

# Police evict Occupy Portland protesters

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Police finally succeeded in forcing hundreds of Occupy Portland supporters from their camp on Sunday, capping a tumultuous evening and morning in which thousands of sympathizers flooded downtown Portland to defend the protesters' site.

Democratic Mayor Sam Adams ordered the two parks where protesters had set up camp sites to be cleared, citing as his pretext reported assaults and health and sanitation issues. In an interview on public television he declared, "The camp itself is inherently unsafe."

In response, thousands of people, many of them young, arrived downtown late Saturday, packing the sidewalks and streets around the two parks. As protesters counted down to the 12:01 am deadline to evacuate Occupy Portland's camps and no effort was made by authorities to clear the area, a celebratory mood ensued, with hundreds of young people singing, dancing and playing drums on Main Street, between the parks.

The police simply waited for the crowds to dissipate and implemented their eviction plan Sunday morning. Once again there was an influx of as many as 2,000 supporters.

Julian told the *World Socialist Web Site*, "The police seemed visibly daunted by the number of people who had turned out to support Occupy Portland on the night of its planned eviction. The crowd, from my observations, reached its height around 12:30 a.m., half an hour after the planned beginning of the eviction. Both occupied blocks and the portion of Main Street between them were filled with people. Many more congregated on the sidewalks on the far side of the street.

"The police alternated between threatening actions and faked retreats. Their strategy was one of attrition, wearing down the numbers and morale of the occupiers

throughout the night while boosting their own numbers.

"By around 9 a.m. the police had returned in larger numbers and took advantage of the disorganization to begin dismantling the camps. Batons were used to separate the protesters and push them out of Chapman Square. Those who were not driven out of the park at this time were arrested.

"By about 1 p.m. Sunday, the confrontation had moved out of the park into Main Street, as bulldozers dismantled the remnants of the encampment and fences went up around Chapman Park. Around 4:30 p.m. the occupiers, who had again attracted a large crowd of supporters, seemed to have reached a consensus that they would move and occupy a different location. Meanwhile, the number of riot police had increased several times, apparently reinforced by the state police or police from other cities."

Since the launching of the Occupy camp in Portland on October 6, the media has engaged in a campaign of slander against the anti-Wall Street protesters in order to prepare public opinion for their expulsion and any use of force by the police. An October 27 editorial in Oregon's largest newspaper threatened the protesters with violence if they chose to ignore the editor's invitation to "leave sooner."

The newspaper wrote: "Or it can end later, and end badly, either in a spasm of violence involving someone at the camp or the inevitable police action if the occupiers insist on pushing their protest to a bitter end." (See: "Occupy Portland threatened by Oregon's leading newspaper")

An article in the *Oregonian* declared, "Growing criminal activity, drug use and homeless concentrations may have overtaken Portland's tent city and its anti-Wall Street origins."

A supporter of the Socialist Equality Party addressed a crowd of several hundred Occupy supporters gathered around the speakers' tent. He said the overriding issue

was the need to turn more broadly to the working class with a socialist and internationalist perspective. “The demand for jobs, homes, education comes into conflict with capitalism and the two-party system. The building of a mass socialist party is the only way to defend these rights,” he said.

The *World Socialist Web Site* spoke to occupier Amy Loyd last week. She said, “I have always identified myself as a socialist. I got my degree in history at UC, where the average debt of students will now be \$80,000.

“I personally never liked Sam Adams. He is morally bankrupt. Everyone talks about how gracious he is for letting us stay, but he is just maneuvering so as not to burn his constituency. His is a bourgeois progressivism. I am determined to stay even though I have jury duty Monday. Staying is also a civic duty.”

On the night of the eviction the WSWS spoke with several others who planned to stay in the park after the deadline.

Kent Corey said, “I graduated college five years ago and I haven’t been able to find a job since. I work as a temporary a lot of the time and now I am working in retail. As an adult I can’t sustain myself right now. At some point when the man is pushing your buttons, you got to show solidarity. My particular generation has no future.”

Britt B. said, “I am a college graduate and I can’t sustain myself. I am here because I work for a major corporation that won’t give me benefits. I have to fight for barista jobs, for clerical jobs tooth and nail.”

On defying the eviction notice, Britt explained, “If we give up, they win. If we give up, the nation will see we give up and the nation will give up. I can only speak for myself, but there needs to be a voice.”

Nathan Sosnovski and his friends were at the Occupy site earlier in the week. They were visiting from Seattle to support Occupy Portland.

“I am under the impression that the 1st Amendment provides a certain right to assemble that transcends the ability of local, state and even federal laws to restrict,” Nathan said. “If they don’t agree with what is being said and they try to stop you, then that becomes an

attack on democracy.”

Aliyyah Howes, a high school junior, spoke of the situation facing students. “I only have to go to school every other day. I think it is ridiculous. The first idea was to reduce classroom hours, which didn’t work, and now we are learning less.

“I have a politics class and it is very irritating that my higher income classmates frown on the Occupy as a bunch of homeless people. I do think it is lame to evict Occupy. People aren’t going to leave. A lot of people are going to stay to make a statement and I hope nothing happens. But, knowing the Portland police and their record, I worry.”



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