



Struggle-La-Lucha.org

Capitalists choose Milwaukee for the RNC because Wisconsin is THE austerity model

written by Dorothy Brown, Wisconsin Bail Out The People Movement
July 8, 2024

People's resistance building, week of protest actions July 15-19, 2024

MARCH ON THE RNC DAY-OF ITINERARY



MONDAY, JULY 15

All events will begin at Dontre Hamilton (Red Arrow) Park
(920 N. Water St.)

10 AM

PRESS CONFERENCE *

*Press, be sure to sign up for press credentials in advance. Sign up on our website under the "Press" tab.

11 AM

RALLY

Listen to our coalition members on why they are marching against the RNC!

Check out our website for our points of unity.

12 PM

MARCH

Join our family-friendly march as we demand our voices to be heard!

All are welcome!

The legacy of unions and community advances in Wisconsin is deep and has often been led by socialists and communists and other militants. This people's resistance is continuing during the Republican National Convention (RNC) scheduled to take place July 15-19, 2024 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Historically, many firsts for workers nationwide were won in Wisconsin. These

include: the first collective bargaining laws for public sector workers, the first teaching assistants union that won collective bargaining (after striking) at UW Madison, many union locals desegregated due to numerous militant union campaigns by many UAW, numerous advances in women's rights, the first state to enact protections for lesbian and gay people in 1983 and much more. [*We Rise Fighting! Labor Podcast*: <https://tinyurl.com/35dfxbaf>]. There have also been many challenges as Milwaukee, for decades, is one of the most segregated cities in the United States. [Dr. William Trotter: "*Black Milwaukee: The Making of an Industrial Proletariat, 1915-45.*"]

The Capitalist Offensive During the Reagan-Bush-Clinton Era

In the late 1980s, first with the implementation of charter schools and in the 1990s with the evisceration of AFDC and the implementation of TANF, the capitalists and their servants, often led by the right-wing Bradley Foundation, have led a scorched earth model of how to implement rapacious capitalist austerity that has now gone to a great extent nationwide and even global.

In 2011, capitalists went even further by fomenting a political and economic coup in Wisconsin with the state statute Act 10, which – despite the greatest people's state capitol occupation in Madison and resistance since the 1930's (Sue Ruggles of AFT Local 212 Video: <https://tinyurl.com/5n7sjby8>) – was implemented. Act 10 eliminated almost all collective bargaining for public sector workers. This set the tone for the implementation of the Jim Crow-based Right-to-Work-for law in 2015. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. called RTW one of the greatest frauds ever perpetrated on workers in the United States. And following the RTW implementation, the elimination of prevailing wage laws by the right-wing controlled state legislature in 2017.

Unfortunately, many of the dreams of the most extreme factions of the capitalist ruling class have (temporarily) become realized in Wisconsin.

Just a short list since 2011, when the Governor's office and the Wisconsin legislature were completely controlled by right-wing servants of the capitalists:

- The most de-funding of K-12 and higher education, in particular the UW System, in state history (at least over 1 billion outright since 2011).
- In the UW System, hundreds of faculty and staff have been laid off, some services privatized, such as bookstores and janitorial services, and six two-year campuses have or are in the process of closing. In addition, under the former Governor Scott Walker tenure from 2011-2018, administrative offices that service the poor and working class were gutted or eliminated; right-wing legislators refused (still do) to accept federal funding for Medicare in Wisconsin; and more horrendous austerity that has led to the mass misery, suffering, and death of many in Wisconsin. Economically, the plundering of poor and working people since 2011 in Wisconsin has been in the tens of billions stolen by the rich, much by the banks in forms such as "interest payments" from state, county, and municipal loans;
- Most progressive tenant rights laws were eliminated from state statute in 2012 increasing gentrification and landlords getting richer by increasing rents across the state (many right-wing legislators such as Robin Vos own millions of dollars of rental properties fleecing working-class renters as a matter of course and this includes many students in places such as near UW Whitewater where Vos owns many rental properties);
- A variety of environmental attacks ensued, such as the gutting or eliminating of hard-won policies and state statutes over decades;
- The allowance of more corporate farming took place, police given more ability to repress and terrorize the people, prisoner rights reduced or eliminated, various attacks on Indigenous Nations, anti-Boycott, Divestment,

and Sanction (BDS) state statute passed and implemented directly targeting pro-Palestine activists, many other attacks such as supporting U.S. sanctions and blockades against People's Republics such as China, Cuba and Venezuela and support for more U.S. war funding at the expense of poor and working people;

- Union member loss through Act 10, RTW, and other anti-labor attacks has resulted in what some sources claim is a 150,000 dues-paying member loss since 2011. The NEA-affiliated state educators union has lost at least 60,000 members.

How did the capitalists do this in a state with such a deep tradition of union and community progressive and revolutionary history?

- The surgical role of the right-wing Bradley Foundation since the mid-1980s has been central in particular, with specific emphasis on its funding focuses and development of capitalist comprador cadres such as Scott Walker, Robin Vos, Bryan Steil, Glenn Grothman, Ron Johnson, Paul Tittl, and Paul Ryan. These political servants have engaged in endless crimes against the people including racist anti-worker gerrymandering, gutting or eliminating local and state administrative agencies that benefits workers, reduced or eliminated a variety of anti-discrimination protections, still refuse to accept federal funds to cover more poor and working people under Medicaid and much more
(<https://www.prwatch.org/news/2019/06/13479/bradley-foundation-funds-opt-out-campaign-cripple-public-sector-unions>)
(<https://www.prwatch.org/news/2020/06/13587/bradley-spent-millions-voter-suppression-union-busters-climate-deniers-and-right>)
- The capitalists have created a statewide network of vultures with organizing bases such as offices with major administrative support and connections. Some names to be aware of: Michael Grebe (a Nixon and Reagan acolyte),

Art Pope, Rick Esenberg, Sheldon Lubar, Dick and Elizabeth Uhelin, Diane Hendricks, Steve Bannon. (See below links). Right-wing groups such as the Moms for Liberty that frequently attack school boards statewide over LGBTQIA protections for students, COVID safety, educator's union rights, and anti-discrimination policies are able to build local chapters much quicker with Bradley and other right-wing foundation funds. The Wisconsin Institute for Law and Liberty and other right-wing anti-worker law firms, such as Foley and Lardner and Michael Best and Friedrich, assist groups such as Moms for Liberty with a variety of resources. Right-wing operatives such as Karl Rove have been instrumental in advising many capitalists in Wisconsin with his state-by-state austerity model with the goal of bringing it federal such as outlined in Project 2025 by the Heritage Foundation, <https://www.project2025.org/>)

(<https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/group/moms-liberty>);

- Art Pope from North Carolina was the leader of the Bradley Foundation for a period in the past 15 years and he's helping to train many capitalists and their political servants on how to implement and continue "southern methods" in Wisconsin. These include guiding members of the right-wing legislature about how to purposefully starve cities such as Madison and Milwaukee of direly needed shared revenue, regressive tax codes, eliminating residency requirements for public sector workers, how to attack the UW System and other public education by de-funding and other reactionary mechanisms etc. (<https://www.mediamatters.org/health-care/media-guide-right-wing-agenda-north-carolinas-civitas-institute>);
- According to the 1997 investigative report by the former people's organization, *A Job Is A Right Campaign*: The Milwaukee-Wisconsin-based Bradley Foundation is the premier right-wing grant-making foundation in the country, one that has played a leading role in the development of both a

philosophical approach and an activist agenda for the national right-wing movement. Bradley is a leading force in a constellation of other conservative foundations, institutions, media networks, and legal action projects and has used that leadership position to advance a racist, right-wing political agenda with a capitalism with the gloves off approach (no union, safety or anti-discrimination protections, etc.). [Source: *"The Feeding Trough: The Bradley Foundation, "The Bell Curve" & the Real Story Behind W-2, Wisconsin's National Model for Welfare Reform : an Investigative Report."*];

- To realize their goals of ongoing racist austerity, the capitalists and their political servants had to eliminate working-class organization in a variety of sectors statewide. This has taken place with the elimination of almost all public sector collective bargaining with the implementation of Act 10 in 2011. This Act also forced workers to pay a percentage of their wages into the state pension system for the first time ever and also increased their health care costs resulting in massive wage cuts for at least 75,000 state and municipal workers. Many public sector unions no longer have chapters in the UW System or in cities where they had built working-class power for decades, and many union offices have been closed or are struggling to stay afloat. With Right-To-Work as state law, workers in union shops don't have to pay dues or even fair share legally (but they still have to be represented by the union at their work site if there is one there). So, since Act 10 has been implemented in June 2011, billions of dues funds from private and public sector unions that could be going to building union/working class organizing and thus power in Wisconsin and nationwide has been lost and these major losses continue; (<https://www.wpr.org/economy/labor/decade-after-act-10-its-different-world-wisconsin-unions>) (https://www.bls.gov/regions/midwest/news-release/2024/unionmembership_wisconsin_20240207.htm);

- The capitalists and their political servants took advantage of the vacuum of anti-racist class struggle internationalist oriented union leaders and a recent history of almost purely electoral or parliamentary activity and often “service-based” structures by unions instead of a social justice approach with strikes and other direct actions. And, although there’s been some rebuilding of left forces in the state in the recent period, it’s still in a formative stage. At the present time, the people’s movement in Wisconsin isn’t as ideological and organizationally as powerful as the left in the late 1960s and 1970s. During that period in Wisconsin (and previously from about 1900 to the 1930s with progressives, socialists, and communists in the leadership of many union and community organizations), poor and working people statewide won many concessions as a part of a global people’s movement. Much of that movement was often based in socialist philosophy and organizing methods and as a part of a serious united front of a variety of progressive and revolutionary forces that were rooted in working-class formations such as unions.

This “Wisconsin Model” both wings of the capitalist parties want for every state. They want to use Milwaukee as a platform and declare before the country and the world that if this type of racist, union-busting austerity, as described above, can be done in Wisconsin, it can be done anywhere.

But the arrogance of capitalists and their political servants have been met with people’s resistance every step of the way since before and after 2011. Before and after the RNC in Milwaukee, this will continue with the Coalition to March on the RNC and many other independent people’s formations planning various forms of resistance such as rallies, marches, teach-ins and much more. Listings here: <https://wibailoutpeople.org/2024/07/08/milwaukee-wisconsin-peoples-resistance-actions-against-the-racist-and-anti-worker-rnc-convention-july-13-19-2024-listings/>

Then in August 19-22, 2024, similar protests will take at the DNC in Chicago: marchondnc2024.org

Nationally, anti-fascist calls are continuing as well, including from the [Vermont State Labor Council AFL-CIO](https://fighting-words.net/2024/01/27/anti-fascist-organizing-committee-launched/) and others. One example: <https://fighting-words.net/2024/01/27/anti-fascist-organizing-committee-launched/>

RESOURCES

- Coalition to March on the RNC: <https://www.facebook.com/MarchOnTheRNC2024>
- Coalition to March on the DNC: marchondnc2024.org
- Poor People's Campaign: <https://www.poorpeoplescampaign.org/>
- Code Pink: <https://www.codepink.org/>
- Wisconsin Bail Out the People Movement: <https://wibailoutpeople.org/>
- Zao MKE Church: [Zao MKE Church](https://zao.org/)
- MICAH: <https://micahmke.org/>
- Voces de la Frontera: [Voces de la Frontera](https://vocesdelafrontera.org/)
- [Milwaukee Area Labor Council](https://mkearea.org/)
- [Milwaukee Autonomous Tenants Union](https://milwaukeeautonomous.org/)
- RNC Convention: <https://gopconvention2024.com/>
- Center for Media and Democracy Bradley Files: <https://www.exposedbycmd.org/bradley-files/>
- The Bradley Foundation: <https://www.bradleyfdn.org/>
- The Bradley Foundation, Grants: <https://www.bradleyfdn.org/grants/past-grants>
- Wisconsin Institute for Law and Liberty: <https://will-law.org/>
- *"The Feeding Trough: The Bradley Foundation, "The Bell Curve" & the Real Story Behind W-2, Wisconsin's National Model for Welfare Reform: an Investigative Report"* by former A Job Is A Right Campaign -

<https://tinyurl.com/mvt64sca>

- Dr. William Trotter: *“Black Milwaukee: The Making of an Industrial Proletariat, 1915-45”*
- Wisconsin Labor History Society: <https://www.wisconsinlaborhistory.org/>

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

