



AT ISSUE

Labor Peace? Walker Attacks Public Employees

February 14, 2010

“Red - the sign of angry men [and women],” so goes the song from *Les Miserables*. *Wisconsin’s city halls, county court houses, state buildings and schools are seas of red this week, as employees wear red in protest of Governor Walker’s frontal attack. Workers are angry, as Governor Walker moves to destroy their Unions*, the Unions which have enabled workers to enjoy economic security, workplace safety and workplace justice. **And, in education, destroy what teachers have negotiated to benefit children and their learning environment.** *Governor Walker seeks to destroy all of that.* Wisconsin law, as it applies to private sector labor relations, is called “*The Peace Act*”. Whether one reviews the history of Wisconsin law as it applies to the private sector or the public sector, *Wisconsin law has generally enabled labor peace.* And, that has certainly been the case in the public sector since Wisconsin law has enabled arbitration of contract disputes.



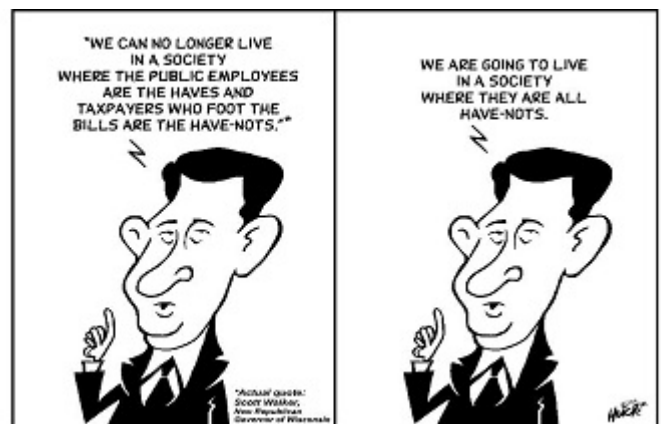
For many years, Wisconsin government has been the leader in seeing the value of public sector unions. In addition to being the *first state to authorize public sector unions, also born here were Social Security, Unemployment Compensation and Worker’s Compensation.*

Union contracts have enabled workers to concentrate on doing the best job possible for the public and have provided public employers with one source with which to work. The union speaks for all employees, as regards wages, benefits and even discipline. The contract between the union and the employer provides not only the wages and benefits, but the procedures for such things as promotion, demotion, transfer, discipline and layoff. Without these agreements, employer’s would be in chaos.

With all their faults, trade unions have done more for decency, for honesty, for education, for the betterment of the race, for the developing of character in men than any other association of men [and women]. Clarence Darrow

So much for the Republican philosophy of government being operated at the lowest possible level. Governor Walker attempts to DICTATE what all Wisconsin public employers will do. How would Walker’s proposals impact you?

- **Salary/wage schedules eliminated** (frozen at your current wage, future increases limited to not more than the Consumer Price Index, 1.5% last year);
- **Health insurance, if any** (if the School Board elects to provide health insurance, they will select the insurance company and the benefit plan. Walker’s mandate is that the employee pay 12.6% of the premium - employee with a GHC family point of service would pay \$2,268 per year more);
- **Dental insurance, if any**, up to the School Board;
- **Long term disability insurance, if any**, up to the School Board;



- **Seniority, if any** (one could be laid off without regard to seniority);
- **Planning time, if any**, up to the School Board;
- **Benefits for designated family partner, if any**, up to the School Board;
- **Transfer procedures, if any**, up to the School Board;
- **Any worker absent longer than 3 days without the employer's approval** is subject to termination;
- **Pension** - Walker's mandate is that the employee pay 5.8% of wage into WRS (average teacher would pay \$2,900 per year more);
- **Work preservation clause - gone**, work could be sub-contracted;
- **Hours of school, unilaterally set** by School Board;
- **Length of school year, unilaterally set** by School Board;
- **Termination without just cause and with no recourse.**

Why would Walker attack public workers? These are the people who purify our water, plow our streets, perform emergency services, keep our homes and streets safe, pick up our trash, treat our sewage, look after the welfare of those in need, teach our children, staff our schools. Public services keep our State great.

Wisconsin has over a BILLION dollars in uncollected taxes. That is about one-third of our State's deficit. Why wouldn't Governor Walker concentrate on collecting back taxes from these corporate scoundrels, rather than bash public employees? Governor Walker has even indicated that he does not plan to live up to Wisconsin's law which provides two-thirds funding for public education.

One can only draw the conclusion that **Walker's intent is NOT FINANCIAL, it is to destroy workers' unions.**
Shame on Governor Walker.

Worker Rights
are
Human Rights

In a recent interview about the world's economic crisis, Pope Benedict XVI lauded unions, stating, *"The great challenge and the great opportunity posed by today's worrisome economic crisis is to find a new synthesis between the common good and the market, between capital and labor. And in this regard, union organizations can make a significant contribution."*

Governor Walker's proposal is 180° from the Pope's philosophy. It is nothing short of a political power grab, at the expense of great public workers, their children and their families - and in the case of teachers, the children they teach. Speak loudly. **Tell Governor Walker NO WAY!**

Madison legislators Senators Mark Miller, Fred Risser and Jon Erpenbach; and Representatives Gary Hebl, Joe Parisi, Terese Berceau, Spencer Black, Mark Pocan, Sondy Pope-Roberts, and Kelda Roys, all oppose Governor Walker's ludicrous proposal. Wisconsin's senior Senator, Fred Risser said, *"Without a willingness to even discuss what concessions need to be made with state employees, the governor comes across more like a dictator and less like a leader."*

MTI members are encouraged to protest Governor Walker's proposals by participating in rallies at the Capitol, after school, Tuesday and Wednesday. Call your legislator and thank them for opposing Walker's horrendous proposal. Your rights, your benefits, your wages are on the line.

**Walker's proposal would cost the
average Madison teacher
a loss of \$5,168.**