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Subject: Wisconsin's Shame: 'I Thought It Was a Home Invasion'

Posted by [CyberkNight](#) on Tue, 21 Apr 2015 18:25:35 GMT

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"THEY CAME WITH A BATTERING RAM." Cindy Archer, one of the lead architects of Wisconsin's Act 10 -- also called the "Wisconsin Budget Repair Bill," it limited public-employee benefits and altered collective-bargaining rules for public-employee unions -- was jolted awake by yelling, loud pounding at the door, and her dogs' frantic barking. The entire house -- the windows and walls -- was shaking.

She looked outside to see up to a dozen police officers, yelling to open the door. They were carrying a battering ram.

She wasn't dressed, but she started to run toward the door, her body in full view of the police. Some yelled at her to grab some clothes, others yelled for her to open the door.

"I was so afraid," she says. "I did not know what to do." She grabbed some clothes, opened the door, and dressed right in front of the police. The dogs were still frantic.

"I begged and begged, 'Please don't shoot my dogs, please don't shoot my dogs, just don't shoot my dogs.' I couldn't get them to stop barking, and I couldn't get them outside quick enough. I saw a gun and barking dogs. I was scared and knew this was a bad mix."

She got the dogs safely out of the house, just as multiple armed agents rushed inside. Some even barged into the bathroom, where her partner was in the shower. The officer or agent in charge demanded that Cindy sit on the couch, but she wanted to get up and get a cup of coffee.

"I told him this was my house and I could do what I wanted." Wrong thing to say. "This made the agent in charge furious. He towered over me with his finger in my face and yelled like a drill sergeant that I either do it his way or he would handcuff me."

They wouldn't let her speak to a lawyer. She looked outside and saw a person who appeared to be a reporter. Someone had tipped him off.

The neighbors started to come outside, curious at the commotion, and all the while the police searched her house, making a mess, and -- according to Cindy -- leaving her "dead mother's belongings strewn across the basement floor in a most disrespectful way."

Then they left, carrying with them only a cellphone and a laptop.

That was the first thought of "Anne" (not her real name). Someone was pounding at her front door. It was early in the morning -- very early -- and it was the kind of heavy pounding that meant someone was either fleeing from -- or bringing -- trouble.

"It was so hard. I'd never heard anything like it. I thought someone was dying outside."

She ran to the door, opened it, and then chaos. "People came pouring in. For a second I thought it was a home invasion. It was terrifying. They were yelling and running, into every room in the

house. One of the men was in my face, yelling at me over and over and over."

It was indeed a home invasion, but the people who were pouring in were Wisconsin law-enforcement officers. Armed, uniformed police swarmed into the house. Plainclothes investigators cornered her and her newly awakened family. Soon, state officials were seizing the family's personal property, including each person's computer and smartphone, filled with the most intimate family information.

Why were the police at Anne's home? She had no answers. The police were treating them the way they'd seen police treat drug dealers on television.

In fact, TV or movies were their only points of reference, because they weren't criminals. They were law-abiding. They didn't buy or sell drugs. They weren't violent. They weren't a danger to anyone. Yet there were cops -- surrounding their house on the outside, swarming the house on the inside. They even taunted the family as if they were mere "perps."

As if the home invasion, the appropriation of private property, and the verbal abuse weren't enough, next came ominous warnings. Don't call your lawyer. Don't tell anyone about this raid. Not even your mother, your father, or your closest friends.

The entire neighborhood could see the police around their house, but they had to remain silent. This was not the "right to remain silent" as uttered by every cop on every legal drama on television -- the right against self-incrimination. They couldn't mount a public defense if they wanted -- or even offer an explanation to family and friends.

Yet no one in this family was a "perp." Instead, like Cindy, they were American citizens guilty of nothing more than exercising their First Amendment rights to support Act 10 and other conservative causes in Wisconsin. Sitting there shocked and terrified, this citizen -- who is still too intimidated to speak on the record -- kept thinking, "Is this America?"

Full article: <http://www.nationalreview.com/article/417155/wisconsins-shame-i-thought-it-was-home-invasion-david-french>