

Obama Cabinet: Good and Bad News

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Labor Reborn: A Department of Labor Worthy of the Name

According to [news reports](#), president elect Obama is considering for Labor Secretary three people who actually know something about labor and actually support the intended mission of the labor department, which is protecting the rights of laborers. And by laborers, I mean you. If you have not recently received a government bailout, you're one of us. Here's the short list:

- Rep. George Miller, D-Calif., chairman of House Education and Labor Committee
- Former Rep. David Bonior, member of Obama's Transition Economic Advisory Board
- Andy Stern, president of Service Employees International Union

Any of these men as Secretary of Labor would be a 180 degree reversal from the past eight years, during which the so-called labor department has done everything it could to damage the labor movement and the rights of working people.

The National Labor Relations Board has [a majority of its seats](#) vacant and waiting for appointments. If similar care is taken in making those appointments, we will be in for a whole new nation, and therefore world, assuming we can all survive long enough to reap the benefits of a reborn labor movement.

Congress is prepared to send to President Obama the Employee Free Choice Act, putting teeth into the legalization of the right to organize in your workplace.

While many of Obama's proposed appointments strike me as hugely misguided, the approach he is taking on labor appears ideal. Maybe that should tell us something. If the peace movement worked as well as the labor movement, or if the labor movement worked for peace, would Obama be considering people like Emanuel, Gates, and Powell for positions in his administration? Solidarity. Forever.

Lying 101: Obama Considering Colin Powell for Secretary of Education

According to [news reports](#), one of the names president elect Obama is considering for running our national education system is Colin Powell.

This is not from The Onion, but the Houston Chronicle. But there's hardly a non-humorous way to envision it. Presumably schools will be required to institute new policies in favor of [cheating on tests](#) if they want to keep their federal funding. Lying will be developed as an academic field fully integrated in the curriculum from preschool on.

And if you thought military recruiters had too much access to kids, just wait. If you thought history books were already flawed by leaving out everything that happens between wars, get ready.

Are we supposed to laugh or cry? Is this what anyone voted for? War criminals running domestic departments? This would be like putting Jane Harman in charge of our "homeland"'s security. Oh. Wait.

The good news is that Obama is considering people who actually know and care about labor to run the department of labor. And there are other good names on his list in consideration for other departments. But it's hard to read them, what with the nausea.

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