

Boston: “If you don’t have money it shouldn’t be a death sentence.”

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The WSWWS interviewed people at Occupy Boston in the city’s financial district, where several hundred people have been camped out since last week.

Scott from Boston is unemployed. He was concerned about health care. “I don’t know what it’s like in every state,” he said, “but health care should be for everyone. If you don’t have money it shouldn’t be a death sentence.

“One of the other issues I’ve started to believe in is that it shouldn’t cost more than a decade’s worth of work to pay off your school bills. We went over to Northeastern University and they were really concerned with tuition as well—\$100,000 in debt, \$60,000 in debt, it’s ridiculous.

“And I’ve seen on the news that people with Harvard degrees are working in liquor stores, making 10 bucks an hour. I don’t know exactly what they should be making, but they shouldn’t be working in a liquor store if they have a doctorate.

“We’re a college town, and when all these colleges have classes of hundreds, where are they going to get jobs?

On the issue of the Obama health care overhaul, Scott said: “I have trouble listening to him, because he came into office saying, ‘change, change, change,’ but he never really said what he was going to change.

“As far as I know, Social Security’s going out the window by the time I need it. My grandmother worked for 50 years, doing various things; supported a whole family, a bunch of children, grandchildren. Now she’s sick, she can’t work.

“Here in this state it’s sort of like a lottery with the free health care. They’re saying you have to have it, and then they’re not making it available to everyone. So my grandmother got charged a fee for not having it. Now she’s having to choose—should I pay for electricity or for these medications that are keeping me

alive?”

Lisa Doherty from Charlestown is unemployed. She told us, “Our president, his hands are basically cut off. He can’t do anything because of the Republicans; they block him at every turn. But he could if he wanted to; that’s what I believe. He could put his foot down and say, ‘I’m president.’ Bush did it when he started all these wars. He said, screw the Congress and Senate. He did what he wanted to do.

“It’s all about the corporatocracy, the corporate elements in our government that are way too influential, and that’s got to go.

“I’ve been out of work for three years. I was a mortgage loan processor, and I have absolutely looked for a job everywhere from Dunkin’ Donuts to god knows where. And I get nothing.

“In Massachusetts, if you’re between the ages of 49 and 64 and you have no disabilities, and you have no children, and you have no reason to get money from the state, you get nothing. If you can’t get a job, once your unemployment runs out, you’re screwed.

“My unemployment ran out a year ago last March. So if not for my family, I would be on the street. I’ve been trying to get food stamps for three months, and I can’t get through to them because they’re so overwhelmed with so many people out of work and so many people homeless that they don’t answer their phones. That could create jobs—why don’t they hire people in that department? I could work there; I’m qualified. It’s a sad state of affairs and I want it to change.

“My ex-husband is a heavy equipment operator and my son’s a boilermaker. My son will work for a while, then get laid off. And every time it takes three weeks for your unemployment to come through when a job ends. He lives from hand to mouth. He’s got nothing, and he’s got a son.

“I have five kids and seven grandchildren and I worry

about what the future's going to be like for them.

"I think this is a start. I think it's going to become a really large movement. I don't think the government's going to be able to ignore us anymore. They're going to have to change, whether they want to or not. Unfortunately, if they don't I think it's going to get ugly. Because there are 300 million people in this country and there are 400 to 500 of them who have all the money.

"So I think if enough people rise up they're going to have to make the changes or they're going to have to suffer the consequences. We don't want that to happen, but if things don't change I think it will."

Greg from New York City said, "I'm here for the Bruins hockey game tonight. I had heard about what's going on in New York, then I saw this. So I figured, let me come up here and visit them and show my solidarity.

"The general situation in this country sucks. That's why everybody's here; that's why we're all protesting. It's not only the whole economic situation, but we're tired of corporations running our lives. It's not only us, union people are getting tired of it too. I really think it's beautiful that these protests are now taking up questions of jobs, health care, housing, education.

"I think the corporations need to wake up and think about something besides themselves and their friends. It has to happen, because if it happens, then everybody here gets to go home. If it doesn't happen, everybody's here to stay, just like New York."



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