

## Strange and desperate attempt to divide growing union movement , Glenn Beck attacks Fight Back! News and Committee to Stop FBI Repression

On March 3, notorious right-wing FOX TV personality Glenn Beck launched a 12-minute attack against Fight Back! News, the [Committee to Stop FBI Repression](#) and many individual labor and anti-war activists associated with these projects. The purpose of his attack was to try to sow division among the many forces that have united in Wisconsin to boldly fight back against the anti-union agenda of Governor Scott Walker.

The Committee to Stop FBI Repression organizes to defend the 23 anti-war and international solidarity activists who have been subpoenaed to a secret grand jury in Chicago. Many of the activists' homes and one office was raided by the FBI in September 2010. The grand jury witch hunt is supposedly investigating 'material support for foreign terrorism.' If indicted, these activists will face severe charges and the possibility of long jail sentences even though they haven't given any material support to terrorism. They have organized against U.S. wars and military aid and have used their First Amendment right to express their political ideas in solidarity with people facing oppression in places like Palestine and Colombia.

Many of the 23 activists attacked by the FBI and grand jury are long-time union activists and a number of unions have publicly criticized the government harassment against them. Unions have a long history of standing up for freedom of speech, freedom of association and civil liberties, because throughout history, unions have had to fight for these basic rights against harsh attacks from companies and the government. Conservatives attack unions and accuse them of being communistic, terrorist and any other thing they can think of. So it's not strange that unions are questioning the FBI's attacks on these labor and anti-war activists.

Despite the plainly obvious fact that the FBI repression against these 23 activists has no direct connection with the union fight back against Wisconsin Gov. Walker's attempt to destroy public sector unions, this is where Glenn Beck starts his attack.

In the face of the bold and united response in Wisconsin against Gov. Walker's plan to destroy public sector unions, reactionaries like Beck are mortified. They rightly see it as a threat to their agenda of helping the rich get richer and more powerful while keeping workers and oppressed nationalities divided, confused and powerless. So what does Beck do? He conjures up the same old, tired tactics of McCarthyistic red-baiting. In the March 3 show, Beck tries to scare his viewers with the spectre of 'communism,' 'Islam' and 'terrorism.'

His goal with this line of attack is to try to turn some sectors of the working class against the union movement by spinning a laughably strange story claiming that unions are basically fronts for communist, Islamist terrorism. Beck particularly tries to appeal to fire fighters, teachers and police officers to turn against the union movement in Wisconsin. The teachers have been central to the movement since they would lose their union and bargaining rights if Gov. Walker's bill passes.

The unhinged incoherence of Beck's rants would be laughable if he didn't have a major TV network at his disposal to spout his lunatic theories day after day. His daily screeds lambasting any group or individual to the left of Attila the Hun have earned him the scorn of millions of workers and progressive people. At every protest in Wisconsin, many people bring signs ridiculing the shrill pro-corporate propaganda

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of Fox News and Glenn Beck. Over the past week protesters have started to bring pictures of palm trees to the wintery Wisconsin union rallies, after Fox News ran a clip they claimed showed Wisconsin union protesters shoving conservative counter-protesters. But the clip was obviously not from Wisconsin - because there was no snow on the ground and you could see palm trees in the background. This made it clearer than ever that Fox will use fake footage and outright lies to try to divide the union movement. Other popular signs people bring to the Wisconsin protests say "Faux News: We make it up" and "Fox News will lie about this." Protesters hope these signs will show up on the TV cameras whenever they're filming.

In that sense, the union movement and other progressive movements take it as a badge of pride to be attacked by Fox and its hosts like Beck. This is the right attitude. In Wisconsin, the divide-and-conquer attacks haven't worked and the movement's broad unity has continued to stop the union-busting bill from being voted on. This has opened up space for the movement in the streets to keep growing, with daily protests attracting as many as 100,000 people.

Whenever large numbers of people challenge the powers that be, like we're seeing in Wisconsin, these divide-and-conquer attacks from the right are as predictable as the sun rising in the east. As the movement grows, we can expect the attacks to get louder, more frequent and more shrill.

We believe that this won't be the last time Beck (and others like him) attack Fight

Back! News and the Committee to Stop FBI Repression. In the 1950s and 60s these kinds of McCarthyistic attacks were common against all progressive movements, including the civil rights movement, the anti-war movement and the labor movement. Martin Luther King, Jr. was one of many prominent leaders who the FBI and prominent conservatives constantly branded as a dangerous communist because of his successes in fighting for civil rights and workers rights and his outspokenness against the U.S. war in Vietnam. It's important not to let such attacks sidetrack or divide our movements.

When we are attacked by Fox News and its cast of characters like Glenn Beck, it means we're doing something right and we should keep moving forward boldly.

You can find out more about the Committee to Stop FBI Repression at [stopfbi.net](http://stopfbi.net).

See Glenn Beck's March 3 tirade here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oK75lEjH11w>



Wisconsin union protesters express their opinion about Fox News (Photo by Jennell Jenney)