

Decolonization and 'Occupy Wall Street'

by Robert Desjarlait

The Occupy Wall Street (OWS) protest has become a matter of debate in Indian country. Some have chosen to be included under the slogan "We Are The 99%"; others, like me, have not. Many of those who support OWS have come up with their own slogan: "Decolonize Wall Street." But I simply don't believe that the indigenous nations on Turtle Island are a part of that 99% equation, let alone that the OWS movement is about decolonization.

One protester, Brendan Burke, said: "Everyone has this problem. White, black. Rich or poor. Where you live. Everyone has a financial inequity oppressing them."

I assume from his statement that Burke only sees things in white and black. Apparently he is color blind when it comes to red and brown.

As far as financial inequity is concerned, we, the red and the brown peoples of the Americas, have suffered financial inequity ever since the oppressors first invaded our shores. Socio-economic inequity began with the subjugation of our lands through treaties. Annuity payments were late and never the amount negotiated under the treaty. Supplies and food rations that were part of annuity payments were often appropriated by Indian agents and resold for higher prices.

The tragedy at Gaa-mitaawangaagamaag (Sandy Lake) exemplifies the socio-economic inequity of annuity payments. In the fall of 1850, nineteen Anishinaabeg bands from Wisconsin journeyed to Gaa-mitaawangaagamaag for annual annuity payments and supplies. The annuity payments and supplies were late and

the people had to wait until early December before they received limited sums of money and available supplies. Trying to survive on spoiled and inadequate government rations while waiting for the annuities, 150 Anishinaabeg people died from dysentery and measles at Gaa-mitaawangaagamaag. 250 more, mostly women, children and elders, died on their way back home to Wisconsin. This is but one example of the economic inequity that has been part of the indigenous experience in the United States.

OWS organizers have repeatedly stated the inspiration for their protest is the Arab Spring movement. If this is the case, one may ask how did the indigenous peoples of the Middle East fare from the Arab Spring?

In September 2011, Daniel Gabriel, the SUA Human Rights and UN NGO Director, stated: "While the media focuses all its energy on the Palestinian search for Statehood and the 'Arab Spring', it is the reduced indigenous populations of the Middle East who continue to lose out. Time and time again, the world demands justice, democracy and freedom in the Middle East, but it fails in its obligation to demand the same for the minority groups like the Arameans. Today we barely survive in our homeland. But tomorrow we may silently vanish from existence."

If Arab Spring didn't flourish for indigenous peoples in the Middle East, how can we expect it to flourish here? If the indigenous peoples in the Middle East are barely surviving in their homelands, can we expect the Arab Spring inspired movement on Wall Street to lessen the oppression in our homelands? Will the actions on Wall Street abate our youth crisis, our teen suicide rate, our domestic and sexual abuse, or our alcohol and substance abuse in Indian Country? Will it heal our broken families and communities?

Will [Occupy] Wall Street stop the rape and plunder of Mother Earth by the mining, oil and energy interests? Will it halt the ecocide, ethnocide, linguicide, and genocide of the indigenous peoples in North America? If Gabriel's words offer any insight, then our historical trauma will not lessen but increase. It will increase in the present generation to the Seventh Generation—and beyond.

Then there is the matter of decolonization. The question is: the decolonization of what, of whom? How can decolonization be a part of the process if the occupiers are occupying occupied land?

The dominance of a white majority involved with the OWS movement explains why decolonization isn't included in the proposed list of demands issued on September 3. The list of demands includes

- Separate Investment Banking from Commercial Banks;
- Use Congressional authority to prosecute the Wall Street criminals responsible for 2008 crisis;
- Cap the ability of corporations to contribute to political campaigns;
- Congress pass the Buffett Rule, i.e., fair taxation of the rich and corporations;
- Revamping Securities and Exchange Commission;
- Pass effective law to limit the influence of lobbyists;
- Pass law prohibiting former regulators to join corporations later.

Where in this proposed list of demands is there anything remotely connected to decolonization? At its core, OWS is about corporate greed, financial accountability, and economic inequity. It's about a change in the system, although, as Gabriel points out, an Arab Spring doesn't bring change to the voices of the indigenous. If change is the basic tenant of the OWS movement, then this change should not be the exclusion of indigenous populations in the United States, rather, change should be inclusive.

The OWS movement is, at the present time, about money. The core message seems to be that corporate America and the wealthy need to share the profits. But the question is: How are those profits made? The profits of the wealthy are made through the industries they own. These industries fuel and generate profits. And they create jobs and programs.

The mining, oil, and energy industries generate enormous profits. Those profits come at a cost to Indian country, to say nothing of the environment in general. The new Indian Wars are about the opposition to ecocidal legislative policies and industries that endanger our homelands and our Mother Earth. Part of the struggle is trying to rise above the marginalization that began with colonization and continues through the corporate policies of the mining, oil, and energy industries.

According to Belinda Morris, "Marginalization is as much a result of colonialism as it is corporatism. One is social, the other economic. From the indigenous standpoint . . . the struggle does not and cannot exist in a vacuum, it must not allow itself to be subsumed by a movement that, to date, has shown little—if any—recognition of it, let alone respect for it."

As evidenced by their proposed list of demands, the OWS movement has no intentions of recognizing indigenous

concerns or demarginalizing indigenous peoples in the United States. And that's because the mindset of the majority of occupiers is an intergenerational extension of a colonized mindset. In her Foreword to *The New Resource Wars*, Winona LaDuke provides insight into the colonized mindset. Regarding "Industrial society, or as some call it, 'settler society,'" LaDuke writes:

"In industrial society, 'man's dominion over nature,' has preempted the perception of Natural Law as central. Linear concepts of 'progress' dominate this worldview. From this perception of 'progress' as an essential component of societal development comes the perception of the natural world as a wilderness. This, of course, is the philosophical underpinning of colonialism and 'conquest.'"

This way of thinking is also present in scientific systems of thought like 'Darwinism,' as well as in social interpretations of human behavior such as 'Manifest Destiny,' with its belief in some god-ordained right of some humans to dominate the earth. These concepts are central to the . . . present state of relations between native and settler in North America and elsewhere."

The "settler society" that LaDuke refers to isn't from the historical past. It is present in non-indigenous society today. It is the mentality of this "settler society" permeating the mindset of the OWS movement. Their demands aren't about decolonization. Rather, their demands are about wanting a share of the profits, profits that come from the rape and plunder of the earth and our indigenous homelands.

This isn't to say that the OWS movement lacks merit. Economic inequities, corporate greed, the mortgage crisis, the unequal distribution of wealth are legitimate concerns. But those concerns have nothing to do with decolonization no environmental justice. As such, the 99% slogan is not inclusive of the myriad of environmental problems that plague both indigenous and non-indigenous peoples in the US.

Wendy Makoons Geniusz writes: "Because of the colonization process, many of us no longer see the strength of our indigenous knowledge. Our minds have been colonized along with our land, resources, people. For us Anishinaabeg, the decolonization of gikendaasowin (Anishinaabe knowledge) is also part of the decolonization of ourselves."

Geniusz points out that biskaabiiyang means "to return to ourselves, to decolonize ourselves."

For many of us, biskaabiiyang is a lifelong process. It is a journey to heal our traumatized inner spirit of the historical past and the historical present. For many of us, our involvement in the struggles that our communities and our homelands face is a part of that healing journey. From this prism, the Occupy movement can be viewed as recognizing the national trauma endured under Corporate America.

But it isn't about the biskaabiiyang of the American people. Rather, it's about the collusion of corporations and the government to keep us under the yoke of economic inequity and the public's demand for reformation of a corrupt capitalist system that has infested the world under the umbrella of globalization. And it is the reformation of this system that has led to the present movement of people on the streets of America.

However, should any kind of reformation occur, indigenous peoples will undoubtedly continue to be marginalized and their natural resources exploited. And, as before, we will continue our struggles in the shadows of democracy.

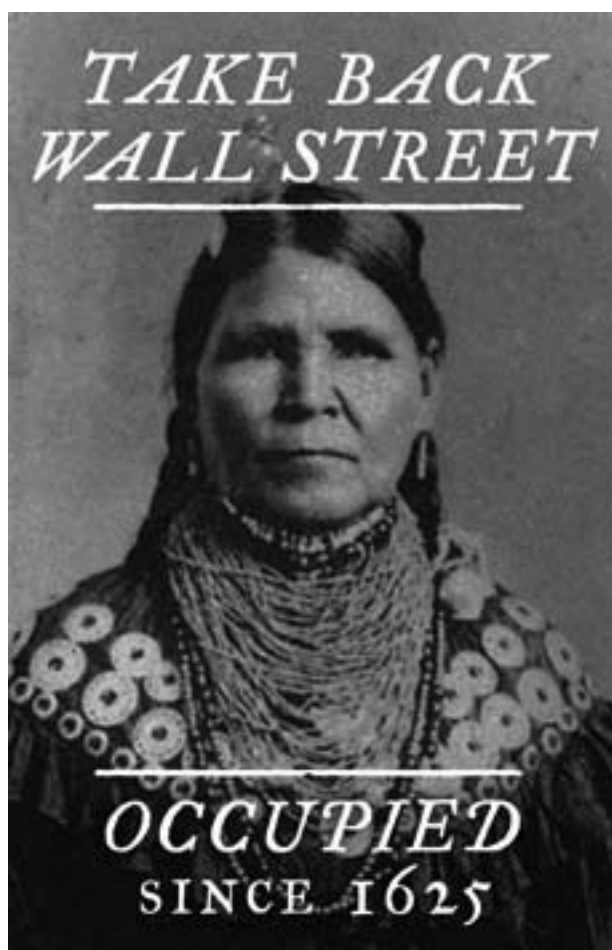
We will need to do this lest we silently vanish from existence.

Robert Desjarlait is from the Red Lake Ojibwe Reservation. He is a free-lance journalist and has been published on issues regarding Indian country. He is a co-founder of Protect Our Manoomin, an Anishinaabe grassroots organization battling against copper mining in northern Minnesota.

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(646) 459-2326

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The Occupation

[column written 10/7/11] © 2011 by Mumia Abu-Jamal

In Lower Manhattan's Zucotti Park (renamed 'Liberty Square' by the demonstrators), the cast of thousands swell in rebellion against the betrayals by the banks, Wall Street's relentless greed, the plague of joblessness and the craven servility of the political class--both Republicans and Democrats--to their moneyed masters.

In short, the central focus of their protest is capitalism--greed writ large, especially since the economic tumble of Fall 2008.

Begun mostly by unemployed youth, it has drawn the presence and support of public workers, urban youth, students, teachers and a considerable number of gray hairs.

That's because social discontent is so widespread that it is spreading like wildfire. Wall Street, and then, days later, Boston, Baltimore, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, and beyond.

Demonstrations springing up like mushrooms after a storm, in protest to the crony capitalism brought to us by the professional sellouts called politicians.

And (speaking of), like vampires at a blood bank, politicians are descending on Wall St., to try to suck the life out of a movement that could threaten their monopoly on power. For, politician's only interest in this protest is to exploit it, to weaken it, while they continue to serve the very bosses the protestors oppose. You can count the number of politicians who truly oppose Wall St. on one hand--and still have a few fingers left.

Perhaps America's greatest white revolutionary, abolitionist John Brown; had little regard for politicians. He told his family: "A professional politician ... you never could trust; for even if he had convictions, he was always ready to sacrifice his principles for his advantage."

Think about that. Now think about every politician you know.

See?

This is People's Power, sparked, in part by the mass protests in Cairo and Wisconsin. Other sparks were the Troy Davis injustice, the assault on several demonstrators by New York cops, the repression on the poor and working class by the political class, and discontent with the long, wasted years at mindless wars abroad.

This is people's power.

May it remain so.

[Sources: DuBois, W. E. B., John Brown: A Biography. (Armonk, NY/London: M. E. Sharpe, 1997

p.83. Wells, Robert, Passing Through to the Territory (Historical novel extending the life and times of Huck Finn, Jim--and John Brown!) (forthcoming, ca. 2011-12), p.224 (mss.).

25th Anniversary of ARA-LA/PART

Next year, 2012, marks the 25th anniversary of People Against Racist Terror, now Anti-Racist Action Los Angeles (ARA-LA/PART), and *Turning the Tide* begins its 25th year of publication. PART was launched in 1987, in response to a scheduled appearance in the L.A. area of convicted Birmingham church bomber J.B. Stoner. Stoner was a former Klansman and fugitive who, having served a prison sentence, was on a national tour for his so-called Crusade Against Corruption, seeking to attract white youth involved in the then-new phenomenon of nazi-oriented boneheads. As a former member of the LA chapter of the John Brown Anti-Klan Committee, which had folded when most of the other members left Los Angeles, Michael Novick had continued to do opposition research on white power groups in southern CA, and caught wind of Stoner's plans. "I blew the whistle on the activities, scheduled for the Glendale Public Library and a nearby Holiday Inn, and with a few friends, launched People Against Racist Terror as a vehicle for organizing a counter-protest. Our slogan was 'Be PART of the Solution!'"

The exposure caused the library to cancel (I believe they shut down for 'security reasons'). But several thousand people turned out in response to the call to oppose Stoner and the boneheads, many local residents of Glendale and lookey-loos, but many others from around the L.A. basin who wanted to express their opposition. We marched over to the nearby hotel where Stoner had booked a room and still planned to proceed. Several nazi-skins on their way in were physically prevented from entering by angry protesters, and sent packing. The Glendale PD declared the protest an illegal assembly, closed several off-ramps on the Glendale Freeway to prevent further protesters from arriving on the scene, and actually called out a water cannon (shades of Stoner's Klan background) to disperse the crowd, although they did not actually fire it. Several arrests were made, including of one of the organizers, and as it turns out, Stoner's event was also disrupted from within the hotel, where a demonstrator had strategically rented a room in advance.

The following year, PART issued Volume 1 Number 1 of "Turning the Tide," then subtitled "L.A. Anti-Racism Newsletter" as a single sheet broadside related to the revived trial of Tom Metzger of the White Aryan Resistance for a triple cross-burning some years before in the San Fernando Valley. (Charges had been twice dropped and reinstated.)

We need your support

To mark this dual anniversary, ARA-LA/PART will be holding two major fund-raising activities in the coming year. In May, we will hold a "first annual" fund-raising dinner honoring local anti-racists in memory of John Brown, martyred abolitionist who was born on May 9, 1800. We intend to publish a commemorative dinner journal, and are seeking sponsors and donors whose ads will help to finance TTT and its distribution to hundreds of prisoners. In the fall, we will be publishing a special commemorative 25th anniversary well-bound issue of *Turning the Tide: Journal of Anti-Racist Action, Research & Education*, featuring excerpts from the previous quarter-century of publication, and we are seeking ads and solidarity messages to pay for printing and distributing the issue. Please get in touch if you would like to participate in either of these projects.

Subscribe or Donate Now!

What Do They Want?

column written 11/2/11 (c) 2011 by Mumia Abu-Jamal

With few exceptions, major corporate outlets, networks, national newspapers and the like, have treated the month-long protests such as Occupy Wall Street as something akin to a UFO: odd, alien and inscrutable.

From microphones nationwide come questions: "What do they want?"; "What are their demands?" or, "Why are they doing this?"

By so doing, they have spread more confusion than information, and performed a serious disservice to their listeners, viewers and readers.

They have become purveyors of misinformation, and are, at the very least, disingenuous.

For, the Occupation movement could not be more clear about their goals and objectives. Indeed, within days of the demonstration's debut, they published a 4-page, full-color newspaper, called The Occupied Wall Street Journal, with a statement on page 3 announcing exactly what brought them together, and why.

It's titled: "Declaration of the Occupation", which in language and tone rings with similarities to the Declaration of Independence. It speaks of "solidarity" with others, and seeks an end to the "mass injustice" being faced by millions of Americans (and others) who "feel wronged by the corporate forces of the world."

In a nutshell, they speak out against corporate greed, illegal foreclosures, bailouts for Wall St., discrimination, exorbitant student loans, political corruption, environmental degradation, the wars abroad--and the corporate control of the media which "keeps people misinformed and fearful.

Huh. There it is. It ain't rocket science. It couldn't be clearer. It's given away freely.

If media couldn't take the time to travel to downtown Manhattan (or their own down towns in over a thousand cities!) to pick up a copy, they could see it on their computer, at: www.occupywallst.com.

Seriously. Now, I don't have computer access. It's not only disallowed on Death Row--it ain't in Pennsylvania prisons period. Yet, a fellow mailed me a copy of The Occupied Wall Street Journal. And I read it.

Why couldn't reporters for major media outlets have done so?

Unless they wanted to "keep people misinformed?"

Send our brotha some LOVE and LIGHT at:

Mumia Abu-Jamal, AM 8335, SCI-Greene,
175 Progress Drive, Waynesburg, PA 15370

ANTI-RACIST ACTION NETWORK FOUR POINTS OF UNITY

1) **WE GO WHERE THEY GO:** Whenever fascists are organizing or active in public, we're there. We don't believe in ignoring them or staying away from them. Never let the nazis have the street!

2) **WE DON'T RELY ON THE COPS OR THE COURTS TO DO OUR WORK FOR US:** This doesn't mean we never go to court, but the cops uphold white supremacy and the status quo, They attack us and everyone that resists oppression. We must rely on ourselves to protect ourselves and stop the fascists.

3) **NON-SECTARIAN DEFENSE OF OTHER ANTI-FASCISTS:** In ARA, we have lots of different groups and individuals. We don't agree about everything and we have a right to differ openly. But in this movement an attack on one is an attack on us all. We stand behind each other.

4) **We support abortion rights and reproductive freedom.** ARA intends to do the hard work necessary to build a broad, strong movement against racism, sexism, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, homophobia, transphobia, and discrimination against the disabled, the oldest, the youngest and the most oppressed people. We want a free classless society.

WE INTEND TO WIN!

**Anti-Racist Action-Los Angeles/People Against Racist Terror
(ARA-LA/PART)
PO Box 1055
Culver City CA 90232
antiracistaction_la@yahoo.com
www.antiracist.org
323-901-4269**

**ANTI-RACIST ACTION NETWORK contact info:
www.antiracistaction.org
info@antiracistaction.org**

Key Documents of the Occupy Wall Street Movement: Principles of Solidarity

What follows is a living document that will be revised through democratic process of General Assembly

On September 17, 2011, people from all across the United States of America and the world came to protest the blatant injustices of our times perpetuated by the economic and political elites. On the 17th we as individuals rose up against political disenfranchisement and social and economic injustice. We spoke out, resisted, and successfully occupied Wall Street.

Today, we proudly remain in Liberty Square constituting ourselves as autonomous political beings engaged in non-violent civil disobedience and building solidarity based on mutual respect, acceptance, and love. It is from these reclaimed grounds that we say to all Americans and to the world, Enough! How many crises does it take?

We are the 99% and we have moved to reclaim our mortgaged future. Through a direct democratic process, we have come together as individuals and crafted these principles of solidarity, which are points of unity that include but are not limited to:

**Engaging in direct and transparent participatory democracy;
Exercising personal and collective responsibility;
Recognizing individuals' inherent privilege and the influence it has on all interactions;
Empowering one another against all forms of oppression;
Redefining how labor is valued;
The sanctity of individual privacy;
The belief that education is human right; and
Endeavoring to practice and support wide application of open source.**

We are daring to imagine a new socio-political and economic alternative that offers greater possibility of equality. We are consolidating the other proposed principles of solidarity, after which demands will follow.

Declaration of the Occupation of New York City

This document was accepted by the NYC General Assembly on September 29, 2011

As we gather together in solidarity to express a feeling of mass injustice, we must not lose sight of what brought us together. We write so that all people who feel wronged by the corporate forces of the world can know that we are your allies.

As one people, united, we acknowledge the reality: that the future of the human race requires the cooperation of its members; that our system must protect our rights, and upon corruption of that system, it is up to the individuals to protect their own rights, and those of their neighbors; that a democratic government derives its just power from the people, but corporations do not seek consent to extract wealth from the people and the Earth; and that no true democracy is attainable when the process is determined by economic power. We come to you at a time when corporations, which place profit over people, self-interest over justice, and oppression over equality, run our governments. We have peaceably assembled here, as is our right, to let these facts be known.

They have taken our houses through an illegal foreclosure process, despite not having the original mortgage.

They have taken bailouts from taxpayers with impunity, and continue to give Executives exorbitant bonuses.

They have perpetuated inequality and discrimination in the workplace based on age, the color of one's skin, sex, gender identity and sexual orientation.

They have poisoned the food supply through negligence, and undermined the farming system through monopolization.

They have profited off of the torture, confinement, and cruel treatment of countless animals, and actively hide these practices.

They have continuously sought to strip employees of the right to negotiate for better pay and safer working conditions.

They have held students hostage with tens of thousands of dollars of debt on education, which is itself a human right.

They have consistently outsourced labor and used that outsourcing as leverage to cut workers' healthcare and pay.

They have influenced the courts to achieve the same rights as people, with none of the culpability or responsibility.

They have spent millions of dollars on legal teams that look for ways to get them out of contracts in regards to health insurance.

They have sold our privacy as a commodity.

They have used the military and police force to prevent freedom of the press.

They have deliberately declined to recall faulty products endangering lives in pursuit of profit.

They determine economic policy, despite the catastrophic failures their policies have produced and continue to produce.

They have donated large sums of money to politicians, who are responsible for regulating them.

They continue to block alternate forms of energy to keep us dependent on oil.

They continue to block generic forms of medicine that could save people's lives or provide relief in order to protect investments that have already turned a substantial profit.

They have purposely covered up oil spills, accidents, faulty bookkeeping, and inactive ingredients in pursuit of profit.

They purposefully keep people misinformed and fearful through their control of the media.

They have accepted private contracts to murder prisoners even when presented with serious doubts about their guilt.

They have perpetuated colonialism at home and abroad.

They have participated in the torture and murder of innocent civilians overseas.

They continue to create weapons of mass destruction in order to receive government contracts.*

To the people of the world,

We, the New York City General Assembly occupying Wall Street in Liberty Square, urge you to assert your power. Exercise your right to peaceably assemble; occupy public space; create a process to address the problems we face, and generate solutions accessible to everyone. To all communities that take action and form groups in the spirit of direct democracy, we offer support, documentation, and all of the resources at our disposal. Join us and make your voices heard!

*These grievances are not all-inclusive.

Statement of Autonomy

Passed by the General Assembly at Occupy Wall Street

Occupy Wall Street is a people's movement. It is party-less, leaderless, by the people and for the people. It is not a business, a political party, an advertising campaign or a brand. It is not for sale.

We welcome all, who, in good faith, petition for a redress of grievances through non-violence. We provide a forum for peaceful assembly of individuals to engage in participatory as opposed to partisan debate and democracy. We welcome dissent.

Any statement or declaration not released through the General Assembly and made public online at www.nycga.net should be considered independent of Occupy Wall Street.

We wish to clarify that Occupy Wall Street is not and never has been affiliated with any established political party, candidate or organization. Our only affiliation is with the people.

The people who are working together to create this movement are its sole and mutual caretakers. If you have chosen to devote resources to building this movement, especially your time and labor, then it is yours.

Any organization is welcome to support us with the knowledge that doing so will mean questioning your own institutional frameworks of work and hierarchy and integrating our principles into your modes of action. SPEAK WITH US, NOT FOR US.

Occupy Wall Street values collective resources, dignity, integrity and autonomy above money. We have not made endorsements. All donations are accepted anonymously and are transparently allocated via consensus by the General Assembly or the Operational Spokes Council.

We acknowledge the existence of professional activists who work to make our world a better place. If you are representing, or being compensated by an independent source while participating in our process, please disclose your affiliation at the outset. Those seeking to capitalize on this movement or undermine it by appropriating its message or symbols are not a part of Occupy Wall Street.

We stand in solidarity. We are Occupy Wall Street.

Decolonize Wall Street: Open Letter to Occupy Wall Street Activists

Thank you for your courage. Thank you for making an attempt to improve the situation in what is now called the United States. Thank you for your commitment to peace and non-violence. Thank you for the sacrifices you are making. Thank you.

There's just one thing. I am not one of the 99 percent that you refer to. And, that saddens me. Please don't misunderstand me. I would like to be one of the 99 percent... but you've chosen to exclude me. Perhaps it was unintentional, but, I've been excluded by you. In fact, there are millions of us indigenous people who have been excluded from the Occupy Wall Street protest. Please know that I suspect that it was an unintentional exclusion on your part. That is why I'm writing to you. I believe that you can make this right. (I hope you're still smiling.)

It seems that ever since we indigenous people have discovered Europeans and invited them to visit with us here on our land, we've had to endure countless '-isms' and religions and programs and social engineering that would "fix" us. Protestantism, Socialism, Communism, American Democracy, Christianity, Boarding Schools, Residential Schools,... well, you get the idea. And, it seems that these so-called enlightened strategies were nearly always enacted and implemented and pushed upon us without our consent. And, I'll assume that you're aware of how it turned out for us. Yes. Terribly.

Which brings me back to your mostly-inspiring Occupy Wall Street activities. On September 22nd, with great excitement, I eagerly read your "one demand" statement. Hoping and believing that you enlightened folks fighting for justice and equality and an end to imperialism, etc., etc., would make mention of the fact that the very land upon which you are protesting does not belong to you - that you are guests upon that stolen indigenous land. I had hoped mention would be made of the indigenous nation whose land that is. I had hoped that you would address the centuries-long history that we indigenous peoples of this continent have endured being subject to the countless '-isms' of do-gooders claiming to be building a "more just society," a "better world," a "land of freedom" on top of our indigenous societies, on our indigenous lands, while destroying and/or ignoring our ways of life. I had hoped that you would acknowledge that, since you are settlers on indigenous land, you need and want our indigenous consent to your building anything on our land - never mind an entire society. See where I'm going with this? I hope you're still smiling. We're still friends, so don't sweat it. I believe your hearts are in the right place. I know that this whole genocide and colonization thing

causes all of us lots of confusion sometimes. It just seems to me that you're unknowingly doing the same thing to us that all the colonizers before you have done: you want to do stuff on our land without asking our permission.

But, fear not my friends. We indigenous people have a sense of humor. So, I thought I might make a few friendly suggestions which may help to "fix" the pro-colonialism position in which you now (hopefully, unintentionally) find yourselves. (Please note my use of the word "fix" in the previous sentence. That's an attempt at a joke. You can refer to the third paragraph if you'd like an explanation.)

By the way, I'm just one indigenous person. I represent no one except myself. I'm acting alone in writing this letter. Perhaps none of my own Nishnaabe people will support me in having written this. Perhaps some will. I respect their opinions either way. I love my Nishnaabe people always. I am simply trying to do something good - same as all of you at the Occupy Wall Street protest in what is now called New York.

So, here goes. (You're still smiling, right?)

1) Acknowledge that the United States of America is a colonial country, a country of settlers, built upon the land of indigenous nations; and/or...

2) Demand immediate freedom for indigenous political prisoner Leonard Peltier; and/or...

3) Demand that the colonial government of the United States of America honor all treaties signed with all indigenous nations whose lands are now collectively referred to as the "United States of America"; and/or...

4) Make some kind of mention that you are indeed aware that you are settlers and that you are not intending to repeat the mistakes of all of the settler do-gooders that have come before you. In other words, that you are willing to obtain the consent of indigenous people before you do anything on indigenous land.

I hope you find this list useful. I eagerly await your response, my friends.

Miigwech! (~"Thank you!")

JohnPaul Montano

<http://twitter.com/jpmontano>

<http://unsettlingamerica.wordpress.com/2011/10/03/decolonize-wall-street/>

(UN)OCCUPY ALBUQUERQUE

Occupy movement in New Mexico finds new name out of respect for Native Americans

By Nicolas Mendoza from The New Mexico Independent

In response to concerns over the term "Occupy Albuquerque", the protest movement has renamed itself "(Un)occupy Albuquerque." The decision was made in a general assembly meeting of protesters at the University of New Mexico campus.

As the New Mexico Independent reported last week, some of the '99 percenters' objected to the association of the word 'Occupy' with what one Daily Kos contributor called "...five-hundred years of forced occupation of [Native American] lands, resources, cultures, power, and voices by the imperial powers of both Spain and the United States. A big chunk of the 99 percent has been served pretty well by that arrangement. A smaller chunk hasn't."

The 'Occupy' movement has emphasized its opposition to those in the top 1 percent of the country's income distribution, as well as the financial sector, which in recent decades has drastically increased its share of the total national income.

But this emphasis has meant that many other societal tensions and grievances that have traditionally preoccupied left-wing and anti-establishment movements, such as those of the Native American community and other racial minorities, have not been a significant focus of the '99 percenters.'

According to the U.S. Census, 4.8 percent of Bernalillo County and 9.4 percent of New Mexicans identify as American Indian. Most likely that underestimates the proportion of New Mexicans with some connection to the Native American community:



3.7 percent of New Mexicans are of more than one race, and 47.9 percent of the state's population is Hispanic, and both of those categories are likely to contain many people who are of at least some Native American descent.

The Game of Colonialism: DECOLONIZE WALL STREET NOW!!!

<http://ernestoyerena.tumblr.com/post/10922151725/decolonize-wallstreet-now-before-the-dutch>

Before the Dutch there was, is and forever there shall be the Algonquian Nation. The Canarsie People were of the Lenape tribe elders of the Algonquian lineage. Manhattan is Algonquian word meaning "Island of Hills" and Long Island was once called Paumonauk meaning "Fish Shaped Island". On May 4, 1626 at Shorakkopoch, on Manhattan, Peter Minuit of the Dutch West India Company "purchased" the Manhattan Island from the Canarsie People for a load of Cloth, beads, hatchets and other odds and ends worth 60 Dutch Guilders about 1 1/2 in Silver. (60 Guilders=1 1/2 pounds of Silver= \$24 in the 19th century=\$72 in 1992)

Dutch settlers then built a colony on Algonquian Land. Then to protect themselves from the Indigenous People they built a wall. The path had become a bustling commercial thoroughfare because it joined the banks of the East River with those of the Hudson River on the west. The path was named Wall Street. Early merchants built their warehouses and shops on this path, along with a city hall and a church. New York was the U.S. national capitol from 1785 until 1790 and Federal Hall was built on Wall Street. George Washington was inaugurated on the steps of this building.

A century later, In March, 1792, twenty-four of New York City's leading merchants met secretly at Corre's Hotel to discuss ways to bring order to the securities business and to wrest it from their competitors, the auctioneers. Two months later, on May 17, 1792, these merchants signed a document named the Buttonwood Agreement, named after their traditional meeting place, a buttonwood tree. The agreement called for the signers to trade securities only among themselves, to set trading fees, and not to participate in other auctions of securities. These twenty-four men had founded what was to become the New York Stock Exchange. The Exchange would later be located at 11 Wall Street.

The first stock exchange in America was founded in Philadelphia in 1790. The New York merchant group, realizing their stock exchange was in decline after the early tumult of revolutionary war bonds and stock in the Bank of the United States, sent an observer to Philadelphia in early 1817. Upon his return with news of the Philadelphia exchange, the New York Stock and Exchange Board was organized on March 8, 1817.



WHY PRISONS AND PRISONERS MATTER

Prisons and the millions who are imprisoned are a critical issue in this society for the 1% and for the 99%. They must be a vital area of concern for the OccupyWallStreet movement and especially here in OccupyLA. **HERE'S WHY:**

SOCIAL CONTROL:

Dostoyevsky said that you can best understand a society by looking inside its prisons. The US has the highest incarceration rate in the world. We have 5% of the global population, and 25% of all the prisoners. Prisons expose the brutal violence at the base of social control, the iron fist hidden by the velvet glove of elections and by the weapons of mass distraction. After the mass rebellions of the 60s and 70s, the 1% made a conscious decision to de-industrialize the US and drive poor people from the inner city – to the outskirts of the cities, as in Latin America and Africa, or into the concentration camps. Prison populations shot up from under 200,000 to over 2,600,000 and still rising. Millions more are in and out of jail, or under custodial control by the parole and probation systems. This has resulted in painful and massive destabilization of communities, especially communities of color, and affected millions more in families disrupted by having members imprisoned and moved far away. The police may be making nice today with us, but they function to criminalize people and send them to prison.

Here's the other 1% --

One percent of all adults in the United States are in prison or jail right now!

PRISONS FOR PROFIT:

Prisons and the war on crime were the leading edge of the wedge of privatization and reactionary

corporate control of electoral politics. "War on crime" became the code word for racism, and tough-on-crime politics and politicians were used to break support for social liberation, human needs programs, and civil rights. ALEC, the right wing legislative think tank that has been writing state by state legislation attacking unions and migrant rights cut its teeth supporting prison privatization. Prison privatization and using prison construction and supply contracts to tap public funding for private corporations set the pattern now being used to privatize schools, social services and even military and covert operations.

POLITICAL PRISONERS:

COINTELPRO – the FBI Counter Intelligence Program -- was a domestic counter-insurgency war strategy directed against the blossoming social, political and economic liberation movements of the 60s and 70s. Black Panthers and other Black freedom organizations, the American Indian Movement, the Brown Berets, Young Lords, SDS, Asian and other effective dissident, serve-the-people groups were criminalized and attacked. Many are still locked down 30 or 40 years later for their uncompromising resistance. This setback allowed the government and the corporations to strengthen their control over the rest of us, cut back on the social safety net, and begin mass incarceration. They're still doing it today with the Black Riders Liberation Party, Carlos Montes, the "Green Scare," etc.

EXPOSING THE DUOPOLY:

Democrats and Republicans alike have been totally sold out to the prison-industrial complex. The

CA prison guards union (CCPOA) is the biggest political donor and lobbyist in this state and calls the shots. A couple of years ago, under Schwarzenegger and Democratic leader Fabian Nunez, the legislature passed overnight and without debate a bill adding 59,000 MORE prison "beds" in the state with the largest prison population. While Jerry Brown was pushing his austerity budget cuts, he cut a backroom deal with CCPOA to sweeten their retirement package with a multi-million dollar bonus that he slipped into the state budget.

MODEL OF RESISTANCE:

The prisons are becoming schools of revolutionary social transformation. Thousands of prisoners are on hunger strike right now in CA against the brutal and torturous conditions of the "special housing units" – isolation units designed to break people down and keep the lid on all the prisoners by creating prisons within a prison. The SHU prisoners' example of inter-racial solidarity and putting their bodies on the line challenges all of us to our best efforts.

WHAT WE CAN DO:

Act in solidarity with the prisoners' resistance, reach out to their families, connect the Occupy movement to those communities in struggle, educate ourselves about Leonard Peltier, Mumia Abu-Jamal, Oscar Lopez Rivera, Assata Shakur and other political prisoners and exiles. Check out www.thejerichomovement.com for information on the amnesty movement and opposition to the prison-industrial complex.

Jericho Amnesty Movement LA chapter meets on Sat., Dec. 17 (and 3rd Sat. each month) at SoCal Library, 6120 S. Vermont in L.A. The Jericho National meeting will take place on February 18-19, 2012.

Occupy, Community Support, Helps win Release of Gen. T.A.C.O. of Black Riders

Similar to what occurred during the Los Angeles trial of Officer Mehserle for the murder of Oscar Grant, the state attempted to lock up General T.A.C.O. (Taking All Capitalists Out) of the Black Riders Liberation Party, a new-generation Black Panther Party for Self Defense formation, in the period of time during which the prison hunger strikers began a second strike and Occupy LA launched. He was picked up on the streets of the Crenshaw district along with BRLP Chief of Staff sister LaaLaa (who is also national youth coordinator of the Jericho Amnesty Movement to free all political prisoners). LaaLaa was released, but parole authorities held T.A.C.O. for the "crime" of political association and expression, allegedly prevented by his parole conditions from the Black Rider 3 case, even though during that case, the judge threw out a prosecution effort to get gang enhancement charges placed on T.A.C.O., rejecting the state's allegation that the Riders are a gang.

Once again, the state miscalculated, as strong support was built for T.A.C.O. by Occupy the Hood and Anti-Racist Action, among other groupings. The OccupyLA General Assembly passed a resolution calling for his release, and delegations were sent from the Occupation to two separate parole hearings held nearby on Bauchet St. across from the Twin Towers. Although the state kept moving T.A.C.O. to different jails within the county system (the largest jail system in the world), this did not deter supporters from keeping in touch and only served to allow T.A.C.O. to connect with and voice the discontents of the masses of Black and Brown locked down in the jails. This occurred amid embarrassing disclosures of unchecked violence by deputies in the jails, including incidents corroborated by the FBI smuggling a cell phone to a confidential informant prisoner assisting the feds in probing the deputies.

The BRLP with support from Occupy LA, GrassrootsKPFK and others were able to obtain independent private counsel for T.A.C.O. at his parole hearing, along with strong community support inside and out. This resulted in T.A.C.O.'s release back to "minimum security" on the streets, though still with a 21st Century slave shackle GPS tracking device on his ankle, constant harassment by cops and PDs and new severe restrictions on his housing and association with other Black Riders, which has resulted in the dispersal of one of their housing commune and made additional expenses necessary. But the release was a clear victory for the people over the state who had intended to send him to state prison for a year. This came despite the personal intervention of LAPD Chief Charlie Beck, who wrote a letter to the head of the state Parole Dept. in Sacramento, libeling T.A.C.O. as planning to kill cops. This only serves to underscore the seriousness with which the LAPD and other repressive agencies take the BRLP. Call them to offer you support at 323- 289-4457. There is an ongoing need for material aid and solidarity!

Turning the Tide: Journal of Anti-Racist Action, Research & Education needs your help!

Postal and printing costs are up. Dozens of new prisoners ask to get free subs every month. Over 1500 copies of each edition are sent in to prisoners. Friends of ARA-LA/PART are either in prison, or facing prosecution for anti-fascist political activity. We had to switch to quarterly publication because of a lack of sufficient funds and staffing.

What can you do?

We rely entirely on subscriptions and reader donations to publish. We've been coming out for 22 years, distributing thousands of copies free to prisoners, anti-racists and other concerned people without partisan subsidy, government funds or corporate grants. We depend entirely on you, the reader, to keep printing hard-hitting anti-racist, anti-colonialist analysis.

If you like what you're reading –

Don't delay -- Subscribe or donate today:

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**Pay to: Anti-Racist Action, PO Box 1055,
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ATTENTION PRISON SUBSCRIBERS! TTT is a small project with few resources: **we can't provide books or legal aid, or investigate individuals' innocence.**

Bulk orders of "Turning the Tide," including this special "OCCUPY" issue are available in the US only for \$10 for 50 copies, payable to Anti-Racist Action at the above address.

This public statement was developed as a proposal by the LA General Assembly and passed with full consensus at GA on Wednesday, Nov. 23, 2011. The language, ideas and grievances were culled from the minutes of two special City Liaison Committee Meetings, two General Assemblies devoted to the issue, one meeting with the Demands & Objectives Committee, and consultation with Media and PR Committees. They were widely circulated and amended by the online community of occupiers, and adapted into its current form by the General Assembly on the night of their final adoption.

The General Assembly's Response to the City of Los Angeles: PARA TODOS TODO, PARA NOSOTROS NADA FOR EVERYONE, EVERYTHING, FOR US, NOTHING

As a collective, Occupy Los Angeles would like to express their rejection of the City of Los Angeles's alleged proposal that we leave City Hall by November 28th, 2011, in exchange for an apparently now rescinded offer of a 10,000 square foot building, farmland and 100 SRO beds for the homeless.

Occupy Los Angeles believes that as part of a global movement advocating direct, participatory democracy, and challenging economic and social injustices, our position is such that we cannot, in all good faith, accept further material benefit from City Hall at the taxpayer's expense without seriously compromising our beliefs, our desire for global change, and our commitment to our inherent human rights to free speech and assembly protected in this country by First Amendment Rights. The 1 percent should be paying for any services used by the Occupy Movement, not taxpayers.

In the spirit of inclusivity and transparency which is so dear to our movement, Occupy Los Angeles extends an invitation to Mayor Villaraigosa and the City Council to attend our General Assemblies at the City Hall Occupation if he wishes to discuss these and other matters in a direct, democratic and horizontal way. Mayor Villaraigosa must speak out against the violent actions towards our brothers and sisters, declare the actions of other cities to be unjust, and stand before us equally at a General Assembly. Occupy Los Angeles believes that until this happens, we should have no more closed-door discussions regarding our continuing occupation of City Hall.

The City Council – in line with government in general – is an authority which is more accountable to developers and corporations than the public. The very act of the Los Angeles City Council requesting the physical removal of Los Angeles Occupiers without redressing the grievances which were specifically referenced in the inclusion of our adopted 'Declaration of the Occupation of New York City', and in the City Council's '1st Amendment Rights / Occupy Los Angeles / Responsible Banking Resolution' — is in effect supporting the removal of all Occupations from public space by any means. We cannot negotiate with such an institution without undermining our sister occupations across the globe who are suffering from oppressive force and attacks upon their inherent human rights to free speech and assembly, protected in this country under the First Amendment. We refer here to episodes in Oakland, Boston, New York, Portland, UC Davis and San Francisco, to name but a few. We refer to those further afield, in Tahrir Square in Egypt, in Madrid, Greece, London and more. Teargas, pepper spray, beatings, jail, suppression and intimidation have been used as a coercive method of silencing our movement and our desire for global change.

We reject outright the City's attempts to lure us out of City Hall and into negotiations by offering us nebulous, non-transparent and unconfirmed offers which fail to even begin to address our local grievances. We will continue to occupy this space, in solidarity with our global movement, until the forces of the few are forced to capitulate to the power of the people.

When the following grievances have been addressed – grievances which we have agreed upon as a movement through our General Assembly as advancing our cause and providing for the people of Los Angeles – we as a movement will be happy to initiate dialogue with the Mayor and Los Angeles City Council. An office space of 10,000 square feet would not have addressed these grievances. While the grievances listed below are localized, we believe that they promote the underlying foundations and principles of our movement,

Corporate Media Whitewash Rights Violations, Police Abuse

by Ruth Fowler, an Occupier with Occupy LA

Facts so far are: a ruthlessly efficient military operation comprised of 1400 riot cops armed with tear gas canisters and batons, in which people who left City Hall as ordered were chased down, beaten and arrested, was roundly praised by the mainstream media as "peaceful" or "restrained" and "professional." This ignores the police brutality we witnessed, including beatings, unlawful arrests and rubber bullets used on protestors and non-corporate media, while the legitimacy of the second announcement of 'unlawful assembly' called at First and Main, and resulting in numerous more arrests, is still called into question.

A media pool was established covertly, citing non-existent penal codes to silence the press, while media in the pool were working for the LAPD.

As a result, KCAL9 was running an awesome aerial live stream of the massive deployment of 1,000-plus LAPD officers from Dodger Stadium to City Hall. But then -- get this -- they reportedly stopped the stream because they had "made an agreement with LAPD not to reveal their tactics," and wanted to protect the integrity of the operation.

The Mayor and LAPD appeared on CNN Live to deny all this, naming my blog and saying that it was untrue. Meanwhile, the 292 arrestees' bail was set extortionately high at 5k. Occupiers were handcuffed for 7 hours and held for over two days without charges. Our TRO was thrown out of court as the judge claimed Carol Sobel of the National Lawyers' Guild had not filed in time.

The next day, Occupiers returning to the West Steps of Solidarity Park from Pershing Square were surrounded by riot cops who seemed on the verge of making arrests. Once they dispersed, and our General Assembly of approximately 300 people commenced, Occupiers were told by the fifty or so remaining police officers surrounding City Hall, that if we did not disperse by 10:30 PM, they would call unlawful assembly and arrest us again. All arrestees released on OR today were warned that if they returned to City Hall, they would face arrest. A source from the mainstream media sent me this email:

Civil Rights Attorney Cynthia Anderson Barker says: "One condition of OR release is a stay away order from City Hall. We can fight that as the case proceeds."

Forty Occupiers outside the City Metro Jail on Los Angeles and Temple, waiting to greet the arrestees this evening, were again surrounded by 50 police, despite being peaceful.

which include, but are not limited to: providing for basic, fundamental and inalienable human rights such as shelter, food, healthcare, freedom of choice, sexual orientation, gender equality and education — and the right most paramount to a free and democratic society — the right to self-govern. Detailed demands which encompass our greater world view will be released at a later date by our Demands and Objectives Committee through the General Assembly.

GRIEVANCES NOT ADDRESSED

A moratorium on all foreclosures in the City of Los Angeles. The City of Los Angeles to divest from all major banks, and money to be removed from politics.

A citywide effort undertaken to solve the homelessness problem which has led to 18,000 homeless people sleeping on Skid Row every night. Rehabilitation and housing must be provided for all homeless people.

South Central Farm to be returned to the same LA community from which it was taken, and all other vacant and distressed land be open for the community use, and money to the tune of 1 million dollars – taken from Skid Row and given to a multi-million dollar NFL firm – to be returned to Skid Row.

Los Angeles to be declared a sanctuary city for the undocumented, deportations to be discontinued and cooperation with immigration authorities be ended – including the turning in of arrestees' names to immigration authorities.

All forms of weaponry used by multiple law enforcement officials – including, but not limited, to rubber bullets, pepper spray, verbal abuse, arrest, foam batons, long-range acoustic devices and more – are not to be used on those exercising their First Amendment Rights to petition our government for redress of grievances. We do not accept interference with freedom of the press and the public to document police actions in public spaces. We will not tolerate brutality.

We assert our right to an open plaza on the South Side of City Hall for people to peacefully assemble, voice grievances, speak freely, hold our General Assembly and come to the people's consensus 24 hours a day if needed.

The City of Los Angeles to pressure the State to start a convention, as provided for in the Constitution, to remove corporate personhood and money from politics at a national level.

The City of Los Angeles to begin a dialogue at the State and Federal level on the issues of student debt and tuition hikes.

No cutbacks in city services or attacks on the wages, work conditions and pensions of city employees.

A world class transit system which addresses our debilitating traffic problem and restores the quality of life in Los Angeles.

We conclude, as a General Assembly, by hereby renaming City Hall Park -
SOLIDARITY PARK!

As the numbers of Occupiers across America who have now been jailed, tear gassed, beaten and subject to intimidation and violence in reaction to their peaceful protests reaches into the thousands., the Senate just passed a bill that allowed indefinite military detention without charges or trial of American citizens living within the US.

They are afraid of us. They are fighting us. That means we are winning.



Police evicting Occupy LA made nearly 300 arrests, many of them of people who had obeyed the order to disperse from the City Hall lawn. Bilal Ali, co-founder of Occupy the Hood, had ribs broken by police near Pershing Square, 5 blocks away. To contribute to bail and legal defense, go to <https://www.wepay.com/donate/192938>

PART's Perspective:

Occupation, Liberation, and Overcoming Contradictions Among the 99%

by Michael Novick, *Anti-Racist Action-Los Angeles/People Against Racist Terror (ARA-LA/PART)*

Somewhat akin the occupation of Alcatraz Island more than four decades ago, Occupy Wall Street has stood the concept of “occupation” on its head. Groups on the left that were chanting “Money for jobs and education, not for war and occupation” have had to change the last word to “corporations.”

The occupation of Alcatraz, however, was a clearly anti-colonial insurgency that helped spark the on-going struggle for indigenous sovereignty and self-determination that continues to this day and has reached global proportions. The Alcatraz occupation liberated both the shell of an imperial prison and the conquered and colonized land on which it was built. It occurred within a countrywide and worldwide upsurge of colonized and oppressed people and of a new generation claiming its place in the world. Though there are both generational and global parallels today, Occupy Wall Street distinguishes itself from the Alcatraz occupation in having neither explicitly anti-colonial nor categorically anti-capitalist politics.

Just a few short months ago, the editorial in *Turning the Tide* sought to understand the remarkable political quiescence in the US when the rest of the world was on fire. We analyzed the psychosocial breaks with the Empire that needed to occur to unleash the righteous anger and resistance of people in this country, particularly those of European descent. Immediately and unexpectedly, like Marx's “old mole” of revolution, the Occupy movement burst upon the scene to galvanize a broad sector of society.

It has ignited hopes of a rebirth of direct action and militant resistance, and spread back around the world as a beacon to some of the very struggles that inspired it. Yet ironically, dissent, resistance and direct action have spread like wildfire even as the consciousness and ideology of the Occupiers have yet to show signs of a thorough and fundamental break from the identification with the oppressor that has long held such resistance back. This is a measure of not only the grip of Empire and settler colonialism on US psyches, but also the depth of the economic crisis and contradictions in which that empire is ensnared. These are beginning to fray the ties that bind people in the US to our own oppressors no matter people's consciousness.

The question for all Occupiers, all attracted to and inspired by the Occupy movement, and especially for those who are revolutionary-minded, is how to overcome that contradiction between consciousness and practice. How can we not only sustain, but also build and advance the Occupy movement? How can we birth the methods, organizational forms, and strategies that will advance the Occupy movement, without killing the goose of horizontal inclusiveness – the 99% -- that has laid the golden egg of movement?

As always, a process of constructive criticism and self-criticism is necessary to identify strengths and overcome weaknesses. Studying not only its own brief history but also the rich historical record of previous errors and failures can best enable us to chart a path forward to Occupy 2.0. This applies the open source approach, of users collaboratively reshaping and recreating their tools and making them more usable, useful, and user-friendly through practice, the shared experience of bugs and glitches, and the discovery of new desirable features. At Occupy LA, it often seems that name-calling and email flame wars have been far more common than constructive criticism and self-criticism, so beginning to apply those methods will be a step forward in itself.

The bulk of this issue is dedicated to theme of decolonization, as has the bulk of the work and analysis of ARA-LA/PART over more than two decades. But understanding that many drawn into political activity by the Occupy movement may be reading this alone, or seeing *TTT* for the first time, I want to underscore the fundamental basis of that approach. You cannot understand, let alone transform, US society unless you grasp that it is an Empire -- a state, an economy and a social formation based on settler colonialism, land theft, genocide, and chattel slavery. These on-going realities have shaped *and continue to shape* class formation, national identity, and the nature of even dissident and oppositional struggles.

The Occupy movement is a case in point. First, Occupy bases itself on the goal or tactic of reappropriating the commons, countering the privatization and corporatization of public space. But there is a fundamental difference that must be acknowledged about the commons in the U.S. compared to most other societies. The commons in the US context is not the remnant of an earlier, land-based socio-economic formation like European feudalism or African communalism. It was created through acts of war, conquest and “ethnic cleansing” – the physical and cultural genocide of an indigenous population. Failing to recognize this makes Occupy complicit in this matrix and incapable of surmounting its contradictions.

Second, Occupy bases itself on the kind of rudimentary class-consciousness of income and wealth that has always been a hallmark of US settler colonialism. Applying the paradigm of the 99% on a global level would quickly illustrate the flimsiness of this thinking. The *global* 99%

are almost entirely outside the United States with the exception of some sections of the urban and rural poor, of indigenous and other internally colonized people, the “Third World” that exists inside the “homeland” of the Empire. The World Institute for Development Economics Research reports that in 2000, the richest 1% of adults owned 40% of global assets. The richest 10% accounted for 85% of the world total, while the bottom half of the world adult population owned 1% of global wealth. A person in the US at the average income level of the *bottom* 10% of the US is better off economically than 2/3 of the world's population. On a global level, \$2161 puts you into the top half of the world wealth distribution, and \$61,000 puts you into the top 10%. These global realities are the reason the notion of a “middle class,” and the call for “middle class jobs,” is so deeply embedded among even working class people in the US and within the Occupy movement.

But these realities are changing, and the change is what accounts for the appeal of Occupy. Globalization and the “third-world-ization” of the US have meant that many people are experiencing the realities or the prospects of a permanent class fall. Class contradictions are inexorably reasserting themselves through a process of national “convergence” between rich and poor nations. More important, though per capita incomes of nations may rise, the lion's share of growth is absorbed by an international elite (still primarily and ostentatiously concentrated in the US and Europe, but including also Japan, parts of China, India and Indonesia, Israel and Arab elites, and Brazil). Correspondingly, growing sectors of the population in advanced industrial and settler colonial societies are experiencing losses even as the US continues to possess 25% of the world's wealth (no other country reaches the 5% level of concentration).

For some, this has meant belt-tightening, foreclosure and a first experience of protracted unemployment. In that sense, Occupy is a response to conditions and frustrations similar to those addressed by the Tea Party. But fortunately, Occupy has had a more spontaneous emergence than the Tea Party's astro-turf launch by the 1%, and it gains from its understanding of that phenomenon, as well as its intention to avoid being ensnared by the Democratic Party as the Tea Party was by the Republicans. Also, the Occupy movement's social base embraces organized and unorganized labor and other lower social strata. Because for others within the US, globalization means the deepening and extension of the conditions of homelessness, incarceration, malnutrition, and early death that illustrate the reality that some of the global 99% do in fact reside inside “the richest country in the world.”

The Occupy movement is a cross-class movement despite its assertion that the 99% constitute a single social entity. Obscuring or denying class and colonial contradictions does not eliminate them; it makes them fester. Casting Occupy's demands or objectives within the appealing-on-the-surface proposition that “the richest country in the world” shouldn't allow foreclosures, or failing schools, or homelessness, is a recipe for failure. At a teach-in at Occupy Los Angeles, Robert Reich proclaimed that this struggle was not class war, and that the goal of the Occupy movement was to “save capitalism from itself.” This call to save a system that is beyond repair or redemption, and whose further extension could well doom humanity and the biosphere, was greeted with silence (even from a crowd of listeners who were far

older, whiter and better off than the Occupiers). Yet many in the Occupy movement want to limit its program to re-regulation of banks, taking money out of politics and ending corporate personhood.

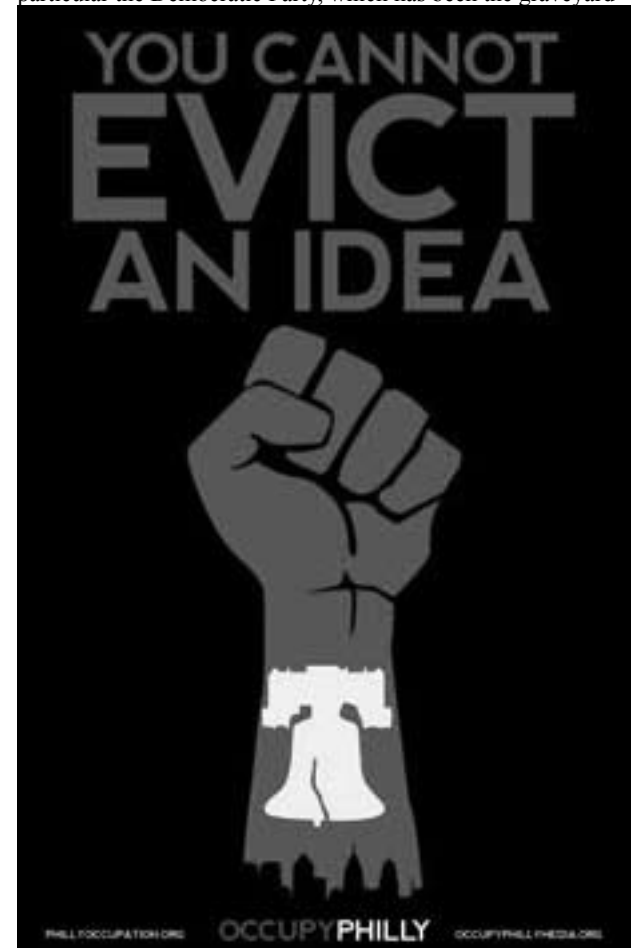
The emphasis on the concentration of wealth and income inequality is a mixed bag. How much concentration in how few hands is “acceptable”? Would 20% of national wealth be big enough to satisfy the 1% and small enough to quiet the concerns of the 99%? To ask the question is to recognize that such demands amount to asking, in the words of Malcolm X, someone who has stabbed you in the back to pull the blade back out a few inches. The same can be said about some of the demands for democratization. Though Occupy responded angrily to the Military Authorization Bill that allows indefinite military detention of US citizens without trial, neither Occupy nor the Democrats seem to be talking any more about repealing the USA PATRIOT Act, closing Guantanamo or abolishing Homeland Security. Within Occupy LA (finally mostly disbanded by reality) there was strong sentiment that “the police are part of the 99%.” Reality has taught that they are the enforcers of the rule of the 1%.

Occupy must begin to put forward not demands (which presupposes they will be granted by those in power) but objectives – declarations of the kind of world we want and will build to replace a system that is rotten to the core. Economic objectives would include developing an ethical, environmentally sustainable, democratic economic system that serves to meet human needs and heal the environmental and social damage that the current system has caused. This would be a system that honors human dignity, labor and creativity, and that ensures first that all are well-fed, well-clothed and well-housed, with clean water, and that other human needs, such as education and health care, are met before any enjoy champagne and caviar. No amount of tinkering or reform could turn capitalism or colonialism into such a system.

Occupy LA has issued a call which is step in such a direction, to “Occupy the Ports” on Dec. 12. This is part of a day of action, march and boycott for migrant rights, full legalization and good jobs for all, and the beginning of a process of building towards a General Strike on May 1. That initiative is spreading with a call from Occupy Oakland to shut down the West Coast ports, and a General Strike call from Occupy DC.

Learn more about this from occupytheports@gmail.com and at www.occupytheports.com.

This begins to chart a path forward based on direct action, base-building and alliance building, engaging with other social forces seeking to transform this society – not from ‘within’, but from below. This will also help Occupiers and the movement as a whole to resist the schemes and seductions that seek to ensnare Occupy within electoral politics and in particular the Democratic Party, which has been the graveyard



of transformational and liberating social movements for generations.

Hopefully, the Occupy movement will become a pole of attraction that will instead pull labor, anti-war, environmental and other such movements out of their orbital path into the black hole of the Democrats before they pass the event horizon from which no light emerges. It can do so if Occupy aligns itself with the wretched of the earth, the most oppressed and exploited, the prisoners and ex-cons, the homeless, unemployed and welfare recipients, the indigenous, the anti-colonial, anti-capitalist struggles not only globally, but within the US itself.

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TURNING THE TIDE

Special Occupy Wall Street Issue

OCCUPY the PORTS!

A Day without Goldman Sachs!

December 12, 5:00 AM

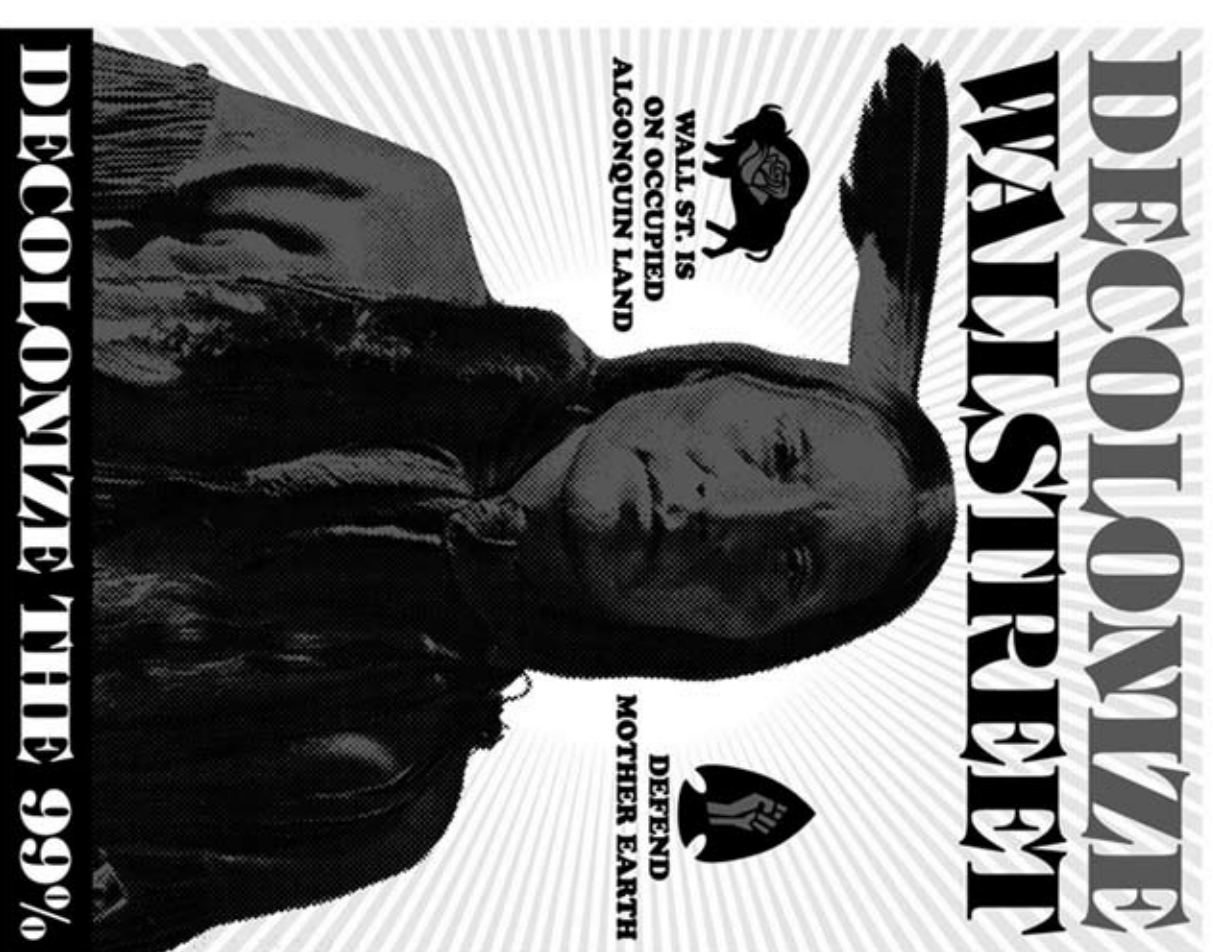
Harry Bridges Park, 1126 Queens Hwy., Long Beach CA
Rising Greed Sinks All Boats!
Build for a General Strike May 1, 2012

As part of the Dec. 12 Boycott and March for legalization and good jobs, the Occupy movement will protest at one or more facilities belonging to SSA Marine, a shipper owned by Goldman Sachs, with 5 terminals and a warehouse in the Harbor area. SSA Marine was recently fined for building an illegal road to the site of its massive, dirty coal terminal project in WA. It was also caught recently not alerting workers to the threat of explosive cargo in Oakland. SSA/Goldman Sachs symbolize the ruin that corporate greed has brought into our lives. The 1% are depriving port truck drivers and other workers of decent pay, working conditions and the right to organize, even while the port of LALB is the largest in the US and a huge engine of profits for the 1%. The 1% have pursued a conscious policy of de-industrialization that has resulted in “trade” at the port meaning that there are 7 containers coming in for every one going out. The 1% have driven migrant workers into a “grey market” economy and repression. The 1% use police brutality and repression, jails and prisons to suppress, divide and try to silence the 99% and all who oppose their insatiable greed. To put an end to all that, we call on the 99% to march, boycott, occupy the ports, and STRIKE on December 12 for full legalization, good jobs for all, equality and justice.

Economic Justice for All!

Join the West Coast Port Shutdown!

For more information: occupytheports@gmail.com 323-901-4269, www.occupylosangeles.org
or on Twitter [@OccupyLA](https://twitter.com/OccupyLA)
www.occupytheports.com or www.westcoastportshutdown.org



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Anti-Racist Action-L.A./People Against Racist Terror

PO Box 1055, Culver City CA 90232*323-901-4269

www.antiracist.org antiracistaction_la@yahoo.com

GENERAL STRIKE MAY 1, 2012!