

Military Resistance 9C8



Call To Action: By Wisconsin Iraq Veterans Against The War:

**Stand In Solidarity March 19th
Madison, Wisconsin:
“We Call On Veterans
Organizations And The Anti-War
Movement To Join Us As We
Stand In Solidarity With Working
People In Wisconsin And Call-Out
To The National Guard To Refuse
Mobilization Against These
Workers”**

**“It Is Vital That Our Brothers And Sisters Know They Have A Choice And Can Fall On The Right Side Of History This Time By Standing With The Working People Of Wisconsin”
“Join Us As We Call For An End To The Wars Against The People Of Iraq And Afghanistan And An End To The War Against The Working People Of Wisconsin”**



2011-03-10 Wisconsin Iraq Veterans Against the War via Iraq Veterans Against The War (www.ivaw.org/)

Iraq Veterans Against the War calls on all veterans and peace organizations to mobilize to Madison, Wisconsin on March 19th, the 8th anniversary of the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq, to stand in solidarity with workers organizing for their rights.

We will be joined in the streets by the AFL-CIO, union members, and their supporters:

10AM rally at Library Mall, 750 State Street in Madison, WI

11AM march up State Street to the capitol, stopping at the Civil War Memorial Noon rally and speak-out at the capitol, joined by the Wisconsin AFL-CIO and other unions - King Street entrance

With Scott Walker's latest maneuver to erase collective bargaining rights, Wisconsin workers are calling for continued resistance, with the possibility of a general strike on the table.

Scott Walker has threatened to call in the National Guard to repress these mobilizations.

As military veterans, we call on our brothers and sisters in the Wisconsin National Guard to refuse and resist any mobilization orders.

We believe military service members are public employees. It is dishonorable to suggest that military personnel should be deployed against teachers, health care providers, firefighters, police officers, and other government employees, many of whom are serving in the National Guard.

The Wisconsin National Guard was sent in to repress workers fighting for the eight hour workday over a century ago.

It is vital that our brothers and sisters know they have a choice and can fall on the right side of history this time by standing with the working people of Wisconsin.

As veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, we stand in solidarity with the hundreds of thousands of workers who have mobilized across the country to defend their rights as workers and union members.

The waves of resistance sweeping the Middle East show us that democracy is not something delivered by U.S. military intervention, but won and fought for by people in their own towns, cities, and countries.

Almost a decade of war in Afghanistan and eight years of war in Iraq have brought nothing but death and trauma to the people of those countries, as well as our brothers and sisters in the military.

Meanwhile, we have seen the erosion of public goods such as education, veterans benefits, and healthcare and an all-out political attack on the very workers who make our society function.

Scott Walker and the Republican caucus of the Wisconsin state legislature have gone behind the backs of the people of Wisconsin to erase collective bargaining rights for public workers.

Under the guise of budget crisis, these and other politicians throughout the country are attempting to undo the hard-won union rights of the American people.

Yet, these same politicians continue to reach deep into the pockets of working people to finance the ongoing wars in Iraq and Afghanistan while sending our sons and daughters, our brothers and sisters, off to fight them.

It is time for us to start connecting the dots between endless war abroad and the erosion of our rights and public goods here at home.

We call on veterans organizations and the anti-war movement to join us as we stand in solidarity with working people in Wisconsin and call-out to the National Guard to refuse mobilization against these workers.

On the 8th anniversary of the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq, join us as we call for an end to the wars against the people of Iraq and Afghanistan and an end to the war against the working people of Wisconsin.

- Wisconsin Iraq Veterans Against the War

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

MILITARY NEWS

THIS IS HOW OBAMA BRINGS THEM HOME: ALL HOME NOW, ALIVE



The remains of Army Cpl. Loren M. Buffalo March 11, 2011 at Dover Air Force Base, Del. Buffalo, 20, of Mountain Pine, Ark., died March 9, 2011 in Kandahar province of wounds sustained when insurgents attacked his unit with an IED. (AP Photo/Steve Ruark)

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

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

**NEED SOME TRUTH?
CHECK OUT THE NEW
TRAVELING SOLDIER**

**Issue 34
Special Issue: Egypt, Tunisia, Libya
Soldiers in Revolt 2011**

Click here to download and view a PDF of issue 34:

<http://www.traveling-soldier.org/TS34.pdf>

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/)

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.

A revolution is always distinguished by impoliteness, probably because the ruling classes did not take the trouble in good season to teach the people fine manners.
-- Leon Trotsky, History Of The Russian Revolution

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

“What country can preserve its liberties if its rulers are not warned from time to time that their people preserve the spirit of resistance? Let them take arms.”
-- Thomas Jefferson to William Stephens Smith, 1787

“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

Medevac Helicopter In My Unit In Vietnam With “Laotian Whore” Painted On The Nose



Photograph by Mike Hastie: Medevac helicopter; An Khe, Vietnam 1970

From: Mike Hastie
To: Military Resistance
Sent: March 10, 2011
Subject: a picture for you

Laotian Whore

**Medevac helicopter in my unit in Vietnam
with “Laotian Whore” painted on the nose.**

**Fast forward 40 years and the United States
Government is doing it all over again in Iraq
and Afghanistan.**

**It never stops, because the U.S. Empire never stops.
Wall Street is the immoral whore house in America.
“Dust-off” helicopters are still picking up the dead
and wounded so Wall Street gangsters can pick
up their monumental salaries for god and country.
Corporate executives drink and drug in their stretch
limousines while the working class and poor send
their kids to war.**

**Everything is an inside job,
while the U.S. Government propaganda machine is
convincing us that there is this monster thing called,
“War On Terrorism.”**

**The worst thing I experienced in Vietnam was the
magnificent lie of that war.**

Everything was a sham, and a shame.

**The ruling class in America buy the body bags,
while catatonic patriotic Americans willingly put
their kids inside.**

**Dead and gone, and forever an inside morbid lie.
Laotian Whore....**

**Mike Hastie
U.S. Army Medic
Vietnam 1970-71
March 10, 2011.**

**Photo and caption from the I-R-A-Q (I Remember Another Quagmire) portfolio of
Mike Hastie, US Army Medic, Vietnam 1970-71. (For more of his outstanding work,
contact at: (hastiemike@earthlink.net) T)**

DANGER: POLITICIANS AT WORK

March 13: Japanese Government Scientists Say No Radiation Danger To Public From Exploding Nuclear Power Plant

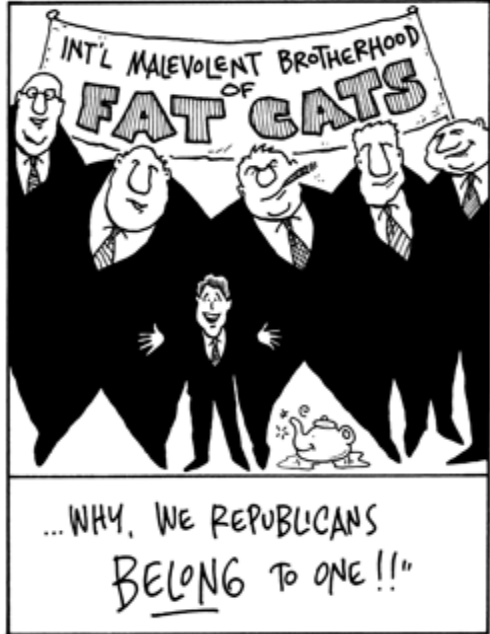
**[March 14: Japanese Government
Scientists Says Earth Is A Giant Fish
Ball]**



Children who are from the evacuation area near the crippled Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant in Koriyama, Japan, March 13, 2011. REUTERS/Kim Kyung-Hoon

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.



CLASS WAR REPORTS



3-4-11

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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.

A Movement Betrayed: #1 How Loathsome Democratic Party Filth And Despicable Union Bureaucrat Traitors United To Strangle The Wisconsin Capitol Resistance To Walker's Attack On Workers' Rights:

**“The Effort To Get People To Leave
Quietly At 4 P.M. Was Presented As
'The Plan' By Fiat, Irrespective Of
What People In The Capitol Desired
To Do”**

**“Everyone On That Mic Was Preselected
And Allowed To Skip In Line To Get On
That Mic--Including Democratic
Representatives, Union Leaders,
Organizational Leaders”**



Democrat Party politicians, union traitors and student thugs meet to scheme ending the occupation of the Wisconsin state capital building by workers' rights advocates.

A disruption serious enough to make Walker and his corporate backers think twice would have to involve mass action that could shut down multiple sectors of the state at once.

That vision can sometimes feel impossible to realize, even to those of us who favor it.

But occupying the Capitol for over two weeks sounded just as crazy--before we did it.

At one point, as I tried to reach the microphone to argue that if enough people stayed past 4 p.m., we needn't be arrested, I found myself surrounded by a small crowd of young men--some from the University of Wisconsin (UW) College Democrats--shouting "Be peaceful!" as they shoved me away.

March 9, 2011 By Elizabeth Wrigley-Field, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

Elizabeth Wrigley-Field, a member of the Teaching Assistants' Association at the University of Wisconsin, looks at political currents in the occupation of the Capitol.

THE ROUND-the-clock occupation of the Wisconsin state Capitol building ended March 3 amid debates on how to take the struggle forward.

For 16 days, the occupation had been the most visible symbol of the remarkable series of protests for workers' rights in Wisconsin and a focal point for solidarity from around the world.

At a more practical level, it had also been the space where activists met one another, debated strategies and ideas, and organized.

That occupation played a crucial role in maintaining the momentum of the protests after Madison teachers ended their sick-out and returned to work during in the second week of protests.

With the occupation now over, in part due to Republican Gov. Scott Walker's illegal restrictions on access to the building, activists are regrouping and developing new strategies.

But the last five days of the occupation--in particular, the debates over when and how to stay or leave--revealed differences that will inform the strategies to come.

The division appeared most sharply on the first day that the police ordered the Capitol cleared--Sunday, February 27--and the last day of the 16-day continuous occupation, on Thursday, March 3.

On February 27, this divergence took the form of struggle for democracy within the movement as much as for the Capitol itself.

Democrats, most labor union leaders and staffers, and the activists who saw themselves as running the Capitol occupation directed everyone to leave as ordered by the police at 4 p.m. on February 27--a pre-selected group was to stay behind to be arrested with a carefully constructed media message.

According to Capitol Police Chief Charles Tubbs, labor leaders and the police had negotiated this exit plan--though this was news to many union members and activists involved in the occupation.

But a core of activists argued for--and organized--a different strategy: pack the building with people refusing to leave at the deadline in the hopes that if the numbers were large enough, no one would be arrested, and the building would remain ours.

This was the strategy of networks of activists formed inside the building, including a group that subsequently began calling itself A People's Movement.

Activists in the latter camp tried hard to organize a democratic discussion about what to do in the form of a town hall meeting in the capitol rotunda.

But as the 4 p.m. deadline approached, the microphone became tightly controlled by its self-appointed MCs--one of whom said he was "just doing what he was told," though he couldn't say who had told him to take charge of the microphone.

At one point, as I tried to reach the microphone to argue that if enough people stayed past 4 p.m., we needn't be arrested, I found myself surrounded by a small crowd of young men--some from the University of Wisconsin (UW) College Democrats--shouting "Be peaceful!" as they shoved me away.

In what had become the parlance of many who saw themselves as being in charge, "peacefulness" reflected not whether an action was violent (none of Wisconsin's three weeks of protests have been), but rather, whether it conformed

to the media strategy determined by the Democrats and the upper echelons of organized labor.

The effort to get people to leave quietly at 4 p.m. was presented as “the plan” by fiat, irrespective of what people in the Capitol desired to do.

Sauntering past the long line of people waiting to speak, Democratic State Rep. Brett Hulseby occupied the microphone for 12 minutes, telling the crowd, “And now I want you to do the most important thing in this campaign, which is to follow me out that door at 4:00.”

Hulseby's effort was joined by activists who saw themselves as running the building.

These people repeatedly made it seem a foregone conclusion that anyone left behind at 4 p.m. would be arrested. One of them got on the building's PA system at 3:50 p.m. to inform everyone that the building would soon be closing--an “activist” announcement that was indistinguishable from those made by the police.

“It Changed From, ‘Hell No, We Won't Go’ To ‘Leaving Is Not Retreating”

What actually happened was very different. When hundreds of activists, including many union members, chose to stay past 4 p.m., the Capitol Police made the call to avoid arrests by leaving the building open.

This happened in part because groups of activists managed to overcome the undemocratic restrictions on access to the microphone and urged people to stay.

One particularly decisive speech came from Katrina Flores, a University of Wisconsin-Madison graduate student in Curriculum and Instruction, a lifelong Wisconsin resident, and a longtime campus activist with MEChA and other organizations. Flores was part of a group of activists that met in the Capitol over several days and headed into Sunday with a plan to try to keep the building open.

As she explained that evening:

“A very small group of us--students, community members, people we organize with culturally--felt like our voices were not being heard, particularly that people of color were not being represented, working-class people were not being represented...So we set up a town hall meeting every night (in the capitol)....

“And today, we decided it was time to continue to get derailed or to start acting. The people making decisions--cops and “leaders of the protest”--have been very efficient at concentrating people in a very small space. We needed to do something different from what we were being told and escorted to do.”

The plan that the group developed--correctly guessing that the police would be preventing people from entering the building as the afternoon wore on--was to bring crowds of people inside the Capitol to the building's entrances to protest the doors being closed to the outside.

The contingents chanting "Let them in!" helped to focus anger at the Capitol being closed, rather than acceptance of the restrictions coming from the police.

These protests were combined by arguments made to the crowd in the rotunda to stay past the 4 p.m. deadline.

Flores explained:

"The rhetoric was, 'Leaving is not retreating.' And I don't know when it changed from, 'Hell no, we won't go' to 'Leaving is not retreating,' or who made the decision.

"It became very clear that there had been a straightforward negotiation with the police about how we were to leave at 4:00--and not even a negotiation, I would say a cooperative planning with the police about how to leave.

"They were going to have a band playing as pre-selected people who were to talk to the media after being arrested were brought out. And then we were supposed to go have pizza together--and that, to me, is a spectacle. It's not a protest, and certainly not representative of the reclaiming of this space....

"Everyone on that mic was preselected and allowed to skip in line to get on that mic--including Democratic representatives, union leaders, organizational leaders.

"Everyone had been given a script. If folks wanted to stay and get arrested they could, but it was strongly suggested to get up and leave.

"And it became very clear in that moment that 'peaceful' had been redefined as giving up quietly, just as 'democracy' in this country has been redefined as capitalism.

"When we heard that, we all looked at each other knowing we had a job to do, and the universe opened up a way.

"They didn't want to let me on the mic--they were very hostile, they wanted to know what I'd say. Finally, I told them I just wanted to do a spoken word, and they let me on.

"And I told people we had to remember what this protest was about, which was holding the Capitol. People needed to hear that.

"Right away, there was a new energy. Everything they'd been doing for two weeks mattered, and it was time to make it matter again."

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The Last Day

On the last day of the occupation, the same constellations of forces emerged.

By this time, Walker had kept the building under illegal lockdown for four days, beginning the morning after the February 27 victory. This was in violation of an explicit promise made to protesters by Chief Tubbs that the building would reopen as usual the following morning.

By Thursday, March 3, the core of activists inside the building had become fewer than 50 people as thousands of others--in violation of the state constitution--were kept from joining them.

Activists knew they could not hold on indefinitely in these circumstances, so discussions inside the building turned to how to resist the police clampdown.

Over several days, activists tested the limits of the police and developed their own confidence and initiative.

One important step came on Tuesday. As UW-Madison sophomore and Student Labor Action Coalition member Scot McCullough explained, after police set up “checkpoints” in the building, a small group of activists moved to sit just outside the allowed area.

This provoked debate inside the building about whether resisting police directives threatened the occupation--a debate that ended after half an hour, when the police decided to respond by moving the rope barrier so that those sitting in were once again inside it.

Then the activists moved to the other side again, establishing that even though they were flagrantly violating the rules, the police did not intend to arrest them.

As McCullough explained, “It was big because they said, ‘You can’t cross this line,’ and then we did, and they didn’t do anything...We showed that the police don’t have supreme rule here.”

On Thursday, March 3, activists hatched a more daring plan. Using their ingenuity with careful coordination with other activists outside, a small group inside rushed an under-guarded door and held it open at the precise moment that thousands of people had gathered for a “No Concessions” rally on the other side.

Hundreds of union members streamed into the building in the minutes before police managed to shut the doors again.

The mood was jubilant--for about 15 minutes, before Rep. Hulseby once again returned to lead people out so that the building could close on time at 6 p.m.

This time, the group inside advocating to stay was too small to effectively influence what happened. As most people filed out, what remained was a core of only about 20 activists, faced with a court order ordering them to leave (and ordering Walker to open the building more fully on Monday--but only during the daytime).

Late that night, after hours of discussion, the small group remaining in the capitol marched out singing, greeted by hundreds of supporters.

The 16-day occupation of the Capitol ended.

“Union Leaders Preferred To Split The March 5 Rally Rather Than Let Michael Moore Speak From Their Stage, For Fear That He'd Call For A General Strike”

NO ONE can fault activists--some of whom had been in the Capitol continuously for four days or longer--for choosing to leave on March 3. As the Capitol became more restricted, holding the space increasingly became a source of exhaustion rather than of creativity and networking, making it hard for activists to formulate longer-term strategies.

In that sense, the decisive moment was not the decision to leave late on Thursday night, but the long series of decisions up to that point to accept every restriction made by the police, and the lack of an effective plan to resist outside the courtroom Walker's illegal restrictions on entry.

The direct action that had brought hundreds into the Capitol only hours before the occupation ended, the successful occupation on the Sunday night, and the smaller actions inside the Capitol last week showed that police orders could effectively be resisted. But this lesson was absorbed too late to bring sufficient people into the Capitol to hold it in the face of the decision of much of organized labor to scuttle the occupation.

The fault lines exposed in the Capitol debates will reassert themselves in the post-occupation strategies for taking the movement forward.

The unions' strategy is to focus everything on efforts to recall eight Republican senators (Walker himself won't be legally eligible for recall until he has served one year of his term). The idea is that special elections can elect Democrats who will modify Walker's attacks on collective bargaining, maintaining unions' legal existence--and their campaign contributions.

But it is no substitute for the kind of struggles--the teachers' sick-outs and the occupation of the Capitol--that have propelled the struggle forward.

And in practice, the push for the recall strategy is explicitly being counterposed to action.

Thus, the recall strategy relegates the hundreds of thousands of people who have protested Walker's so-called budget repair bill to an almost wholly passive role.

At best, they will be phone-bankers and signature-gatherers for an electoral campaign focused in eight relatively conservative districts.

But given that Walker will remain in office and the State Assembly will remain in Republican hands, it will be almost impossible to reverse those cuts once they've passed.

The cost of the Democrats' strategy of counterposing recall elections to mass action can already be seen, from the constant--and frankly condescending--admonitions to "be peaceful" to the attempts to carefully manage a media message.

In fact, union leaders preferred to split the March 5 rally rather than let Michael Moore speak from their stage, for fear that he'd call for a general strike.

This reflects a deep distrust of rank-and-file workers and the power of their self-organization.

But that power is what has propelled the movement forward over the last three weeks in Wisconsin. This has been seen from the regular mass demonstrations to the self-organization of Capitol City, when the hundreds of us sleeping in the Capitol managed to run it better than normal.

It was direct action by large numbers of people who occupied the Capitol, spearheaded by teachers.

The most effective strategy for building a new labor movement will involve organizing the direct power of the masses of angry, hopeful, frightened and inspired people whose lives Walker is planning to wreck.

The teachers gave us a glimpse of that power when they shut down schools for four days and led the blockade of the state legislature that launched the occupation of the Capitol.

But all this hasn't been enough to stop Walker.

A disruption serious enough to make Walker and his corporate backers think twice would have to involve mass action that could shut down multiple sectors of the state at once.

That vision can sometimes feel impossible to realize, even to those of us who favor it.

But occupying the Capitol for over two weeks sounded just as crazy--before we did it.

The question being posed to all of us in Wisconsin is whether we are going to make the most of this historic opportunity and try to organize, from the bottom up, a labor movement that fights--or fritter it away because of the fear that things will get out of hand.

MORE:

A Movement Betrayed: #2

“Top Union Leaders Would Like To Channel The Movement Into Gathering Signatures For Recall Campaigns Around The State”

“Certainly, The Mood Exists For A More Militant Approach”

“The Leadership Of The AFL-CIO Doesn't Want To Talk About A General Strike”

“Its Local Affiliate, The South Central Federation Of Labor Passed A Resolution Last Month Saying It Would Endorse A General Strike If It Were Called”

March 7, 2011 By Phil Gasper, Socialist Worker [Excerpts]

“It's amazing that three weeks into this thing, tens of thousands of union members are still showing up at the Capitol,” said Mike Imbrogno, a member of the executive board of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Local 171 in Madison.

“The optimism and union spirit is inspiring. People are definitely ready to keep up the struggle.”

As in the nearly three previous weeks of protests, public-sector workers had strong support from private-sector unions.

Teachers, nurses, government workers and firefighters marched alongside boilermakers, pipefitters, sheet-metal workers, electricians, construction workers and others.

A convoy of yellow Union Cabs, Madison's only worker-owned taxi company, circled Capitol square honking "This is what democracy looks like!"

The rally included performances by musicians Michelle Shocked and Ryan Bingham, and a fiery speech from documentary filmmaker Michael Moore.

"Wisconsin is not broke," Moore told the crowd in response to Walker's frequent claim that the state has run out of money. "The only thing's that's broke is the moral compass of the rulers."

He added: "You have awakened a sleeping giant known as the working people of the United States of America! Your message has inspired people in all 50 states, and that message is: 'We have had it!'"

A survey by the conservative Rasmussen group found that six out of 10 Wisconsin voters disapprove of Walker's performance, with nearly five out of 10 disapproving strongly.

Other polls have shown clear majorities support collective bargaining rights for public workers and oppose cutbacks in their benefits.

Attempts by Walker and his wealthy backers to shore up his support have fallen flat.

On Sunday, March 6, a pro-Walker rally at Madison's Alliant Center sponsored by Americans for Prosperity, a group funded by the billionaire Koch brothers, drew only about 100 people, while close to a thousand union supporters held a counterprotest outside.

The Wisconsin AFL-CIO, which had organized the previous two rallies, decided to focus on protests outside Madison and called nothing at the Capitol.

It was only Wednesday, March 2, that the IBEW and the Building and Construction Trades Council of South Central Wisconsin took the initiative to call another big demonstration in Madison three days later.

Before word of this labor protest had gotten out, the Wisconsin Wave, a recently formed campaign that opposes the budget cuts and Walker's entire pro-corporate agenda, called its own last-minute protest.

According to Wisconsin Wave organizer and local Green Party activist Ben Manski, an effort was made to merge the two rallies, but the national AFL-CIO would only permit this if the speakers stuck to labor leaders' talking points.

Manski said that AFL-CIO leaders were concerned that speakers at the rally would make calls for a general strike.

On Saturday morning, when Michael Moore offered to speak, organizers of the labor rally turned him down, apparently worried that his speech might be “off message.”

So Moore spoke at the Wisconsin Wave's “We Are Wisconsin” rally instead.

Most of the people who attended the protest were unaware that there were actually two rallies, since they merged relatively seamlessly into one another. But the difficulties of organizing a unified protest highlighted the sharply different strategies that are currently being fought over.



[Socialist Worker graphic]

Top union leaders would like to channel the movement into gathering signatures for recall campaigns around the state. The trouble with that approach, says Mike Imbrogno, is that “it will take months, and may fall flat anyway if the Democrats agree to a lousy compromise deal.”

Instead, local unions should be preparing their members for job actions and a broader fight around threatened budget cuts.

Certainly, the mood exists for a more militant approach.

“This is all about class warfare and the potential demise of the middle class,” says Madison librarian Pamela Bosben. Robert, a Madison teacher who didn't want his last name used, said that many of his coworkers were willing to walk off the job again to stop Walker's agenda.

Despite the fact that the leadership of the AFL-CIO doesn't want to talk about a general strike, its local affiliate, the South Central Federation of Labor (SCFL), passed a resolution last month saying it would endorse a general strike if it were called.

And a SCFL committee spent March 6 putting together a general strike educational packet, with information about how such a strike could work.

While that possibility may still be a ways off, unions can and should be building on the mood of the protests of the last few weeks to prepare their members for strike action.

The next big labor mobilization, set for March 12, will provide an opportunity for further debate and organization.

“The corporate right underestimated the reaction of Wisconsin's workers,” says Poklinkoski.

“Now we need to broaden the struggle to respond to their attacks.”

MORE:

Wisconsin Peasantry Comes Out For Wisconsin Proletariat



Eighty-five thousand protesters gather at the Wisconsin State Capitol Building in Madison for a rally against the Governor of Wisconsin for his new law attacking workers' rights March 12, 2011. REUTERS/Allen Fredrickson



Farmers drive tractors around Wisconsin State Capitol Building in parade of tractors to join eight-five thousand for a rally against the Governor of Wisconsin for his new law attacking workers' rights March 12, 2011. REUTERS/Allen Fredrickson



A farmer drives his tractor past the Wisconsin State Capitol during a rally for workers' rights in Madison, Wisconsin March 12, 2011. Signs say "Farm Labor Feeds America: Support Labor" and "If You Think Education Is Expensive Try Ignorance." (AFP/Getty Images/Scott Olson)

The Revolutionary Movement In Egypt Scores Two Major Victories:

**The Fall Of The Mubarak-
Appointed Cabinet And The
Storming Of Secret Police
Headquarters Send Shock Waves
Across Egypt:**

**“These Two Events Have
Emboldened Supporters Of The
Revolution To Take More Militant
Steps To Achieve Their Goals”
“They Have Dealt A Blow To Those
Parts Of The Mubarak Regime That
Are Still Organizing To Limit And
Defeat The Revolutionary Surge”**

March 9, 2011, Mostafa Omar reports from Egypt, Socialist Worker

LESS THAN a month since the ousting of dictator Hosni Mubarak and against the background of a relentless government campaign against demonstrations and strikes, the revolutionary movement in Egypt has scored two major victories.

First, under the pressure of both continued occupation of the center of Tahrir Square by protesters as well as the spread of strikes across the country, the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces dismissed the cabinet of former Prime Minister Ahmed Shafiq, which was appointed by Mubarak in his last days in power.

On March 3, the Council appointed Essam Sharaf--a former Transportation Minister who resigned in 2005 from a previous Mubarak cabinet to protest corruption, and who also took part in Tahrir demonstrations--as the new prime minister.

The following day, Friday, March 4, 1 million people poured into Tahrir Square to celebrate the fall of the old cabinet.

The new prime minister gave his acceptance speech in Tahrir Square. He promised the massive crowd that he would fulfill the demands of the revolution and declared he would return to protest in Tahrir with them if the government failed to do this.

As a further show of yielding to protesters, the new prime minister immediately replaced the most unpopular ministers in the old cabinet--and at the top of the list were ministers of Justice, Interior and Foreign Affairs.

The ousting of the old cabinet immediately translated into a resurgence of confidence of the millions of Egyptians who made the revolution in their ability to win their demands in the face of an intransigent ruling class.

Meanwhile, that Friday night, as people were still celebrating in Tahrir, hundreds of revolutionaries in Alexandria, Egypt's second largest city, surrounded the headquarters of the State Security Apparatus (SSA)--the notorious secret police.

The protesters mobilized after rumors spread that officers were shredding and burning documents that would implicate them in acts of torture and illegal arrests and the detention of thousands of political and non-political prisoners.

When officers opened fire from the building's balconies and lobbed Molotov cocktail bombs at protesters, hundreds rushed the building.

Army units immediately intervened and detained SSA officers, escorting them out of the building and thus saving their lives.

Inside the building, protesters found evidence that the officers had shredded and burned mountains of documents. However, the demonstrators were still able to save a lot of the material.

The protesters handed most of the saved documents to the army, but only after they photocopied, so it could be shared with the public.

The protesters were also able to find some political prisoners who were being tortured in secret cells and freed them.

The country was electrified by the storming of the headquarters of the secret police in Alexandria by revolutionaries and the immediate appearance on YouTube and the media of recovered secret documents that tell stories of corruption and torture of an unimaginable magnitude.

By mid-afternoon the following day, thousands of protesters were mobilizing to take control of SSA headquarters in city after city--Cairo, Giza, Shubra, Zakazeek, Sohag, Aswan, Domyat, Matrouh.

In some cases, the protesters took direct control of SSA buildings and replicated what the Alexandrians did.

In other cases, army units beat protesters to the SSA headquarters, detained SSA officers and seized documents that had not been burned.

At the Lazoghli Building, headquarters of the Ministry of Interior in Cairo, the army clashed with protesters who attempted to storm the building and arrested some.

The Supreme Council immediately urged all protesters who confiscated SSA secret documents not to publish them in the name of national security.

President Barack Obama sent a Pentagon official to Cairo to discuss with the Supreme Council how to deal with possible fallout from publishing documents that could highlight the cooperation between the U.S. and the Egyptian SSA in torturing suspects in the U.S. government's so-called "war on terror."

Unfortunately for the Council, Egyptians didn't listen to its pleas.

Within 24 hours of the storming of SSA buildings, people had posted on the Internet hundreds of documents, plus videos taken inside the headquarters.

The protesters took parts of the machines used to torture people with electric shocks and showed them to the world.

The SSA was the chief tool of repression under the Mubarak regime, impacting the lives of all Egyptian workers, students and peasants.

The SSA effectively controlled all aspects of life in every company, factory, university and neighborhood. It tracked down, imprisoned and tortured political activists, from Islamists to socialists and trade unionists, and on and on.

Through the leaked documents, the public has finally gotten a chance to see for itself what it already knew from personal experience or from stories told by tens of thousands of ordinary people and activists who were tortured by the SSA and were lucky to make it out of its gulags alive.

Moreover, many documents proved that the SSA was actively cultivating hatred between Muslims and Christians as a divide-and-conquer tactic.

A former Interior Minister is now known to have personally orchestrated the heinous bomb attack on Elkedeseen Church in Alexandria on New Year's Eve that killed and injured dozens--the aim was to ignite a civil war between Muslims and Christians to avert a bigger social upheaval.

For weeks now, democracy demonstrators have called on the government to dismantle the SSA.

And for weeks, the government stalled and refused to promise anything but reform of the secret police.

It turns out that the government was even lying about “reform.”

A secret document confiscated from SSA buildings and posted on the Internet showed that the government was discussing simply changing the name of the SSA to create the illusion among the public that it had been transformed.

But, today more than ever, millions of people support the dismantling of the SSA.

And with Tunisia's new cabinet, also facing protests, has just announced that it will disband the country's secret police, the new Egyptian cabinet will also be under tremendous pressure to do the same.

On March 7, the attorney general's office charged 47 officers with burning documents and tampering with evidence. Meanwhile, the government removed all police and SSA officers from university campuses--where they repressed political and academic freedoms for decades--thus finally honoring a 2010 court order to this effect.

“The Fall Of The Mubarak-Appointed Cabinet And The Storming Of SSA Headquarters Have Sent Shock Waves Across Egypt.

The fall of the Mubarak-appointed cabinet and the storming of SSA headquarters have sent shock waves across Egypt.

On the one hand, these two events have emboldened supporters of the revolution to take more militant steps to achieve their goals.

On the other, they have dealt a blow to those parts of the Mubarak regime that are still organizing to limit and defeat the revolutionary surge.

These two victories can create a breathing space for revolutionaries to strengthen their forces.

For one, militant workers who were continually targeted by the SSA may have one less sword directed at their throats.

Students on campuses will have more freedom to organize a stronger front of struggle.

However, these setbacks for the ruling class mean it will be sharper and more vicious in its campaign to bring back “law and order.”

While the SSA is under siege and maybe on its way out, the guardians of the old order, led by the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces, will attempt to recreate the mechanisms of repression that they believe are needed to deal with workers and revolutionaries.

Since the army is, for the moment, ruling out use of the “force” option to stem the tide of revolution, the government media and even liberal media, as well as moderate parties and formations, will take the lead in supporting the Supreme Council's schemes.

Unfortunately, the Coalition of the Youth of the Revolution Youth, which was formed by liberals and members of the Muslim Brotherhood out of the Tahrir revolt, has already called off the weekly protest on Friday, March 11, to give the new prime minister a chance.

But for now, momentum has shifted back to the side of the revolutionaries, and they have the wind at their backs.



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THE BLOODSHED**

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

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