wage workers in their industry that can lead to potential organizing opportunities thus increasing the unions membership (Bernstein, 2005; Zabin & Martin, 1999). These reasons for union support for living wages are often criticized by opponents as being more about self-interest than about raising wages for people who are in need (Bernstein, 2005). While there may be some truth to this, unions have had a long history of advocating for higher wages not only for their members, but for non-union workers as well.

1. Impact – Unions destroys firm profits and investment spending. **Sherk**[[3]](#footnote-3)

Union wage gains do not materialize out of thin air. They come out of business earnings. Other union policies, such as union work rules designed to increase the number of workers needed to do a job and stringent job classifications, also raise costs. Often, unionized companies must raise prices to cover these costs, losing customers in the process. Fewer customers and higher costs would be expected to cut businesses' earnings, and economists find that unions have exactly this effect. Unionized companies earn lower profits than are earned by non-union businesses. Studies typically find that unionized companies earn profits between 10 percent and 15 percent lower than those of comparable non-union firms.[17] Unlike the findings with respect to wage effects, the research shows unambiguously that unions directly cause lower profits. Profits drop at companies whose unions win certification elections but remain at normal levels for non-union firms. One recent study found that shareholder returns fall by 10 percent over two years at companies where unions win certification.[18] These studies do not create controversy, because both unions and businesses agree that unions cut profits. They merely disagree over whether this represents a feature or a problem. Unions argue that they get workers their "fair share," while employers complain that union contracts make them uncompetitive. Which Profits Fall? Unions do not have the same effect at all companies. In competitive markets, unions have very little power to raise wages and reduce profits. Companies cannot raise prices without losing business, but if union wage increases come out of normal operating profits, investors take their money elsewhere. However, not all markets are perfectly competitive. Unions can redistribute from profits to wages when firms have competitive advantages. Economic research shows that union wage gains come from redistributing abnormal profits that firms earn from competitive advantages such as limited foreign competition or from growing demand for the company's products. Unions also redistribute the profits that stem from investments in successful R&D projects and long-lasting capital investments.[19] Consider a manufacturing company that invests in productivity-enhancing machines. Workers' output increases, and the company earns higher profits years after the initial investment. It has an advantage in the marketplace over companies that did not make that same investment. Unions redistribute the higher profits from this investment--not the normal return from operating a business--to their members. Unions Reduce Investment In essence, unions "tax" investments that corporations make, redistributing part of the return from these investments to their members. This makes undertaking a new investment less worthwhile. Companies respond to the union tax in the same way they respond to government taxes on investment--by investing less. By cutting profits, unions also reduce the money that firms have available for new investments, so they also indirectly reduce investment. Consider General Motors, now on the verge of bankruptcy. The UAW agreed to concessions in the 2007 contracts and has made more concessions since then. If General Motors had invested successfully in producing an inexpensive electric car, and if sales of that new vehicle had made GM profitable, then the UAW would not have agreed to any concessions. The UAW would be demanding higher wages. After the union tax, R&D investments earn lower returns for GM than for its non-union competitors such as Toyota and Honda. Economic research demonstrates overwhelmingly that unionized firms invest less in both physical capital and intangible R&D than non-union firms do.[20] One study found that unions directly reduce capital investment by 6 percent and indirectly reduce capital investment through lower profits by another 7 percent. This same study also found that unions reduce R&D activity by 15 percent to 20 percent.[21] Other studies find that unions reduce R&D spending by even larger amounts.[22] Research shows that unions directly cause firms to reduce their investments. In fact, investment drops sharply after unions organize a company. One study found that unionizing reduces capital investment by 30 percent--the same effect as a 33 percentage point increase in the corporate tax rate.[23]

And the economic recovery is on the brink – investment and business growth is key to prevent collapse. **Kamalick April 2015**[[4]](#footnote-4)

WASHINGTON (ICIS)--The global economic recovery is continuing, International Monetary Fund (IMF) director Christine Lagarde said on Thursday, but she warned that the recovery “is moderate and uneven and just not good enough”. In a speech in Washington a week before the IMF issues its annual world economic outlook, Lagarde said that the worldwide economy has benefited from “a shot in the arm provided by reduced oil prices” and by improved economic developments in the world’s largest economy, the US. However, she added, “In too many parts of the world, the recovery is not strong enough; in too many parts of the world people do not feel it enough”. In addition, “financial and geopolitical risks have increased”, she said. “It’s not that overall growth is bad,” Lagarde told a financial community audience, “at 3.4% last year it is roughly the average for the last three decades.” In October last year the IMF lowered its forecast for global GDP growth this year to 3.8% from its earlier prediction of 4%. “It is rather that, given the lingering impact of the Great Recession on people - including 50% youth unemployment in some countries - growth is just not good enough,” she said. Lagarde cautioned that the current period of mediocre post-recession growth could become the new normal. “Six months ago, I warned about the risk of a ‘new mediocre’ - low growth for a long time,” she said. “Today, we must prevent that new mediocre from becoming the ‘new reality’.” In hinting at results in the IMF’s coming world economic outlook, Lagarde said that advanced economies appear to be doing slightly better this year than last, with recovery firming in the US and the UK and with improving prospects in the euro area. But, she added, “forecasts for most emerging and developing economies are slightly worse than last year, with lower commodity prices one of the main drivers”. Lagarde cited slowing growth in China, economic difficulties in Russia, stagnation in Brazil and “many parts of the Middle East beset by political and economic turmoil”. “The bottom line is that risks to global financial stability are rising,” she said. She cited potential adverse effects of very low or even negative interest rates in many countries caused “by otherwise necessary accommodative monetary policies”. The problem with long-running low interest rates, she said, is that they “foster higher risk tolerance on the part of investors, which can lead to overpricing”. “And if the low interest environment persists, it can create solvency challenges for life insurers and defined benefit pension funds,” she added. “Here is the big issue,” she said. “While current growth is moderate, so too are medium-term prospects.” She called for increased infrastructure investment by governments worldwide, improving access to finance for small business and easing of investment limits and improvement to business climates. In addition, she said, “In Japan and the euro area, too many tax disincentives still exist.” Lagarde’s remarks on Thursday also were in advance of next week’s meeting of central bank governors and finance ministers from the IMF’s 188 member nations.

#### Economic decline causes nuclear war **Kemp**[[5]](#footnote-5) **10**

The second scenario, called Mayhem and Chaos, is the opposite of the first scenario; everything that can go wrong does go wrong. The world economic situation weakens rather than strengthens, and India, China, and Japan suffer a major reduction in their growth rates, further weakening the global economy. As a result, energy demand falls and the price of fossil fuels plummets, leading to a financial crisis for the energy-producing states, which are forced to cut back dramatically on expansion programs and social welfare. That in turn leads to political unrest: and nurtures different radical groups, including, but not limited to, Islamic extremists. The internal stability of some countries is challenged, and there are more “failed states.” Most serious is the collapse of the democratic government in Pakistan and its takeover by Muslim extremists, who then take possession of a large number of nuclear weapons. The danger of war between India and Pakistan increases significantly. Iran, always worried about an extremist Pakistan, expands and weaponizes its nuclear program. That further enhances nuclear proliferation in the Middle East, with Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and Egypt joining Israel and Iran as nuclear states. Under these circumstances, the potential for nuclear terrorism increases, and the possibility of a nuclear terrorist attack in either the Western world or in the oil-producing states may lead to a further devastating collapse of the world economic market, with a tsunami-like impact on stability. In this scenario, major disruptions can be expected, with dire consequences for two-thirds of the planet’s population.

Robust studies prove **Royal[[6]](#footnote-6) 10**:

First, on the systemic level, Pollins (2008) advances Modelski and Thompson’s (1996) work on leadership cycle theory, finding that **rhythms in the** global **economy are associated with the rise and fall of a pre-eminent power and the** often bloody **transition from one** pre-eminent leader **to the next.** As such, exogenous shocks such as **economic crisis could** usher in a redistribution of power (see also Gilpin, 1981) that **leads to uncertainty about power balances, increasing the risk of miscalc**ulation (Fearon, 1995). Alternatively, even a relatively certain redistribution of power could lead to a permissive environment for conflict as a rising power may seek to challenge a declining power (Werner 1999). Separately, Pollins (1996) also show that global economic cycles combined with parallel leadership cycles impact the likelihood of conflict among major, medium, and small powers, although he suggests that the causes and connections between global economic conditions and security conditions remain unknown.¶ Second, on a dyadic level. Copeland's (1996. 2000) theory of trade expectations suggests that 'future expectation of trade' is a significant variable in understanding economic conditions and security behaviour of states. He argues that interdependent states are likely to gain pacific benefits from trade so long as they have an optimistic view of future trade relations. However, if the expectations of future trade decline, particularly for difficult to replace items such as energy resources, the likelihood for conflict increases, as states will be inclined to use force to gain access to those resources. Crises could potentially be the trigger for decreased trade expectations either on its own or because it triggers protectionist moves by interdependent states.4 ¶ Third, others have considered the link between economic decline and external armed conflict at a national level. **Blomberg and Hess** (2002) **find a strong correlation between internal** conflict **and external conflict**, particularly **during** periods of **economic downturn**. They write, The linkages between internal and external conflict and prosperity are strong and mutually reinforcing. Economic conflict tends to spawn internal conflict, which in turn returns the favour. Moreover, the presence of a recession lends to amplify the extent to which international and external conflicts self-rein force each other. (Blomberg & Hess. 2002. p. 89) Economic decline has also been linked with an increase in the likelihood of terrorism (Blomberg. Hess. & Weerapana, 2004), which has the capacity to spill across borders and lead to external tensions. ¶ Furthermore, crises generally reduce the popularity of a sitting government. "Diversionary theory" suggests that, when facing unpopularity arising from economic decline, sitting **governments have** increased **incentives to fabricate** external military **conflicts to create a 'rally** **around the flag' effect**. Wang (1996), DeRouen (1995), and Blombcrg. Mess, and Thacker (2006) find supporting evidence showing that economic decline and use of force are at least indirectly correlated. Gelpi (1997), Miller (1999). and Kisangani and Pickering (2009) suggest that the tendency towards diversionary tactics are greater for democratic states than autocratic states, due to the fact that democratic leaders are generally more susceptible to being removed from office due to lack of domestic support. DeRouen (2000) has provided evidence showing that **periods of weak economic performance in the** **U**nited **S**tates, and thus weak Presidential popularity, **are** statistically **linked to** an increase in **the use of force**.

Unions DA Frontlines

AT Unions help workers

Unions harm workers by a) making it harder to create change in the workplace b) more expensive to create change and c) don’t reward good workers **Sherk**[[7]](#footnote-7)

**Unionizing significantly changes the workplace** in addition to its effects on wages or jobs. Employers are prohibited from negotiating directly with unionized employees. Certified unions become employees' exclusive collective bargaining representatives. **All discussions about pay,** performance, promotions**, or** any other **working conditions must occur between the union and the employer.** An employer may not change working conditions--including raising salaries--without negotiations. **Unionized employers must pay thousands of dollars in attorney's fees and spend months negotiating before making any changes in the workplace**. Unionized companies often avoid making changes because the benefits are not worth the time and cost of negotiations. Both of these effects make **unionized businesses [are therefore] less flexible and less competitive**.[6] Final union contracts typically give workers group identities instead of treating them as individuals. Unions do not have the resources to monitor each worker's performance and tailor the contract accordingly. Even if they could, they would not want to do so. Unions want employees to view the union--not their individual achievements--as the source of their economic gains. As a result, union contracts typically base pay and promotions on seniority or detailed union job classifications. **Unions rarely allow employers to base pay on individual performance or promote workers on the basis of individual ability.**[7] Consequently, union contracts compress wages: They suppress the wages of more productive workers and raise the wages of the less competent. Unions redistribute wealth between workers. Everyone gets the same seniority-based raise regardless of how much or little he contributes, and this reduces wage inequality in unionized companies.[8] But this increased equality comes at a cost to employers. **Often, the best workers will not work under union contracts that put a cap on their wages, so union firms have difficulty attracting and retaining top employees**.[9]

Unions lead to fewer jobs **Sherk**[[8]](#footnote-8)

Unions Reduce Jobs Lower investment obviously hinders the competitiveness of unionized firms. The Detroit automakers have done so poorly in the recent economic downturn in part because they invested far less than their non-union competitors in researching and developing fuel-efficient vehicles. When the price of gas jumped to $4 a gallon, consumers shifted away from SUVs to hybrids, leaving the Detroit carmakers unable to compete and costing many UAW members their jobs. Economists would expect reduced investment, coupled with the intentional effort of the union cartel to reduce employment, to cause unions to reduce jobs in the companies they organize. **Economic research shows** exactly this: **Over the long term, unionized jobs disappear.** Consider the manufacturing industry. Most Americans take it as fact that manufacturing jobs have decreased over the past 30 years. However, that is not fully accurate. Chart 1 shows manufacturing employment for union and non-union workers. Unionized manufacturing jobs fell by 75 percent between 1977 and 2008. Non-union manufacturing employment increased by 6 percent over that time. In the aggregate, only unionized manufacturing jobs have disappeared from the economy. As a result, collective bargaining coverage fell from 38 percent of manufacturing workers to 12 percent over those years. Manufacturing Employment: **Union vs. Non-union Manufacturing jobs have fallen in both sectors since 2000, but non-union workers have fared much better: 38 percent of unionized manufacturing jobs have disappeared since 2000, compared to 18 percent of non-union jobs.[**24] Other industries experienced similar shifts. Chart 2 shows union and non-union employment in the construction industry. Unlike the manufacturing sector, **the construction industry has grown considerably** since the late 1970s. However, in the aggregate, that growth has occurred **exclusively in non-union jobs, expanding 159 percent since 1977. Unionized construction jobs fell by 17 percent.** As a result, union coverage fell from 38 percent to 16 percent of all construction workers between 1977 and 2008.[25] Private Construction Employment: Union vs. Non-union This pattern holds across many industries: Between new companies starting up and existing companies expanding, non-union jobs grow by roughly 3 percent each year, while 3 percent of union jobs disappear.[26] In the long term, unionized jobs disappear and unions need to replenish their membership by organizing new firms. Union jobs have disappeared especially quickly in industries where unions win the highest relative wages.[27] **Widespread unionization reduces employment opportunities**

Unions lead to higher wages

This is not a causal link just correlation **Sherk**[[9]](#footnote-9)

But these studies do not show that unionizing would give the typical worker 20 percent higher wages: **Correlation does not imply causation**. Controlling for factors like age and education, the average worker in Silicon Valley earns more than the average worker in Memphis, but moving every worker in Memphis to Silicon Valley would not raise his or her wages. Workers in Silicon Valley earn more than elsewhere because they have specialized skills and work for high-paying technology companies, not because they picked the right place to live. Similarly, **it is not necessarily unions that raise wages. They may simply organize workers who would naturally earn higher wages anyway. Unions do not organize random companies.** They target large and profitable firms that tend to pay higher wages. **Union contracts also make firing underperforming workers difficult, so unionized companies try to avoid hiring workers who might prove to be underperformers.** High-earning workers do not want seniority schedules to hold them back and therefore avoid unionized companies.

AT Good for Firms

Unions universally harm firms, they lead to decreases in productivity which in turn harm profit **Sherk**[[10]](#footnote-10)

Union wage gains do not materialize out of thin air. They come out of business earnings. Other union policies, such as union work rules designed to increase the number of workers needed to do a job and stringent job classifications, also raise costs. **Often, unionized companies must raise prices to cover these costs, losing customers in the process. Fewer customers and higher costs would be expected to cut businesses' earnings, and economists find that unions have exactly this effect.** Unionized companies earn lower profits than are earned by non-union businesses. **Studies typically find that unionized companies earn profits between 10 percent and 15 percent lower than those of comparable non-union firms**.[17] Unlike the findings with respect to wage effects, **the research shows unambiguously that unions directly cause lower profits.** Profits drop at companies whose unions win certification elections but remain at normal levels for non-union firms. One recent study found that shareholder returns fall by 10 percent over two years at companies where unions win certification.[18] These studies do not create controversy, because both unions and businesses agree that unions cut profits. They merely disagree over whether this represents a feature or a problem. Unions argue that they get workers their "fair share," while employers complain that union contracts make them uncompetitive. Which Profits Fall? Unions do not have the same effect at all companies. In competitive markets, unions have very little power to raise wages and reduce profits. Companies cannot raise prices without losing business, but if union wage increases come out of normal operating profits, investors take their money elsewhere. However, not all markets are perfectly competitive. Unions can redistribute from profits to wages when firms have competitive advantages. Economic research shows that union wage gains come from redistributing abnormal profits that firms earn from competitive advantages such as limited foreign competition or from growing demand for the company's products. Unions also redistribute the profits that stem from investments in successful R&D projects and long-lasting capital investments.[19] Consider a manufacturing company that invests in productivity-enhancing machines. Workers' output increases, and the company earns higher profits years after the initial investment. It has an advantage in the marketplace over companies that did not make that same investment. Unions redistribute the higher profits from this investment--not the normal return from operating a business--to their members. **Unions Reduce Investment In essence, unions "tax" investments that corporations make, redistributing part of the return from these investments to their members**. This makes undertaking a new investment less worthwhile. **Companies respond to the union tax in the same way they respond to government taxes on investment--by investing less. By cutting profits, unions also reduce the money that firms have available for new investments, so they also indirectly reduce investment.** Consider General Motors, now on the verge of bankruptcy. The UAW agreed to concessions in the 2007 contracts and has made more concessions since then. If General Motors had invested successfully in producing an inexpensive electric car, and if sales of that new vehicle had made GM profitable, then the UAW would not have agreed to any concessions. The UAW would be demanding higher wages. After the union tax, R&D investments earn lower returns for GM than for its non-union competitors such as Toyota and Honda. Economic research demonstrates overwhelmingly that unionized firms invest less in both physical capital and intangible R&D than non-union firms do.[20] **One study found that unions directly reduce capital investment by 6 percent and indirectly reduce capital investment through lower profits by another 7 percent.** This same study also found that unions reduce R&D activity by 15 percent to 20 percent.[21] Other studies find that unions reduce R&D spending by even larger amounts.[22] Research shows that unions directly cause firms to reduce their investments. In fact, investment drops sharply after unions organize a company. **One study found that unionizing reduces capital investment by 30 percent**--the same effect as a 33 percentage point increase in the corporate tax rate.[23]

Economy as a whole

Labor cartels attempt to reduce the number of jobs in an industry in order to raise the wages of their members. **Unions cut into corporate profitability, also reducing business investment and employment over the long term.** These effects do not help the job market during normal economic circumstances, and they cause particular harm during recessions. **Economists have found that unions delay economic recoveries. States with more union members took considerably longer** than those with fewer union members **to recover from the 1982 and 1991 recessions**.[34] Policies designed to expand union membership whether workers want it or not--such as the misnamed Employee Free Choice Act--will delay the recovery. Economic research has demonstrated that **policies adopted to encourage union membership in the 1930s deepened and prolonged the Great Depression.** President Franklin Roosevelt signed the National Labor Relations Act. He also permitted industries to collude to reduce output and raise prices--but only if the companies in that industry unionized and paid above-market wages. This policy of cartelizing both labor and businesses caused over half of the economic losses that occurred in the 1930s.[35] Encouraging labor cartels will also lengthen the current recession.

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