

Protests building momentum as they enter fourth week

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The anti-Wall Street protests continued to spread over the weekend, with new protests being organized in cities across the US, including Cincinnati, Indianapolis, Philadelphia and many others. According to the web site Occupy Together, as of Sunday evening “meetups” to plan protests had been set in more than 1,100 cities.

The protests have also taken on an international character, with October 15 being planned as an international day of action in solidarity with the movement that began more than three weeks ago in New York City with the Occupy Wall Street protest.

The demonstrations are giving expression to growing anger in wide layers of the population over social inequality, unemployment and the decline in living standards for the vast majority of the population. Some of the issues motivating participants include rising home foreclosures, skyrocketing student debt and the multi-trillion-dollar bailout of Wall Street and the banks.

As they gain support, the protests are generating growing concern in the ruling elite that they will move outside the orbit of the two parties of big business. They have been derided by leading politicians. US House Majority Leader Eric Cantor, Republican of Virginia, last Friday described the protests as “growing mobs.”

On the CBS “Face the Nation” program on Sunday, Republican presidential contender Herman Cain denounced the protesters as “jealous Americans” who want to “take somebody else’s Cadillac.” “To protest Wall Street and the bankers is basically saying you’re anti-capitalism,” he complained.

A number of Democratic politicians have weighed in with feigned sympathy for the anti-Wall Street protests in order to channel them behind the Democratic Party and President Obama’s 2012 reelection campaign.

House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi, appearing on ABC’s “This Week” program, commented cynically, “I support the message to the establishment, whether it’s Wall Street or the political establishment and the rest, that change has to happen... People are angry.”

Pelosi supported the bailout of the banks, the wage-cutting restructuring of the auto industry and Obama’s cost-cutting health care “reform,” and is backing the White House’s proposals to slash hundreds of billions of dollars from Medicare and Medicaid and reduce taxes for corporations and the wealthy in the name of tax “reform.”

The trade unions are working in tandem with the Democratic Party to bring the movement under control and prevent it from taking an independent and consciously anti-capitalist direction. (See “Occupy Wall Street and the Democratic Party”)

The spreading protests are a genuine expression of mass popular discontent that is correctly targeting the banks and big business. The *World Socialist Web Site* is continuing its coverage and encourages readers to send in reports on protests in their areas.



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