Firefighters enjoy pizza on Ian's Pizza on State. People from over 60 countries and all fifty states have ordered pizza for the demonstrators from the nearby pizza shop. Firefighters and police officers are being paid $18.75/hour to intercept the budget repair bill that would strip collective bargaining powers from about $70,000 public employees in Wisconsin. Even though the Mayor of Madison says he has no police and a defense trooper in tow, from Walker's bill, they have joined the protests for labor rights in their state. Photo by Ian's Pizza on State.

By WORKERS' INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE

Editor's Note: We are republishing this article about the mass protests in Wisconsin written by the Workers International League. Workers around the world are fighting back as governments try to make them pay for the bosses' crisis. It is important for New Eristows workers learn from the struggles of their fellow workers in every country.

Wisconsin is on the front lines of the worldwide battle against cuts and austerity. Most public sector workers in the state belong to unions that collectively negotiate their wages, benefits, and pensions. It has been that way for over 60 years. Now Governor Walker wants to make Wisconsin a "right to work" state, make it illegal for state employees to bargain collectively, and limit wage increases to the consumer price index. The result is that 175,000 teachers, government employees, prison guards and others will be at the mercy of the Wisconsin state legislature every year to determine how much they will get in raises and pensions, with wage increases limited to adjustment for inflation.

Governor Walker's vicious attack against organized workers is the result of an old and assault that is picking up steam as the crisis of the system continues. If he succeeds in smashing Wisconsin's public sector unions, other states and the private sector will follow. This will mean an even lower standard of living for all workers in the United States. What Walker does in Wisconsin today can happen in Wisconsin tomorrow.

Just six weeks after he was elected with the backing of the Tea Party, Walker said that anyone who could not see he made progress in Wisconsin by the unions "must have been in a coma." But the Governor, like the rest of the big business politicians and the corporate media, seems to have gone into a sort of self-induced coma, believing their own hype about the Tea Party having a real mass base in the American population. His victory was based on the fatiguing lack of strength of the opposition. Walker came to power not because Wisconsin's voters gave him a mandate; he extends an attack on Wisconsin's working people and millions of dollars spent by billionaires like the Koch brothers on his campaign. These are the real interests behind Walker's attacks.

Walker blames the budget deficit and says there are cuts which need to be made. But this has nothing to do with balancing the budget. It has everything to do with making life even worse for the wealthy, while the majority of us see our quality of life driven to new lows.

Two thirds of Wisconsin's corporations pay no corporate tax whatsoever. Corporate America is sitting on $2 trillion, but are not investing in creating new jobs because they want even higher profits than they are already getting and can get fewer workers to do more work as the millions of unemployed workers need work. It is no secret that they are the ones that have to make sacrifices! For Walker's attack on labor is not only important things about profits. People are more important than jobs still lost or pensions, for the state's citizens.

The reaction of Wisconsin's workers and young people to the implementation of the Tea Party's anti-worker program has quickly shown the real state of American labor. Unions, unorganized workers, as well as unorganized workers has been tremendous. Organized contingents of hundreds of thousands of unionized workers marched on the Capitol. Hundreds of students have staged walkouts. Thousands of workers have desecrated the Capitol. A wave of strikes of workers and young people have come out overnight. As many as 40,000 walked in one day. Unions and many schools have been shut down, a vivid reminder of the power of the people. The working class has returned to the inspiring scenes in Egypt's Tahrir Square, which as we know, led to an important victory. We have the numbers. But we also need the strategy to make sure we are not betrayed.

So far, the response has been largely spontaneous. What we need is a coordinated mass struggle. An important attack on the Walker plan was a rally talk of a recall of Governor Walker, but this will take time. On March 13, public employee contracts will be torn up. It is a slogan of the organized. A day general strike of public sector workers, with solidarity of workers and people will be on the cards. Unions and unions united unorganized would bring the state to a halt and make clear what is possible. The road to walkout and resistance is there to be taken. But we urgently organize a city-wide assembly of Madison's workers and young people, a kind of mass "town hall" meeting, and a mass meeting of people from around the state to join us. The union leaders and coordinating bodies like the Wisconsin Labor Council and the state labor federation must take the lead on this. They were elected to lead, and this is the time to do it.

At such a mass meeting we could democratically and concretely discuss the new general strike. To build for this we should form coordination committees in every factory, school, and workplace, linked up centrally and governed by elected delegates. This is a fight we can and must win! We, the people have the power.

Community Calendar

For details and updated event listings, visit nmbmediacoop.org To list your event or to receive the community calendar by email once per week, email community@nmbmediacoop.org

ACORN Organic Conference and Trade Show and Seedy Saturday
Lord Beaverbrook Hotel, March 10-12, 9am-1pm. Free admission. Additional workshops at cost on seed saving, grafting, urban gardening, food preserving and cooking organic food. Seedy Saturday will feature more than 20 seed vendors, and a display table by the Anishnawbe Women. Contact: admin@acornorganic.org or 1-888-322-2767.

5th Annual Vory Show Benefit for the Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan
Complex, 440 York St., Fredericton. With: Voices from Afghan women, the Raging Grannies, the Elm City Echoes, Debbie Robinson and the Hooters. Contact: Fredericton Sexual Crisis Centre, Advisory Council on the Status of Women/Fredericton, or 660-724-2433. More! Silent Auction, Literature & Refreshments. Tickets on sale at the door, $10. RAWA was established in Kabul, Afghanistan, in 1992 to mobilize a universal group fighting for human rights and social justice in Afghanistan. Contact: rawaaf-net.org for more info. Proceeds to RAWA's national health care and women's income generation. Contact: info@frederictonpeace.org Co-Hosted by Fredericton Peace Coalition, CUSO-VSO, CUPW Atlantic Women's Committee Solidarity Fund and the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC). Contact: info@peacecoalition.ca

Volunteer with CUSO-VSO. Join us for an information session on our volunteer opportunities. Experienced volunteers will share their stories. Thurs., March 24 at 7:30 p.m. Renaissance College, 811 Charlotte St., Fredericton. Contact: events@cuso-vso.org Screening of The Price of Life
Fredericton, March 21st at 7:30 pm, followed by a panel discussion. Gosland is a witty and frightening investigation into natural gas and oil production in the Maritimes. Contact: info@gridjustice.org. Contact: info@gridjustice.org. Contact: info@gridjustice.org. Contact: info@gridjustice.org. Contact: info@gridjustice.org.

Spring into Action: Auction: Conservation Council's Annual Fundraiser. Joes Fish and Chips, 39 Bridge St. Fredericton, Sat., April 30 at the Crowne Plaza in Fredericton for the annual "Spring into Action" auction in support of CCBN. Auction includes outdoor excursions and experiences. Contact: ccbn@conservationcouncil.ca. Registoguest. Contact: info@conservationcouncil.ca/506 457 2405

Cinema Politica is a network of community and campus locals screening documentaries on issues that matter. Fredericton, Cinema Politica screenings are held every Friday night at 7:00pm at Conserver House, 180 St. John St. Cinema Politica is a not for profit, volunteer run, organization with an executive committee of volunteers in Moncton and Taymouth. Check out film schedules at cinemapolitica.org

In Brief...

- On March 1st, about 200 university students from St. Thomas University and University of New Brunswick took to the streets in defence of public education. Students in New Brunswick pay the second highest tuition fees on average in the country. In the Wintersem, the average undergraduate leaves school $37,000 in debt. As the government begins to reduce its deficit this year, budget, on March 22, students and their families are calling on elected representatives to defend public education by providing more funding to public institutions.

- Thousands marched in Hamilton, Ontario on Jan. 29, 2011 in solidarity with the 900 steelworkers who have been locked out by US Steel and 9,000 pensioners whose incomes are in jeopardy.

- Despite mounting public concern over the impact of aquaculture pesticides on the marine environment, Fisheries and Oceans Canada is in the process of developing regulations that will facilitate the ongoing use of pesticides in the open water by the salmon aquaculture industry. Sea lice infestations plaguing the Atlantic salmon industry has led to the increased use of pesticides. The unsustainability of open net pen salmon aquaculture as it is currently practiced has been widely documented. The salmon aquaculture industry in New Brunswick is toxic not only to sea lice, but also to other crustaceans, fish eggs and the many small crustaceans (krill) that form the base of the food chain.

- Whole Foods Market sent an email to its customers calling for "conditional deregulation" of Monsanto's genetically engineered herbicide Roundup. The Organic Consumer's Association called the email "profoundly misleading."

- Roundup Ready alfalfa will be widely planted with the approval of Whole Foods, Stonyfield Farm and Organic Valley, effectively allowing the GMOs to be included in products labeled "organic."

- Dozens of tree planters from Africa working in rural British Columbia say they were treated like slaves. They were hired by a Canadian company to plant trees on containers and subjected to violence and sexual abuse, according to an investigative report.

- In New Brunswick, the government has ordered to pay $228,000 in back wages to the workers at the John Deere plant in Smethport, New York.

- Two supporters of Bradley Manning, the U.S. soldier suspected of leaking confidential documents to WikiLeaks, will be released from jail.

- Senators have passed a bill criminalizing public violations by military police at Virginia's Quantico Marine Base.

- The Moody Blues have announced that the band has been awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award at the upcoming 2011 Grammy Awards.

- Student workers at St. Thomas University in Fredericton, New Brunswick, who have organized workers on campus, our labour is valuable and we make a significant contribution to the life of the University. We demand respect from the administration of St. Thomas. We want to make being a student worker at our university the best possible development for all future generations to come after us. As employees of St. Thomas University, it is our legal right to organize and we will do so. To support our efforts, we call all organized unionized workers on campus and have a real voice in our workplace and working conditions. Sign our union petition online at stuse.ca or contact the STUSE Organizing Committee today at stuse.info@gmail.com.