



**The 13th Annual Conference of the  
Coalition of Graduate Employee Unions  
July 22 - 25, 2004  
Columbia University**

## **OPPOSITION TO NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS BOARD RULING IN BROWN UNIVERSITY BARRING GRADUATE EMPLOYEES FROM ORGANIZING UNDER THE NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS ACT**

WHEREAS, 260,000 teaching and research assistants are currently identified by the US Department of Education as part of the higher education instructional workforce; and

WHEREAS, in 2000 the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) held that graduate employees at New York University (NYU) are employees entitled to organize for collective bargaining under the National Labor Relations Act (Act), prompting collective bargaining campaigns in a number of private universities; and

WHEREAS, on July 13, 2004, the NLRB by a 3-2 vote along partisan lines, overruled the NYU decision in the case of Brown University, ruling that graduate teaching and research assistants are not employees eligible to unionize under the act; and

WHEREAS, in the words of the dissenting members of the Board, this decision is "woefully out of touch with contemporary academic reality...seeing the academic world as somehow removed from the economic realm that labor law addresses -as if there was no room in the ivory tower for a sweatshop":

RESOLVED, that the CGEU pursue all possible avenues to reverse the decision and to extend the benefits of unionization to graduate employees at private institutions.

RESOLVED, that CGEU continue its efforts to organize graduate employees at public and private universities.

*July 25, 2004*