

Dozens of anti-Wall Street protesters arrested in Sacramento

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Occupy Wall Street protests spreading reached Sacramento, California on October 6, when an estimated 600 people gathered in Cesar Chavez Park and marched to the state capitol building, the federal building and the Wells Fargo [Bank] Center.

Twenty protestors were arrested at 12:30 am early the next morning when dozens of police officers in riot gear encircled and intimidated protestors by warning they would use various methods of coercion, including chemical and electrical, to expel the group of peaceful protesters from the public park.

Fourteen more people were arrested early October 9 after a handful of protesters again refused to leave Cesar Chavez after Sacramento Police Department officials issued a dispersal order.

As the number of arrests nationwide in response to the outburst of anger aimed at the wealthiest one percent of Americans approaches 1,000, the Occupy Wall Street movement continues to grow in terms of both participants and geographic reach.

Those arrested in Sacramento include Iraq war veterans, recent foreclosure victims, the homeless, community college students and teachers. The make-up of the protest represents a cross-section of the working population, who feel genuine anger and frustration at the current situation.

Furthermore, the treatment of those arrested highlights the fear and hostility of the authorities toward the protest. Many arrestees faced abuse while in detention. Female protesters were repeatedly called names, and a young protestor with autism was

disparaged by multiple police officers, who repeatedly called him “retarded”, “an idiot”, and proceeded to crudely mock his speaking difficulties. Moreover, the young man was intentionally separated from his father, who was also arrested.

Not a single banker or speculator responsible for the ongoing economic disaster has been arrested. When their victims exercise their constitutional rights to gather and peacefully protest, however, they are met with the full force of the law.

As the movement enters its second month, many questions remain. Prominent members of the Democratic Party, led by figures such as former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and New York Congressman Charles Rangel, are working to channel popular anger against Wall Street behind the Democrats’ 2012 campaign plans.

Tim L., from Fair Oaks, in Sacramento County, voiced his concern with these developments, explaining that “a lot of the frustration lies with [Barack] Obama. I have been really disappointed in this man who promised hope and change and gave us nothing.” When asked who he plans on supporting in the 2012 elections, Tim simply said, “What’s the difference?”

Confusion is sown by liberals and ex-left groups who are essentially pleading with Obama to “listen” to the protest demands. They argue or imply that Obama has simply lost his way and can still be pressured into fighting “corporate greed.” A Democratic victory in 2012 is the answer, these forces suggest.

In reality, Obama and both big business parties are

carrying out a bipartisan attack on the working class, an attack that will continue no matter which party takes the White House or Congress in the next election.

Some anti-Wall Street participants in Sacramento recognized the need to fight attempts by the Democrats and their apologists to gain control of the protests. Amanda, a former Obama supporter from Sacramento, was furious with the president's statement that he understood the working class' "broad-based frustration" in response to the global economic crisis: "No s***, we're frustrated!" she said, "That's not much of a statement! I don't have faith that [Obama] believes us enough to make change happen ... I voted for Obama, but now it's like finding out that Santa isn't real."

Mary, visiting from Topeka, Kansas, added: "Some of his policies have been total failures. This is not a man who is going to fight for us."

Illusions in the Democratic Party will result in the failure and collapse of the anti-Wall Street movement. Only a mobilized and organized mass socialist movement aimed against capitalism has the potential to end the social inequality that has helped give rise to the Occupy movement.



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