



Struggle-La-Lucha.org

Waupaca, Wis., protest demands equality and builds unity

written by Wisconsin Bail Out The People Movement
August 14, 2020



Aug. 9, 2020, Waupaca, Wis. Photo: Wisconsin Bail Out The People Movement

Waupaca, Wis., Aug. 9, 2020 — Dozens from across Wisconsin came to defend Black Lives Matter community activists while building a broad based People's United Front to oppose racism and raise other people's demands.

A diverse array of multinational workers, youth and students from Fon du Lac, Oshkosh, Appleton, Neenah, Green Bay, Manitowoc County, Madison, Milwaukee and numerous other cities participated in the "Rally For Equality: Build Unity!" event.

A mass rally took place at a downtown park followed by a strong, disciplined march down Main Street in Waupaca and then returning to the park. During the march armed right-wing goons and police attempted to menace the protesters but the protesters held their ground.

At the event, besides signs in support of Black Lives Matter, many participants raised concrete demands including a moratorium on evictions and foreclosures; money for public education and not cages, cops and war; union jobs not racist union busting; and money for free healthcare not U.S. wars.

Speakers included members of Jonathon Tubby's family. Tubby was a youth murdered by the Green Bay police on October 18, 2018. Other labor and community and Waupaca residents spoke at the main rally before the march.

Self-defense is a human right!

Waupaca is a town of 6,000 people in central Wisconsin, an area known for environmental activities, a massive foundry and other industrial and manufacturing plants such as paper mills. The world renowned University of Wisconsin Stevens Point is an hour from Waupaca.

Over this summer, many courageous community activists have physically defended themselves and their children against racists in Waupaca and other right-wing goons that have come to the city with the goal of terrorizing the population.

Community members in Waupaca who organized Black Lives Matter events were and are being attacked verbally on social media; some having their home addresses published. At one protest, a right-wing goon tried running over protesters. On August 1, 2020 an armed protester on site at a protest to defend participants was tackled by cops and subsequently was locked up in jail over a weekend and has been charged with multiple felonies and other charges.

Meanwhile right-wing racist armed goons such as the 3 Percenters are walking the streets, driving erratically through the city with loud racist music, tearing down Black Lives Matter signs and engaging in other terrorism against progressive activists have gone untouched by police.

Community residents in Waupaca in solidarity with Black Lives Matter, are defending themselves in the city against racist goons by any means necessary with support from many quarters.

Fighting back!

Just days before the August 9 protest, almost 1,000 United Steelworkers at a plant in Wisconsin Rapids (an hour from Waupaca) were given notice that the bosses planned on shutting down a major mill that's been in operation for over 100 years.

In addition to this devastation - in the midst of the COVID-19 Pandemic - the Waupaca area, as across the state, has been devastated by the unrelenting racist capitalist austerity over the past decade in Wisconsin. Much of what poor and working people wrested in class struggle over the past 100 years in Wisconsin is now gone. Millions of poor and working people in the state have fought union busting, environmental destruction, attacks on women and the LGBTQ community and much more. Wall Street forces - in particular the banks - have wrested billions in concessions from poor and working people in Wisconsin in the last decade alone through methods such as increased debt service, public sector workers wage and healthcare cuts, the elimination of collective bargaining and Jim Crow right-to-work (for less) laws.

This horrific theft by the capitalists and their vile political servants has come primarily at the expense of a range of public services and public K-12 and higher education. And police across the state in the past decade have murdered dozens of Black, Brown, Indigenous and white workers. And the police of course protect the

rich while they engage in plundering poor and working people and destroying the earth.

Organizations, such as the Milwaukee-based Bradley Foundation, fund numerous right-wing organizations in Wisconsin such as the Americans For Prosperity which has an office in Wausau, a short distance northwest of Waupaca. Bradley leaders also have a decades-long alliance with the John Birch Society in Appleton, 40 miles southeast of Waupaca.

Bradley's "capitalism with the gloves off" approach has turned Wisconsin into a model for Jim Crow austerity in many other states and now federally with the Trump administration. A major focus of Bradley is to eviscerate working class bases of organization such as unions, community and student organizations, to ensure billions in debt service to the banks and that corporations can operate with "flexibility" and "freedom" (no unions, minimal or no safety regulations etc.). Bradley also operates fundamentally with a eugenics ideological base so it's no mistake that numerous academic and other studies conclude that people of African descent in Wisconsin have the worst quality of life in the United States. The former Chairperson of Bradley, Michael Grebe, goes back to the Reagan administration, formerly chaired the national Republican Party and chaired Scott Walker's gubernatorial and recall campaigns. Grebe and Bradley for decades have helped "groom" the likes of Paul Ryan, Reince Priebus, James Sensenbrenner, Robin Vos, Scott Fitzgerald and a host of other political servants of Wall Street. The Board of Bradley is stocked with union busting attorneys, corporate vultures, bankers and also Art Pope of North Carolina who assisted in bringing racist anti-worker "southern methods" to Wisconsin in the last decade in particular.

This has all resulted in a situation where in particular the life choices for working class youth in semi-rural, rural and urban areas of Wisconsin have been curtailed dramatically. Black, Brown and Indigenous youth are of course experiencing even

more barbaric and cruel conditions. Instead of free education, union jobs, free childcare and other necessities, right-wing politicians in Wisconsin and their Wall Street masters are responsible for hundreds of thousands of youth facing potential futures of low-wage non-union jobs, jails, drug addiction, sex trafficking, dying for Big Oil in the military, having their peers murdered by cops and other horrific outgrowths of the profits-at-all-costs capitalist system.

In this environment, youth and students and their allies across Wisconsin are becoming leaders in building a better world by organizing protests, developing relationships and more. They refuse to live in a capitalist world of racism, endless wars, police terror, sexism and bigotry. Despite the numerous very serious challenges facing them, participants joining the August 9 rally and march in Waupaca all joined in solidarity with this vision. They continue the hard work of building the necessary unity and solidarity to win a better world for all poor and working people.

Members of the [Coalition](#) to March on the Democratic National Convention (DNC) were also on site to invite participants to an August 17 protest against the DNC in Milwaukee.

Photo and video coverage of the August 9 Waupaca event (and many other BLM and related events in Wisconsin): <https://www.facebook.com/wibailoutpeople.org/> and <https://wibailoutpeople.org/>

Source: [Wisconsin Bail Out the People Movement](#)

