

Violent crackdown on Occupy protesters in Oakland, California

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26 October 2011

Police violently attacked hundreds of demonstrators in Oakland, California Tuesday evening, one day after clearing out the Occupy Oakland encampment, with several injuries reported. Protesters attempted to retake the plaza, which they have dubbed Oscar Grant Park (Ogawa Plaza).

Decked in riot gear, hundreds of police fired volleys of tear gas canisters and used bean bag guns and flash grenades against the unarmed protesters, who numbered in the thousands. Children, the elderly and disabled were among those trapped in the teargas clouds. Police helicopters patrolled overhead. (Some videos of the police violence were available. See *Tear gas thrown at Occupy Oakland and Police fire tear gas at protesters*)

A reporter from the *East Bay Express*, an independent weekly newspaper, tweeted at about 7:45 p.m. local time, “Tear gas fired into crowd... People on the ground with head wounds near 15[th Street].” There were reports of at least one demonstrator critically injured.

The violent crackdown is being carried out under the orders of Democratic Party Mayor Jean Quan. Quan is one of a number of Democrats who are overseeing the escalation of repressive measures against occupy demonstrators. The actions in Oakland come a couple of days after Democratic Mayor Rahm Emanuel, the former White House Chief of Staff for Obama, ordered the arrest of 150 demonstrators in Chicago.

Police actions were also underway Tuesday evening in Atlanta, Georgia; Orlando, Florida; and Cleveland, Ohio. Police began surrounding the Atlanta encampment at around 11:00 p.m. local time, then moved in to clear the park and arrest those remaining.

In clearing the Oakland encampment early Tuesday morning, police used tear gas to drive away media covering the event. This was followed by flash grenades and rubber bullets, fired into the tents on the plaza. They then tore the camp apart and arrested about 75 protesters. Police beat people, slashed tents with boxcutters and destroyed personal property.

Helicopters hovered overhead, and sonic cannon were used sporadically in an attempt to disorient the people about to be arrested. A smaller number of people were also arrested at nearby Snow Park, which was an outgrowth of the main camp. One eyewitness said the occupants at Snow Park were treated more brutally than those at the main location. Another at the main camp described people being dragged down concrete steps while still inside their tents or sleeping bags.

As the police gathered near the Oakland Coliseum to prepare the military-style operation in the early morning, a local news station had reportedly alerted some protesters that the attack was soon to occur. This may have allowed some people at the camp to slip away before the police from Oakland, Hayward, Union City, Emeryville, Vacaville and several other cities moved in.

Those arrested were taken to several jails, including as far away as Dublin, 22 miles away. Some were being detained on \$10,000 bail and are being held until Thursday.

At a rally in the afternoon before the Oakland Main Library, the National Lawyers Guild announced that they had the names of 105 arrested; two people had their hands broken, and one had a head injury requiring hospitalization. The ludicrous charges leveled at the protesters were “remaining at the scene of a riot” (in

fact, a police riot), resisting arrest and battery of a police officer.

Occupy Oakland, a part of the Occupy Wall Street movement, began on October 10. Within days, a sophisticated infrastructure had arisen which included round-the-clock cooking, sanitation, and communications.

Riot police maintained a presence in the city center area throughout the day on Tuesday, urging people to avoid downtown and at one point closing the local BART transit station.



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