

Western Wisconsin students, workers oppose cuts

Ron Jorgenson
19 February 2011

While workers and students have concentrated their forces at the state capitol in Madison, rallies have proliferated throughout outstate Wisconsin. WSWS supporters leafleted a boisterous crowd of well over 500 workers and students who packed the “Falcon Nest” auditorium located on the campus of the University of Wisconsin in River Falls. The WSWS also covered another noontime demonstration at the University of Wisconsin Stout campus in Menomonie that brought out students, faculty and city workers.

Tom Pearson, a member of the faculty at UW-Stout told the WSWS, “Fundamentally, I see Governor Walker’s proposal as an attack on workers’ rights. It’s not only an attack on the right to collective bargaining, but it’s an attack on solidarity.”

Pearson called attention to the recent events in Egypt and how they had affected workers in Wisconsin. “I was at the rally in Madison yesterday and it was really impressive how many people drew inspiration from the movement in Egypt. There were a lot of signs comparing Walker to Mubarak. Workers are clearly identifying with each other’s struggles.”

Mitchell Nelsen, another student at Stout declared, “Every worker in Wisconsin should have the same rights as workers in every other state to negotiate their wages. These rights are important because with inflation, people will not be able to afford all the things that in the end help the economy.”

“And what Walker has said about using the National Guard against state workers I find very offensive. They would be fighting against their own family and friends. Service men and women ultimately look to go into middle class jobs and their future will also be affected by this bill.”

Annie Hagger, a UW-Stout sophomore majoring in early childhood teaching said, “I don’t agree with

Walker at all, because teachers don’t make enough and they’ll be making even less after this legislation gets passed. Teachers should actually be getting paid more for what they do. They play such an influential role but they don’t get enough credit. This bill shows the governor doesn’t appreciate teachers.

“My mom is a special education aid. We’re lucky my dad works, because she only makes about \$9,000 a year. I have two other siblings and that’s what we live on.

“I also find it offensive what Walker said about using the National Guard. My father is in the military. It’s not okay to use the troops like this. Walker should take responsibility for what he is doing and not be putting the guard in this situation.”

Karla Hanson, another sophomore at Stout majoring in early childhood, said, “I think what he’s doing is going to come back and bite him. It’s going to cause all sorts of problems for people in this economy. Teachers won’t be able to support their families. They’ll have to get second jobs because their wages will be cut.

“Some people don’t think it will affect them, but it will. The economy is going to fall apart. Restaurants, businesses, entertainment—people simply won’t be able to afford it.

I don’t think they should pass this bill. The legislature should be talking to the people instead of trying to push it through.”



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