

San Diego: “The revolution is worldwide, not just in the US”

Our reporting team
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Occupy San Diego entered its second week amidst police attacks and a new demonstration against Wall Street and the ongoing wars.

On Friday, the police moved to clear the downtown Civic Center, which has been the main site for the occupation. A section of the occupiers relocated to a nearby park, while others stayed in the Civic Center intending to peacefully resist.

The police forcibly removed most of the tents early morning on Friday. The occupiers attempted to resist nonviolently and were pepper-sprayed and physically attacked by the police. Police Chief William Lansdowne was caught on video wistfully reminiscing about the 1960s, when “we would have waded into that with sticks and clubs ... that’s exactly what would have happened” (see video).

On Saturday, in conjunction of a series of protests held worldwide, a demonstration and rally took place involving several hundred people. A team of WSWs reporters interviewed the participants, who expressed frustration with social inequality, war and the grim prospects facing a new generation.

Dagmar was at the protest because she is against the war. She is hopeful that this is the beginning of a movement that will actually change society: “I voted for Obama in 2008, but he has failed. I hope that he doesn’t try to hijack this movement for his re-election campaign. As soon as he elected Timothy Geithner and his cabinet, I knew he was a failure. We can’t just vote Democrat or Republican, both parties are almost the same thing.”

Joanne was at the original march for Occupy San Diego last Friday and she has been out a few times since as well. She told us that she reads the WSWs and appreciates the international character of the web site. “People need to know what socialism is,” Joanne told us. She went on, “One of the really troubling things is what has been taken away from us. I had opportunity when I was young but the younger generation doesn’t, the future generations are being denied opportunities.”

“There is a completely corrupted monetary system that has infected the entire world. A lot of people applauded Clinton, but he repealed the Glass-Steagall Act—now commercial banks have created monstrous corporate banking structures. Obama has proven to be a disappointment. As soon as he came into office he surrounded himself with the same people that caused this crisis. There is a revolving door between the government and Wall Street.”

Eric Suttle is a recent graduate from college and works as a biochemist. He told us, “I am lucky to have a job. I know a lot of people who don’t. The problem is the whole relationship between the corporations and politics. I remember hearing about this bailout. The banks are privatizing gains and socializing the losses.” Speaking about education, Eric said, “It’s a big difference if you’re born into a rich community or poor community. The way that money works right now takes away the equality of opportunity.”

David Heldreth, a laid-off journalist, said the two big business parties are to blame for the crisis. “Both the Democrats and Republicans represent the

corporations,” he said. “They get their money from them, so how can you say they aren’t run by the corporations? The Republicans are a little different, at least they will tell you they are going to stab you. The Democrats just stab you in the back.”

When asked about the crisis confronting the youth, David said, “They are even a lot worse off than I am. I don’t have student loan debt and I have five years of work experience, whereas they are coming into a job market with none. Even some of my friends who are 27 and 28 and have jobs have been losing their houses as a result of raised interest rates. The banks have an incentive to take people’s houses away. They collect insurance, they have already gotten all of your money, and now they can sell the house again.”

When we asked David about the prospects for socialism, he responded, “That’s the inevitable goal. A few years ago, a lot of people could maybe still say that the war or the economy didn’t affect them. Not anymore. Now they are taking your sister’s house, or your brother is in the military. You can’t say it’s someone else’s problem anymore. It’s our problem.”

Richard, a retired worker, told the WSWs, “I’m here to oppose the greedy bankers who have robbed the public of trillions of dollars. I’m also here to protest the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and the other multiple illegal wars the US is engaged in. We are fighting for our freedom here. This revolution is worldwide, not just in the US. Occupy is a grassroots movement of the 99 percent. The 1 percent is not going to give us our freedom, we are going to have to take it.”

Sophia, a 16-year old high school student, also attended the protest “There is absolutely no difference between the parties,” she said. “They are just one big corporate cluster. They are the reason we are in such a decline, the reason why we have no jobs.”

Sophia explained why she was participating in the protest: “We are trying to revolt. These events are

making young people come out. We need to look at all of the world. We need to change things. I think the world will be inspired by what happens in America.”



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