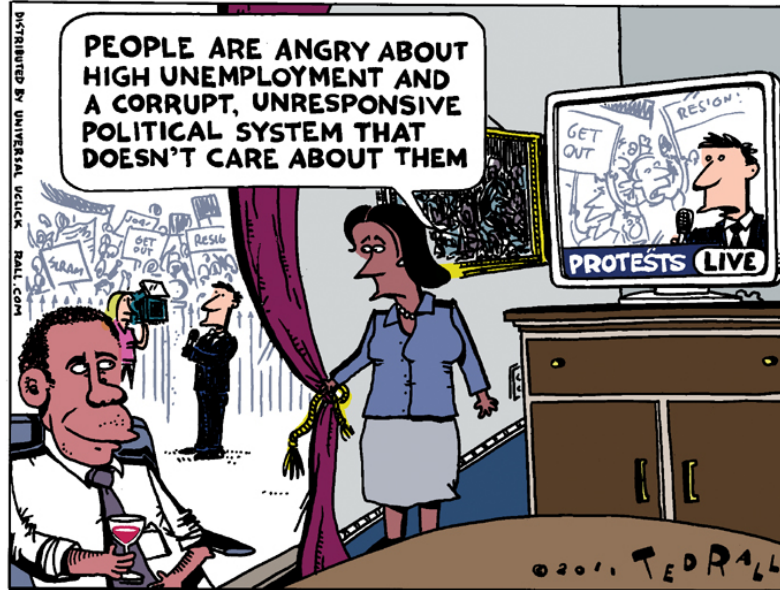


Military Resistance 9C2



“I Don’t Think That’s Anything That Anybody Wants”

Iraq Veterans Against The War Calls On Wisconsin National Guard To Defy Orders To Deploy Against Workers’ Rights



March 04, 2011 by Bryant Jordan, Military.com [Excerpts]

Some veterans’ organizations are adding their collective voices to the ongoing protests in Wisconsin, including one group that has called on Wisconsin National Guardsmen to ignore their orders if deployed in response to the demonstrations.

“Historically, we’ve seen how it was when the National Guard is called out” against protesters, said Aaron Hughes of Iraq Veterans Against the War, citing anti-Vietnam War demonstrations like the one at Kent State University that resulted in the deaths of four students.

“I don’t think that’s anything that anybody wants,” he said.

Hughes, who served in Iraq while a member of the Illinois National Guard, was in Madison with other IVAW members to support the demonstrators.

Protesters have been picketing the Wisconsin Capitol since Feb. 13 in response to Gov. Scott Walker’s effort to end the teachers’ union right to collective bargaining around anything except pay.

As the union built support from other public employee unions, including police and firefighters, Walker threatened to call up the National Guard if any of them went on strike.

That idea was criticized by Votevets.org, an organization that works to get Iraq and Afghanistan veterans elected to public office.

“The National Guard is not (the governor’s) personal intimidation force to be mobilized to quash political dissent,” Iraq War vet and Votevets.org member Robin Eckstein of Appleton, said in a statement released by the group.

“The Guard is to be used in case of true emergencies and disasters, to help the people of Wisconsin, not to bully political opponents,” he said. “Considering many veterans and Guard members are union members, it’s even more inappropriate to use the Guard in this way. This is a very dangerous line the Governor is about to cross.”

Additionally, Votevets.org is promoting a letter-writing campaign, asking vets to support not only the Wisconsin workers, but those in Indiana and Ohio, where Republican governors are also pressing unions to give up collective bargaining and other benefits. In a statement, the group’s interim chairman warned that veterans across the country will be affected by outcomes in these states, noting that more than 2 million vets belong to unions.

“For those veterans who are union members, this is a matter of having a fair wage, benefits, and decent health insurance,” said Ashwin Madia, a former Marine JAG who served in Iraq. “On top of that, the same public employees under attack from right-wing governors help run veterans’ homes, drive disabled veterans to their VA center for treatment, and help homeless veterans at transitional housing programs.”

Lt. Col. Jackie Guthrie, a spokeswoman for the Wisconsin National Guard, said she was aware of the IVAW’s call to state guardsmen but would not comment on it.

“I’m not a politician. I’m a Soldier,” she said. “I’m not getting into a debate of politics. We follow orders, and no such order has been given.”

MORE:

IVAW In Madison: “The Entire Crowd Roared Its Approval And The Sound Was Deafening; You Could’ve Heard The Noise Miles Away From The Rotunda”



IVAW marches in Madison, Wisconsin, in support of worker's rights.

2011-03-01 By Wes Davey, Iraq Veterans Against The War (www.ivaw.org/)

I was in Madison on Saturday when Iraq Veterans Against the War group was invited to speak. The crowd went crazy when we filed into the rotunda of the Wisconsin State Capital that evening, all of them cheering our small group on.

As we each took a brief turn speaking, the entire crowd roared its approval and the sound was deafening; you could've heard the noise miles away from the rotunda.

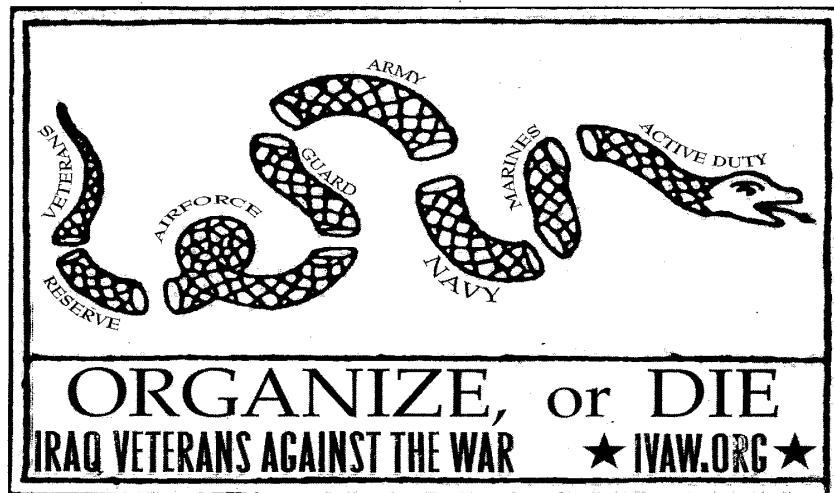
Except for the RNC protests, I've never witnessed this kind of approval of our message before.

Driving home that night, I felt that the crowd response was a validation of all that we had been trying to do since IVAW was formed too many years ago, a repudiation of the past where we had been accused of being unpatriotic, and that people finally got our message.

And it felt good.

MORE:

**“We Stand With Public Employees In
Their Fight For Better Working
Conditions And Call On The
Wisconsin National Guard To Refuse
Any Call-Up Orders Which Ask Them
To Repress Their Fellow Worker”**
**“IVAW-Madison Had The Pleasure Of
Welcoming Members From The Region
To Our City To Join The Fight In
Defending Public Workers Who Are
Under Attack”**



2011-03-03 By Todd Dennis, Iraq Veterans Against The War (www.ivaw.org/) [Excerpts]

This past weekend, IVAW-Madison had the pleasure of welcoming members from the region to our city to join the fight in defending public workers who are under attack by our new Governor and his “Budget Repair Bill.”

This bill would remove the right of public workers to collectively bargain for better working conditions in a political move unrelated to the current budget shortfall.

Since his inauguration in January he has spent over \$140 million on special interests, specifically two items which put the current budget into a deficit before the end of the

fiscal year: a tax break for businesses is projected to have a one-time cost of \$11.8 million, while the tax deduction for Health Savings Accounts (HSA) will cost the state \$49 million in tax revenue over two years.

His 'budget repair bill' is just partisan politics in action, the removal of collective bargaining rights is not related to the budget crisis that we now face in Wisconsin and is now faced in many states around the country.

The occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan have cost Wisconsin taxpayers over \$18.5 billion dollars in the past 9 and a half years.

At the same time the funding from the federal government to states has dwindled and only those on Wall Street whose speculation caused the current financial crisis have received a bailout.

Workers in this country have been asked and have time and again given up pay and benefits only to see their bosses get a larger bonus or to see their jobs eliminated.

Since 1981 corporations have seen their tax burden decrease by 50 per cent. Janesville lost its GM plant, workers at Mercury Marine were threatened with the loss of over 600 jobs in order to give major concessions, Harley-Davidson employees accepted a 7 year pay freeze when the company threatened to move out of it's home state of Wisconsin.

Now the governor of Wisconsin wants public sector workers to give up a right which some of their predecessors gave their lives to earn.

To top it off he boldly remarked that he was prepared to deploy the Wisconsin National Guard in his union busting effort.

For Wisconsin residents, veterans and members of the Guard; the threat should not be taken lightly.

In 1886 seven striking workers who were striving for an eight-hour workday were killed by members of the Wisconsin National Guard while marching peacefully.

It is unethical for the governor to think that he has his own militia to force through his political agenda when many of those same members of the Wisconsin National Guard are those same public employees: teachers, fire fighters, police officers, nurses, and others.

As former public employees in the U.S. military we stand with public employees in their fight for better working conditions and call on the Wisconsin National Guard to refuse any call-up orders which ask them to repress their fellow worker.

IVAW members read part or all of the statement released by the organization and reminded the crowd that we were/are public workers numerous times over the weekend.



DO YOU HAVE A FRIEND OR RELATIVE IN THE MILITARY?

Forward Military Resistance along, or send us the address if you wish and we'll send it regularly. Whether in Afghanistan, Iraq or stuck on a base in the USA, this is extra important for your service friend, too often cut off from access to encouraging news of growing resistance to the wars, inside the armed services and at home. Send email requests to address up top or write to: The Military Resistance, Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657. Phone: 888.711.2550

AFGHANISTAN WAR REPORTS

Foreign Occupation “Servicemember” Killed Somewhere Or Other In Afghanistan: Nationality Not Announced

March 5, 2010 AP

A foreign servicemember died following an improvised explosive device attack in southern Afghanistan yesterday.

Twice As Many U.S. Soldiers Wounded In Battle Last Year

**Required Limb Amputations
Than In Either Of The Two
Previous Years:
“Soldiers Who Have Lost Two
Limbs And Their Testicles Are A
New Category Of Survivor”
“The Actual Number Of Patients
With The Injuries Increased Even
More Drastically”
“I’ve Seen These Types Of Injuries
Before. What I Haven’t Seen Is Them
Coming In Over And Over And Over
Again”**

The actual number of patients with the injuries increased even more drastically.

In 2009, 75 soldiers underwent amputation and 21 lost more than one limb. In 2010, 171 soldiers had amputations and 65 lost more than one limb. GU injuries increased from 52 to 142 over the same period.

March 4, 2011 By David Brown, Washington Post Staff Writer [Excerpts]

Doctors and nurses treating soldiers injured in Afghanistan have begun speaking of a new “signature wound” - two legs blown off at the knee or higher, accompanied by damage to the genitals and pelvic injuries requiring at least a temporary colostomy.

Twice as many U.S. soldiers wounded in battle last year required limb amputations than in either of the two previous years.

Three times as many lost more than one limb, and nearly three times as many suffered severe wounds to their genitals.

In most cases, the limbs are severed in the field when a soldier steps on a buried mine.

The increase in both rate and number of such wounds is most likely a result of the troop surge in Afghanistan that began last spring, combined with a counterinsurgency strategy that emphasizes foot patrols in villages and on farm compounds.

It was noticed by military surgeons in Afghanistan last fall and quantified in late December by a team of surgeons at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany, where virtually every evacuated soldier stops en route to the United States.

"I've seen these types of injuries before. What I haven't seen is them coming in over and over and over again," said John B. Holcomb, a trauma surgeon at the University of Texas at Houston and retired Army colonel who helped identify the trend.

The report prepared by Holcomb and two surgeons at Landstuhl has circulated at the highest levels of civilian and military command in the past two months.

It shows that from 2009 to 2010, the proportion of war casualties arriving at Landstuhl who had had a limb amputated rose to 11 percent from 7 percent - a 60 percent increase.

The fraction suffering genitourinary (GU) injuries increased to 9.1 percent from 4.8 percent - a 90 percent increase.

The actual number of patients with the injuries increased even more drastically.

In 2009, 75 soldiers underwent amputation and 21 lost more than one limb. In 2010, 171 soldiers had amputations and 65 lost more than one limb. GU injuries increased from 52 to 142 over the same period.

Month-by-month totals were not provided, but numerous people who have seen the full report say that multiple-limb amputations rose especially steeply starting in September. Lt. Col. Paul Pasquina, a physician who heads the amputee program at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, recently confirmed that those injuries had "gone up a lot."

Also on the increase are patients requiring "hip disarticulation" - the removal of the entire thigh bone, which makes fitting and using a prosthesis more difficult.

Of the 142 soldiers with genitourinary wounds who arrived at Landstuhl last year, 40 percent - 58 men in all - suffered injury to the testicles.

Of that group, 47 had injury to one testicle, and 21 men lost a testicle.

Eleven soldiers had injuries to both testicles, and eight lost both testicles.

Body armor, which has greatly reduced fatalities, usually includes a triangular flap that protects the groin from projectiles coming from the front.

It does not protect the area between the legs from an upward blast.

Although the U.S. Army Medical Command released the data on genital injuries, military officials are reluctant to discuss these wounds further.

A recent medical journal article that reviewed more than 800 GU injuries suffered from 2001 to 2008 (mostly in Iraq, not Afghanistan) reported that 9 percent involved damage to the testicles. That suggests the proportion of GU injuries involving the testicles is growing. The review provided no data on the on soldiers who had lost both testicles, so it is unclear whether that number is rising.

Anecdotal evidence, however, suggests it is.

In mid-October, a Washington Post reporter attended a weekly videoconference in which military medical personnel from around the world discuss the previous week's severe trauma cases. Of the 13 patients on the agenda, many had lost limbs, and three had lost both legs and both testicles.

Medical staff at Landstuhl also noticed a rise in severe genital injuries last fall.

"In my 21/2 years here, it's just started," intensive-care unit nurse Kathryn Gillespie said in late October.

Most critically injured soldiers arrive at Landstuhl unconscious or heavily sedated. Some regain consciousness for the first time since the battlefield during their two- or three-day stay. Gillespie described a typical awakening.

"The first thing we let them know is they're in Germany. We tell them, 'You're hurt, but you're okay.' Then they want to do a scan of their body. They ask, 'Is my junk all together?' They want to check their 'package.' Then they check their arms and legs. This all happens probably within 15 minutes of being off sedation."

Many patients, minds clouded by illness and medication, "discover" their injuries more than once during the stay.

Each time, they ask nurses and doctors to explain what happened and what lies ahead.

"It sickens us. It's devastating," said Gillespie, who has twin sons who served in the military in Iraq.

The long-term prospects for the recent double-amputees are a mixture of the known and unknown. A study published last year compared 73 Vietnam War veterans and 61 Iraq or Afghanistan veterans who had lost two or more limbs. About 70 percent of each group experienced phantom pain in their lost limbs.

An increased risk for cardiovascular disease is well-recognized in amputees, even in those who are fit:

One in six of the Vietnam veterans, whose average age was 61, had suffered heart attacks.

Soldiers who have lost two limbs and their testicles, however, are a new category of survivor.

They will require testosterone supplementation for life. While infertile, some might be able to have sexual intercourse.

A search of the medical literature found no articles about their long-term care, quality of life or psychological adjustment.

**THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO COMPREHENSIBLE REASON TO BE IN THIS EXTREMELY HIGH RISK LOCATION AT THIS TIME, EXCEPT THAT THE PACK OF TRAITORS THAT RUN THE GOVERNMENT IN D.C. WANT YOU THERE TO DEFEND THEIR IMPERIAL DREAMS:
That is not a good enough reason.**



US soldiers on patrol pass the wreckage of a car after an explosion in the Arghandab district of Kandahar province, Afghanistan, Feb. 27, 2011. AP Photo/Allauddin Khan)

**POLITICIANS CAN'T BE COUNTED ON TO HALT
THE BLOODSHED**

**THE TROOPS HAVE THE POWER TO STOP THE
WARS**

MILITARY NEWS

NOT ANOTHER DAY NOT ANOTHER DOLLAR NOT ANOTHER LIFE



The remains of Army Staff Sgt. Chauncy Ryan Mays, Army Sgt. Kristopher James Gould and Army Spc. Christopher Glenn Stark March 4, 2011 at Dover Air Force Base, Del. Mays, 25, of Cookville, Texas, and Stark, 22, of Monett, Mo., died Feb. 28, 2011 in Wardak province, Afghanistan of wounds sustained when enemy forces attacked thier unit with an improvised explosive device and Gould, of Saginaw, Mich. died when insurgents attacked his unit using an improvised explosive device in Ghazni Province, Afghanistan. (AP Photo/Steve Ruark)

Troops Invited:

Comments, arguments, articles, and letters from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Write to Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657 or send email to contact@militaryproject.org: Name, I.D., withheld unless you request publication. Same address to unsubscribe.

FORWARD OBSERVATIONS



“At a time like this, scorching irony, not convincing argument, is needed. Oh had I the ability, and could reach the nation’s ear, I would, pour out a fiery stream of biting ridicule, blasting reproach, withering sarcasm, and stern rebuke.

“For it is not light that is needed, but fire; it is not the gentle shower, but thunder.

“We need the storm, the whirlwind, and the earthquake.”

“The limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those whom they oppose.”

Frederick Douglass, 1852

**Hope for change doesn’t cut it when you’re still losing buddies.
-- J.D. Englehart, Iraq Veterans Against The War**

**Rise like Lions after slumber
In unvanquishable number,
Shake your chains to earth like dew
Which in sleep had fallen on you-
Ye are many — they are few
-- Percy Bysshe Shelley, 1819, on the occasion of a mass murder of British
workers by the Imperial government at Peterloo.**

It is a two class world and the wrong class is running it.
-- Larry Christensen, Soldiers Of Solidarity & United Auto Workers

I say that when troops cannot be counted on to follow orders because they see the futility and immorality of them THAT is the real key to ending a war.
-- Al Jaccoma, Veterans For Peace

“The Nixon administration claimed and received great credit for withdrawing the Army from Vietnam, but it was the rebellion of low-ranking GIs that forced the government to abandon a hopeless suicidal policy”
-- David Cortright; Soldiers In Revolt

March 7, 1932; Five Ford Workers Killed And Nineteen Wounded By Police And Company “Security” Armed With Pistols, Rifles And A Machine Gun



Carl Bunin Peace History March 3-9

The Ford Hunger March began on Detroit’s East Side and proceeded 10 miles seeking relief during the Great Depression.

Facing hunger and evictions, workers had formed neighborhood Unemployed Councils. Along the route, the marchers were given good wishes from Detroit Mayor Frank Murphy as well as two motorcycle escorts, and thousands joined the marchers along the route.

At the Detroit city limit, the marchers were met by Dearborn police and doused by fire hoses.

Despite the cold weather, they continued to the Employment Office of the Ford River Rouge plant, from which there had been massive layoffs.

Five workers were killed and nineteen wounded by police and company “security” armed with pistols, rifles and a machine gun.

According to Dave Moore, one of the marchers, “That blood was black blood and white blood.

One of the photos that was published in the Detroit Times, but never seen since, shows a black woman, Mattie Woodson, wiping the blood off the head of Joe DiBlasio, a white man who lay there dying . . . It’s been 75 years, but when you drive down Miller Road today, your car tires will be moistened with the blood that those five shed.”

Grave markers with the words “His Life for the Union” pay tribute to them in Woodmere Cemetery on Detroit’s West Side.

March 7, 1965: Noble Anniversary: The First March From Selma: A Day That That Shook The World



Alabama police attack Selma-to-Montgomery marchers

Carl Bunin Peace History; Americaslibrary.gov [Excerpts]

March 7, 1965

When 525 people started a planned march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, on Sunday March 7, 1965, it was called a demonstration. When state troopers met the demonstrators at the edge of the city by the Edmund Pettus Bridge, that day became known as "Bloody Sunday."

In Selma, African Americans made up almost half the population, but only two percent were registered voters. Discrimination and intimidation tactics aimed at blacks kept them from registering and voting. The demonstrators marched to demand fairness in voter registration.

The sheriff warned the people that they had two minutes to break up the march, but the deputies attacked sooner. The demonstrators were tear-gassed, clubbed, spat on, whipped, trampled by horses, and jeered by others for demanding the right to register to vote.

Television and newspapers carried pictures of the event that became known as "Bloody Sunday."

The images sickened, outraged, and electrified people throughout the country.

Within 48 hours, demonstrations in support of the marchers were held in 80 cities. Many of the nation's religious and lay leaders, including Martin Luther King, flew to Selma. After one more failed attempt, King led a peaceful march from Selma to Montgomery. Congress responded to these events by enacting the Voting Rights Act of 1965.



GOT AN OPINION?

Comments from service men and women, and veterans, are especially welcome. Write to Box 126, 2576 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10025-5657 or send to contact@militaryproject.org: Name, I.D., withheld unless you request identification published.

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK



[Thanks to Linda O, who sent this in.]

CLASS WAR REPORTS



Majority In Wisconsin And The USA Have Two Messages For Wisconsin Governor Walker: #1: We Are For Union Rights And #2

**WICH PART OF
FUCK YOU
DON'T YOU
UNDERSTAND?**

[Thanks to Mark Shapiro, Military Resistance Organization, who sent this in.]

“Americans oppose weakening the bargaining rights of public employee unions by a margin of nearly two to one: 60 percent to 33 percent,” the New York Times reported. “Those surveyed said they opposed, 56 percent to 37 percent, cutting the pay or benefits of public employees to reduce deficits....”

March 5, 2011 By Brad Knickerbocker, Staff Writer, Christian Science Monitor [Excerpts]

The two sides in Wisconsin’s “Badger rebellion” over public employee unions are threatening to escalate the conflict.

Gov. Scott Walker (R) has issued layoff warning notices to public employees. The move is aimed at forcing Democrats in the state senate to return home and vote on his “budget reform” bill, which would also do away with most collective bargaining rights for unionized workers.

Meanwhile, political opponents fighting Walker’s effort to severely rein in unions have begun recall procedures against the eight Republican state senators eligible for recall this year. (Under Wisconsin law, elected officials in office for at least a year may be recalled. Since he was elected governor just last fall, Walker himself could not yet be recalled.)

Governor Walker says the spending reforms, including restrictions on union power, are needed to close the state’s estimated \$3.6 billion budget gap over the next two years.

But increasingly, people in the Badger State aren't buying Walker's arguments.

He was elected governor with 52 percent of the vote, but if the election were held today Walker would lose.

A Rasmussen Reports poll this week shows Walker's approval rating dropping to 43 percent with 57 percent disapproving of his performance.

Rasmussen Reports also finds that 52 percent of Wisconsin voters say they oppose the weakening of collective bargaining rights, while 39 percent are in favor.

Nationally, such polls are a warning not only to Walker but to other Republican governors working to weaken public employee unions.

A Pew Poll this week has 42 percent of those surveyed siding with unions while 31 percent support Walker's position.

The latest New York Times/CBS News poll gives similar results.

"Americans oppose weakening the bargaining rights of public employee unions by a margin of nearly two to one: 60 percent to 33 percent," the New York Times reported. "Those surveyed said they opposed, 56 percent to 37 percent, cutting the pay or benefits of public employees to reduce deficits...."

MORE:

**"The Struggle In Wisconsin Is Also
A Return Of Dignity To Working
Class People Across This
Country"**

**"Proud To Be Union, Proud To Be A
Worker, Proud To Be Standing Up
And Knowing You're Not In This Fight
Alone"**

“Political Conversations Are Happening Everywhere: Every Street Corner, Every Restaurant”

Comment: T

This article was written before the government of Wisconsin accomplished the end of the occupation by using police force to regain control of the capitol building, without serious opposition from union bureaucrats who are terrified of and hate mass movements from below they can't control.

This particular battle in the U.S. class war may be winding down, time will tell, but another will come sometime and somewhere else. No one can predict where or when, but the wait will not be long, as history goes. The next will be more ferocious, more determined, and more widespread. Battle has been joined, conscious class polarization is accelerating and is on our side, because our class is the overwhelming majority.

The flavor of the report below is unmistakable.

For our class, this is Lexington and Concord. For theirs, Fort Sumter.

***There's a better world that's a-coming
Tell you why why why
Better world a-coming I'll tell you why
Out of marching out of battling
You can hear the chains a-rattling
There's a better world that's a-coming
I'll tell you why***

-- Woody Guthrie

For the first time in my life, I experienced class solidarity on a mass scale. It was just understood that everyone you interacted with was on your side. And that a line had been drawn in the sand: it was our side versus the Walkers and Koch brothers of the world.

March 1, 2011 By Leia Petty, a public school counselor and member of United Federation of Teachers in New York City, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

“Breathe deep Wisconsin. Justice is in the air!”

This was part of a statement written by an Egyptian activist in support of the struggle in Wisconsin and read aloud into the “people’s mic” inside the state Capitol building in Madison, where thousands of unionists, students and their supporters were continuing

their nearly two-week-old occupation against Gov. Scott Walker's assault on working people.

There is a lot in the air in Wisconsin: justice, solidarity, struggle, dignity, determination, generosity.

You see it and breathe it everywhere.

When I first set foot in the Capitol building over the weekend, I was completely overwhelmed.

There wasn't a wall that wasn't completely plastered with homemade signs and union placards. The most inspiring was a huge piece of butcher paper that said: "In the event of a general strike, I vow to support workers"--with hundreds of names signed to it. A group was singing "Solidarity Forever" to greet those entering the Capitol.

Every contingent entering the Capitol walks through this hallway, and the people's mic (situated in the middle of the rotunda where anyone can line up and speak) is temporarily silenced to welcome them: Crowds surrounding erupt in cheers, whether in greeting students, firefighters, members of Iraq Veterans Against the War or a high school drum line from Milwaukee that took over the center of rotunda for a 10-minute routine.

Once a contingent walks through the middle of the rotunda, they usually do a circle around the floor above to another round of cheers.

The sense of pride and dignity has returned to many who have never felt it in their life: proud to be union, proud to be a worker, proud to be standing up and knowing you're not in this fight alone.

It is immediately clear after spending an hour inside the Capitol that it has been completely taken over, physically as well as politically. This is why it has not been easy to evacuate people, though the authorities are certainly trying.

While I was there, the Capitol was currently under the people's control. Those who have been occupying the building for two weeks self-organized a fully functioning 24-hour day care center, medic station, charging station, food distribution center, lost and found, and "free stores" with donated diapers, toilet paper, tampons, sleeping bags, socks and other basic needs.

There is an information station and protest marshals who try to remain up-to-speed on the latest developments and assist people new to the Capitol--essential for broadening the occupation's participation.

Town halls were organized both nights I was there at 8 p.m. to communicate updates about logistics concerning food sources, meetings happening inside the Capitol (such as civil disobedience trainings), day care center information, the latest statements from police, and any information necessary for those new to sleeping in.

People are encouraged to take shifts to help with food distribution (reintroduced after the Teaching Assistants' Association retreated by giving up their offices inside the Capitol

and ending food distribution the day before), and volunteers for the information station also take shifts cleaning.

This level of organization and solidarity don't just exist inside the Capitol. I left a few times in the two days I was there and was greeted on the streets with smiles and incredible generosity.

On Saturday morning, a building trades local set up a block-long free Bratwurst station. Breakfast of champions! Free Ian's pizza (now famous for receiving orders from around the globe to be sent to the protesters) and coffee stations were in another corner.

Even when in line at a take-out restaurant later in the day, the guy in front of me gave me his leftover gift cards to pay for my meal. I didn't even have a conversation with him!

“The Capitol Building Has Become The Safest Place In This Country”

SOLIDARITY REIGNS, and there is a high level of trust that accompanies it. One woman who has emerged as one of the main leaders inside the Capitol occupation said, “As an African American woman, I don't feel safe out there. But I feel safe here. The Capitol building has become the safest place in this country.”

People leave bags unattended for hours. While many stay by their phones and computers at the charging station so that they can continue using them, most just plug in their phones and return to them when they're charged. At one point, I found myself surrounded by a group of construction workers and I commented to another woman, “I think this is the first time I've been surrounded by a group of men in hard hats and not felt like I was going to be sexually harassed.”

Trust and solidarity also means equality, and every service provided by the occupation was deemed “equal opportunity.” This meant that homeless people slept in the Capitol and got free food. One homeless guy I was sitting next to and talking with even offered me some wine from his thermos. There was no reason why they should have to return to the freezing cold streets of Madison. It was their “house,” too.

Being from New York City, part of me initially thought I was just experiencing some kind of Midwestern friendliness I had heard so much about. I'm sure there's truth to that, but it came from a place so much deeper.

For the first time in my life, I experienced class solidarity on a mass scale. It was just understood that everyone you interacted with was on your side. And that a line had been drawn in the sand: it was our side versus the Walkers and Koch brothers of the world.

I've never high-fived and hugged so many strangers for no reason other than sharing a moment in history.

I met and spoke with a father and son who came together, both Teamsters from a Chicago local, proudly wearing their union bomber jackets.

I asked them what they thought of private-sector workers being pitted against the public sector. They thought it was “bullshit.” We talked about the 1997 UPS strike and how UPS had tried to divide part-time and full-time workers, and the parallels of how the bosses try to divide us today. The conversation meant a lot to both of us, and we learned a lot from each other. Afterwards, the father asked if I would take a picture with him.

Political conversations are happening everywhere: every street corner, every restaurant, at the charging station, during cigarette breaks, in the line to get into the Capitol.

No one feels like a stranger, and you talk to whoever is sitting or standing next to you, no matter where you are.

At one point, a member of AFSCME from Iowa was standing next to me and wearing a button that said “Fund jobs, not wars.” I saw many references to war spending throughout the day. I told him I liked his pin.

He was an older worker, with white hair and a raspy voice. He said he had tried to form a progressive group in Iowa against the war, but it was small, and he was struggling to keep it alive. He was excited to talk with someone about the war and the insanity of the Pentagon budget.

He asked if I had seen the metal pin he had on his jacket. I hadn't. He then explained to me that it was a pie graph about the relationship of war spending to all other social spending. It was a beautiful pin. After talking more, he insisted that I have it. This was one of the many moments when I was brought to tears.

“There Is No Question That The Struggle In Wisconsin Is Also A Return Of Dignity To Working Class People Across This Country.

Everyone who came to this place, everyone who has invested so much in this struggle, even if only for a few days, will never be the same.

It is certainly true for me, but what is more inspiring is that this is true on a mass scale. The protests in Madison have brought hundreds of thousands of people through, and they have tasted democracy.

The vast majority of people at the protests are from Wisconsin. But people have been inspired from all over the country, and traveled to witness this struggle and take part in this. I felt compelled to go to Madison after hearing of the teacher sickouts and the stories relayed to me by a friend and comrade who traveled to Madison earlier in the week.

When I saw a sign that said “Outside Agitators Welcome,” I immediately decided that I wanted a turn on the people's mic. I waited in line while helping to lead chants. The most popular ones were “This is what democracy looks like!” and “Who's house? Our house!”

When another firefighter local came through, we started chanting, “The workers united will never be defeated,” giving high-fives to every firefighter walking by.

They were followed by firefighters on bagpipes who led the crowd in “Amazing Grace” and slowly everyone raised their fists.

An older woman across from me and a young woman standing next to me began weeping. The words, “I once was lost but now am found, was blind, but now I see” never felt so true to so many people.

In his articles on the Egyptian revolution for SocialistWorker.org, Ahmed Shawki describes the uprising as the “return of dignity to Arabs around the world.” There is no question that the struggle in Wisconsin is also a return of dignity to working class people across this country.

I felt proud to speak into the people’s mic, saying that I traveled from Brooklyn in New York City, inspired by the sickouts by teachers in Wisconsin. We’re told every day by politicians and the media that we’re the “problem with education” in this country, and greedy for wanting secure pensions and affordable health care. It’s impossible not to internalize this message, even when you know it’s not true.

But this feeling completely left me while I was there. Thunderous cheers followed when I said that I was a public school counselor from New York City. I’ve never felt so proud. Other teachers who remembered my speech hugged me throughout the rest of the afternoon as we exchanged stories of our working conditions, and what the future holds for us if we don’t keep fighting.

While the scale is different, the parallels to the struggle in Egypt are profound and not lost on most people. There were plenty of signs and speeches that demonstrated this.

At the end of the second town hall meeting I was part of, a letter was read aloud from one of the activists in Tahrir Square, Egypt. It read:

“To our friends in Madison, Wisconsin: We wish you could see firsthand the change we have made here. Justice is beautiful, but justice is never free. The beauty in Tahrir Square you can have everywhere, on any corner, in your city, or in your heart.

“So hold on tightly and don’t let go, and breathe deep Wisconsin! Our good fortune is on the breeze, in the Midwest AND in the Middle East. Breathe deep, Wisconsin...because justice is in the air! And may the spirit of Tahrir Square be in every beating heart in Madison today.”

References to Tahrir Square also came up in a meeting the International Socialist Organization helped to initiate the night we heard that the police were going to evacuate all occupiers the following day at 4 p.m. After attending a nonviolent civil disobedience training, we decided to organize a meeting under the “Tax the Rich” banner to discuss a plan for outreach to pack the Capitol.

Some of the occupation organizers wanted to comply with police orders without any resistance. Others had already begun planning for civil disobedience, stating over the people’s mic, “Everyone has a choice to make at 4 p.m. If you decide to leave, that’s fine. But if you decide to stay, you will not be alone.”

But as quiet hours began, there was no public plan for outreach that could pack the Capitol in the way necessary to potentially avoid arrest altogether.

Those who were arguing for complete compliance with police orders to leave were far outnumbered. Many people felt incredibly invested in the occupation and argued that similar to Tahrir Square, it has symbolic as well as strategic functions for continuing the movement. One guy stated that meetings such as the ones we were having are only possible if we don't surrender this space.

Everyone agreed that packing the Capitol was key regardless of whether you were planning to do civil disobedience or whether you thought the police were permanent allies.

It was incredible to take part in such a democratic moment (of which there were and are many) where every voice was respected and every voice counted.

As one activist told me earlier, "Everything we do matters. It's exciting and terrifying."

The Capitol occupation is far from the only struggle happening in Wisconsin, but it's an incredibly important one. We owe a debt of gratitude to those who are working courageously to continue it.

**Class War Egypt:
“The Supreme Council Of The
Armed Forces Ended Up On Top
After February 11”
“The Supreme Council And Its
Cabinet Have Taken An Increasingly
Hard Line Against Workers’ Protests
And Demands”
“The Sheer Social And Political Weight
Of Egyptian Workers And Their Militant
Potential--Which Is On Display Every**

Day--Provides The Revolutionary Movement With Its Best Hope”

Through all the attempts by the Council to dispel the revolutionary moment and the vacillations of middle-class forces, strikes and mobilizations by the working class have kept the revolution’s spark lit.

February 28, 2011 By Mostafa Omar, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

Mostafa Omar reports from Cairo on the direction of the revolution since Mubarak was toppled--and the challenges facing workers and revolutionaries in a new era.

Two weeks after the ouster of the Egyptian dictator Hosni Mubarak, the overwhelming majority of Egyptians continue to celebrate their historic victory.

On February 18, millions of people took to the streets of all the major cities to commemorate the one-week anniversary of Mubarak’s departure. In Cairo alone, as many as 3 million people danced and chanted in and around Tahrir Square for over 10 hours.

The protesters honored the martyrs of the revolution and called on the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces, which took power after Mubarak’s ouster, to fulfill the democratic demands of the revolution--such as dismissing the cabinet led by Prime Minister Ahmed Shafiq which was appointed by Mubarak in his last days in power; dissolving the secret police; lifting all emergency laws; and freeing all political prisoners.

The uprising unleashed on January 25 catapulted Egypt’s working class into action, and it continues to organize and put forward its own economic demands.

Immediately after Mubarak’s fall, hundreds of thousands of government and public-sector workers started to organize a bold wave of strikes, sit-ins and protests to demand higher wages and the dismissal of overpaid, corrupt CEOs, many of whom are members of Mubarak’s much hated National Democratic Party (NDP).

Private-sector workers are also taking action for similar demands.

Strikes are taking place daily in cities such as 6th of October and 10th of Ramadan, where massive international investment and high levels of exploitation have produced the conditions for resistance.

The combination of these political and social struggles have won some important concessions from both employers and the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces in the weeks following Mubarak’s fall.

For example, the Supreme Council suspended the old undemocratic constitution and appointed a committee made up of law experts to amend it along more democratic lines.

The cabinet froze the assets and ordered the arrest of a number of businessmen and former ministers close to Mubarak. The assets of Mubarak and his family were also frozen.

Striking workers have also won significant concessions on wages and benefits. Public-sector officials and different ministries agreed to raise wages and to grant permanent status to thousands of workers who had been laboring under temporary contracts.

Also, workers in a number of places have forced out unpopular and corrupt CEOs. For example, 24,000 workers for the Misr Spinning and Weaving Co.--the country's largest state-owned company--in the industrial city of Mahalla el-Kubra struck on February 17 to oust the company's CEO and won.

“The Supreme Council And Its Cabinet Have Taken An Increasingly Hard Line Against Workers’ Protests And Demands”

BUT SO far, these struggles have proven insufficient to force the ruling Supreme Council to concede important democratic demands or address larger workers' grievances.

For example, on February 23, the Supreme Council replaced 11 ministers in the cabinet appointed by Mubarak, but refused to change the cabinet in its entirety.

It has released more than 230 political prisoners, but refuses to free hundreds of others.

The military has also refused to end the emergency laws against political dissent, leaving that decision to a future elected government.

The Supreme Council and its cabinet have taken an increasingly hard line against workers' protests and demands.

The council refused to meet the popular demand of setting 1200 pounds as a national minimum wage. Plus, military leaders and the government media launched a propaganda campaign accusing striking workers of elevating their “narrow” and “sectional” demands over the national interests.

The council continues to issue warnings to workers not to strike and to poor peasants not to reoccupy land they were forced off of.

In several instances, the new rulers have attempted to break strikes and arrest strikers.

For example, on February 22, the army arrested seven strikers in Adamiya Port in Suez.

That day, an army tank killed an elderly woman who was among protesters attempting to free the arrested strikers.

In response to the council's attempt to stall on the demands of the revolution, various forces, including coalitions of youth, independent unions and socialist organizations, have called for continuing mass protests in Tahrir and elsewhere in the country every Friday to keep up the pressure.

On February 25, more than half a million people came to Tahrir Square to demand the resignation of the Ahmed Shafiq cabinet.

In addition, socialists and the left are organizing popular committees to defend the revolution in factories and in city neighborhoods and villages--the goal is to mobilize forces that can confront the regime on a local basis. In Cairo alone, 16 such neighborhood committees have been formed and are active. Socialists have printed thousands of bulletins titled "Egypt the Revolution" with the aim of recruiting new members.

The fact that the majority of the political and economic demands of the January 25 revolution have yet to be met is a reflection of the fact that the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces--not revolutionaries or organizations representing revolutionaries--ended up on top after February 11.

The military rulers of the Council ousted Mubarak in order to preempt the possibility of the political revolution transforming into a social upheaval that could have begun to threaten the entire capitalist social and political structure.

The Supreme Council itself is an integral part of the Egyptian capitalist class. It is composed of Mubarak-era generals who benefit from the existing class system in Egypt. The military controls around a quarter of the economy, including a gigantic arms sector, construction, factories, agricultural land, hotels, and on and on.

There's no doubt that the Council understands it has to make serious economic and political concessions to revolutionaries and workers in order to stabilize the system.

But the aim of the Council in making these concessions is to slow down and control the pace of change in order to give itself time to divert the revolutionary moment, while simultaneously reorganizing and reorienting capitalism in Egypt.

This is why the Council insists it won't make any fundamental economic changes regarding wages and pensions in the short term. The generals say they plan to leave these and other issues, such as the emergency laws, to the new parliament.

Meanwhile, the Council is reorganizing the discredited police to resume their functions. The military rulers made it clear that they plan to "reform" these hated institutions, but have no intention of disbanding them.

The Council also tested its ability to rein in the protests--and failed.

On the night of February 25, the army attempted to push out 1,000 demonstrators who occupied Tahrir Square past the midnight curfew set by the army. Military police and masked army special forces used electric batons to beat and disperse protesters, and arrested 20 of them. The soldiers also destroyed a statue built by revolutionaries to commemorate the martyrs of the revolution.

But due to a huge public outcry against the army's violent tactics--and accusations that the military is now doing what the secret police used to do to nonviolent protesters--the

Council issued a formal apology, saying its soldiers acted on their own. The detainees were released, and the Council issued orders not to interfere with 1,000 people who reoccupied Tahrir Square the next night. And in a gesture of good will, Presidential Guard units built a replacement statue for the martyrs.

“Strikes And Mobilizations By The Working Class Have Kept The Revolution’s Spark Lit”

There is no doubt that everyone in Egypt who wants to push this political revolution toward more victories will face great challenges in the coming period.

One of those challenges will be to confront the attempt by the ruling class and the Supreme Council to end this revolutionary moment with the least amount of concessions to workers and peasants.

Another connected challenge is that sections of the middle classes which supported the ouster of Mubarak are now calling for workers and activists to end all protests, so people can go “back to work” to rebuild the economy.

The army is consciously mobilizing these middle-class forces through its media campaign with the hope of winning them to its side against the strikes--it will take some anti-corruption measures and implement some parliamentary reforms to placate them.

Slowly, some sections of the Muslim Brotherhood, old liberal opposition parties and the remainder of the NDP are lining up behind the Council’s project.

The Brotherhood, for one, has declared its intention to form a political party, and tacitly allowed some of its members and supporters to join the cabinet and the committee to reform the constitution. Liberal newspapers such as Al Masry Al Youm, which played a key role in building opposition to Mubarak’s rule, are now calling on readers to trust the army and oppose strikes.

Some youth groups formed after Mubarak’s fall, such as the Coalition of the Youth of the Revolution, continue to call for weekly Friday protests, but are too focused on advising the Council on better ways of achieving political and parliamentary reforms, rather than building solidarity for the workers’ demands.

In this context, some revolutionaries in Egypt have grown impatient and frustrated.

It is clear that the forces of counter-revolution are busy plotting against change--and equally clear that, while the military is unable at this point to disperse the Tahrir demonstrations, those mobilizations alone are insufficient to win more concessions from the Council.

Here, it is important to point out, as revolutionary socialists in Egypt are now arguing, that that while street protests are very important in order to pressure the regime, much more is needed to win the democratic demands of the revolution.

And crucially, the social force that can take the struggle to its next stage is in motion.

Through all the attempts by the Council to dispel the revolutionary moment and the vacillations of middle-class forces, strikes and mobilizations by the working class have kept the revolution's spark lit.

The Egyptian working class is the key to the revolutionary movement that started on January 25 accomplishing its goals of social justice and political freedom. The sheer social and political weight of Egyptian workers and their militant potential--which is on display every day--provides the revolutionary movement with its best hope.

Therefore, it is important for all revolutionaries to support the struggles of workers in Egypt, ideologically and materially.

Solidarity with the independent unions, the new Workers Democratic Party and every strike is necessary to strengthen the revolution in Egypt, and continue the wave of revolt that is sweeping across North Africa and the Middle East.

NEED SOME TRUTH? CHECK OUT TRAVELING SOLDIER

Traveling Soldier is the publication of the Military Resistance Organization.

Telling the truth - about the occupations or the criminals running the government in Washington - is the first reason for Traveling Soldier. But we want to do more than tell the truth; we want to report on the resistance to Imperial wars inside the armed forces.

Our goal is for Traveling Soldier to become the thread that ties working-class people inside the armed services together. We want this newsletter to be a weapon to help you organize resistance within the armed forces.

If you like what you've read, we hope that you'll join with us in building a network of active duty organizers. <http://www.traveling-soldier.org/>

And join with Iraq Veterans Against the War to end the occupations and bring all troops home now! (www.ivaw.org/)

Military Resistance Looks Even Better Printed Out

Military Resistance/GI Special are archived at website

<http://www.militaryproject.org> .

The following have chosen to post issues; there may be others:

<http://williambowles.info/wordpress/category/military-resistance/> ;

news@uruknet.info; http://www.traprockpeace.org/qi_special/;

<http://www.albasrah.net/pages/mod.php?header=res1&mod=gis&rep=gis>

Military Resistance distributes and posts to our website copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available in an effort to advance

understanding of the invasion and occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan. We believe this constitutes a "fair use" of any such copyrighted material as provided for in section 107 of the US Copyright Law since it is being distributed **without charge or profit** for educational purposes to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving the included information for educational purposes, in accordance with Title 17 U.S.C. Section 107. **Military Resistance has no affiliation whatsoever with the originator of these articles nor is Military Resistance endorsed or sponsored by the originators. This attributed work is provided a non-profit basis to facilitate understanding, research, education, and the advancement of human rights and social justice.** Go to: www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/17/107.shtml for more information. If you wish to use copyrighted material from this site for purposes of your own that go beyond 'fair use', you must obtain permission from the copyright owner.



If printed out, a copy of this newsletter is your personal property and cannot legally be confiscated from you. "Possession of unauthorized material may not be prohibited." DoD Directive 1325.6 Section 3.5.1.2.