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Press Clippings for the period of March 5 – 10, 2011
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English Media

March 10

Wisconsin labor bill: What happens now?

In a surprise move, Wisconsin Senate Republicans last night used some legislative maneuvering to pass a bill stripping most public-sector workers of collective bargaining rights. But it looks like the skirmishing over the bill--a forthright challenge to the power of organized labor, that in recent weeks had brought throngs of protesters to the state capitol--isn't over by a long shot.

http://news.yahoo.com/s/yblog_thelookout/20110310/ts_yblog_thelookout/wisconsin-labor-bill-what-happens-now

March 9

Wisconsin Senate Limits Bargaining by Public Workers

CHICAGO — The bitter political standoff in Wisconsin over Gov. Scott Walker's bid to sharply curtail collective bargaining for public-sector workers ended abruptly Wednesday night as Republican colleagues in the State Senate successfully manœuvred to adopt a bill doing just that.

http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/10/us/10wisconsin.html?_r=1

<http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2011/03/06/us/public-private-employees.html?ref=us>

Today's letters: Public sector workers are not the problem

Public sector workers should not be forced to pay for a financial crisis that they did not create. Unionized public workers often hold the key to financial recovery, providing essential services and spending their hard-earned salaries in local communities.

<http://fullcomment.nationalpost.com/2011/03/09/todays-letters-public-sector-workers-are-not-the-problem/>

March 8

Public Commission Report Makes Nine Recommendations for the Future of Legal Aid in British Columbia

The Public Commission on Legal Aid (Public Commission) announced today the release of a report containing nine recommendations for the improvement of the legal aid system in British Columbia. The report represents the culmination of a broad public engagement process that included hearings in 11 communities throughout the province and an open call for written submissions.

<http://www.marketwire.com/press-release/Public-Commission-on-Legal-Aid-in-British-Columbia-Releases-Report-1407912.htm>

B.C. legal aid system fails to meet basic needs – Report

B.C.'s legal aid system is failing to meet even the most basic needs and should be fully funded as an essential public service, a public commission has concluded.

<http://www.vancouversun.com/legal+system+fails+meet+basic+needs+report/4403013/story.html#ixzz1GEA4RTYs>

Legal Services Society response to the report of the Public Commission on Legal Aid

Mark Benton, QC, Executive Director of the Legal Services Society, made the following statement in response to the report of the Public Commission on Legal Aid.

<http://www.newswire.ca/en/releases/archive/March2011/08/c9038.html>

Attorney-general rejects claims that B.C. legal-aid is in crisis

Attorney-general Barry Penner has tossed cold water on a call for more government funding for legal aid in the province, which a hard-hitting report found was failing to meet “even the most basic needs” of British Columbians.

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/british-columbia/study-finds-bc-legal-aid-fails-to-meet-basic-needs/article1933411/>

Legal aid should be essential service: report

Legal assistance for low-income people should be declared an essential public service and receive stable government funding, says a lawyer who was appointed by the profession to look into British Columbia's legal aid system.

<http://www.metronews.ca/vancouver/local/article/796848--legal-aid-should-be-essential-service-report>

New report says legal aid system failing most needy in B.C.

British Columbia's legal-aid system is failing those who need it most, says a new report from a public commission.

<http://www.straight.com/article-378955/vancouver/new-report-says-legal-aid-system-failing-most-needy-bc>

Top jurist urges review of 'coercive' plea bargaining system

A top jurist has condemned plea bargaining as a form of coercion that tempts an intolerable number of innocent people into pleading guilty to avoid a harsh sentence.

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/top-jurist-urges-review-of-coercive-plea-bargaining-system/article1933161/>

March 7

Back-to-work bill 'unconstitutional'

Back-to-work legislation that ended a legal strike by Quebec Crown prosecutors and government lawyers is unconstitutional, according to the leaders of two associations.

<http://www.lawtimesnews.com/201103078288/Headline-News/Back-to-work-bill-unconstitutional>

The Hill: Real cost of new crime laws

Prime Minister Stephen Harper and his dauntless duo of Justice Minister Rob Nicholson and Public Safety Minister Vic Toews have 24 crime bills in the hopper.

<http://www.lawtimesnews.com/201103078287/Commentary/The-Hill-Real-cost-of-new-crime-laws>

March 6

B.C. court backlog may benefit defendants

A lack of funding for B.C.'s justice system could result in criminal cases being dismissed because a defendant's right to a fair and speedy trial is in jeopardy, according to the B.C. Crown Counsel Association president.

<http://www.torontosun.com/news/canada/2011/03/06/17515746.html>

FP's Terence Corcoran: Why the public sector is hanging on for all it's worth

To Canada's union leaders, the old putdown applies: They couldn't organize a one-float parade. They can't, for example, organize the relatively lower-paid workers at even one Wal-Mart outlet, despite more than a decade of trying and millions of dollars spent.

<http://opinion.financialpost.com/2011/03/04/terence-corcoran-why-the-public-sector-is-hanging-on-for-all-it%E2%80%99s-worth/>

March 5

We must be honest about crime to develop smart policies

When the Macdonald-Laurier Institute published Scott Newark's paper on Canadian crime statistics earlier this month, criticism was harsh and voluble.

<http://www.calgaryherald.com/news/must+honest+about+crime+develop+smart+policies/4388050/story.html#ixzz1GEEwJVdG>

Death benefits not meant as income: court

The Supreme Court of Canada has deemed the federal government's practice of reducing amounts to be paid in death benefits as its former employees grow older --something its opponents call "discriminatory" and "grossly unfair" -- as fair and reasonable.

<http://www.edmontonjournal.com/news/Death+benefits+meant+income+court/4389474/story.html>

Supreme Court rejects appeal of pension payout ruling

The Supreme Court of Canada has dismissed the appeal of the widows of two former federal employees, lifting the threat of a payout the government had said would cost it more than \$2 billion.

<http://www.montrealgazette.com/news/Supreme+Court+rejects+appeal+pension+payout+ruling/4388309/story.html#ixzz1GEJ5K5sr>

Public spat

As the showdown with public-sector unions escalates in the U.S. Midwest, no one is likely more nervous than Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty, who will seek re-election in the fall.

<http://www.financialpost.com/news/Public+spat/4388566/story.html>

Special prosecutors' fitness for job probed

The province plans to examine the qualifications of special prosecutors hired to take on cases involving police officers in the wake of a pair of recent acquittals.

<http://www.winnipegfreepress.com/local/special-prosecutors-fitness-for-job-probed-117393308.html>

Manitoba prosecutor policy to be reviewed

The provincial justice minister is promising to review the way Manitoba Justice hires independent lawyers to prosecute cases where police officers and others with direct connections to the criminal justice system are charged with crimes.

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/story/2011/03/02/man-crown-attorney-review-swan.html>

Média francophones

7 mars

Un assaut qui mobilise les syndicats américains

Se peut-il que l'assaut dont font l'objet les employés du secteur public dans certains États américains, dont le Wisconsin et l'Ohio, finisse par profiter au mouvement syndical des États-Unis?

http://www.cyberpresse.ca/international/etats-unis/201103/06/01-4376669-un-assaut-qui-mobilise-les-syndicats-americains.php?utm_categorieinterne=traffidriver&utm_contenuinterne=envoyer_cbp

6 mars

Merci Mme Courchesne

Merci du traitement que vous avez tout récemment réservé aux officiers de justice qui ne comptaient pas leurs innombrables heures de bénévolat au service de votre gouvernement, les procureurs aux poursuites criminelles et pénales.

<http://www.cyberpresse.ca/le-soleil/opinions/carrefour/201103/04/01-4376059-merci-mme-courchesne.php>