

# THE VOORHIS VOICE

Liberal Voice of the Pomona Valley

March, 2012

[www.claremontdems.org](http://www.claremontdems.org)

## MEETINGS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

Friday, March 2, 2012, 12– 2 PM

Rabi's Café, 930 Central Avenue, Upland

**Issues Committee Luncheon**

No speaker: Bring your issue

Friday, March 9, 2012, 12-2 PM

Monthly Luncheon at the LYL Gardens Restaurant

Speaker: TBA

921 W. Foothill Blvd., Claremont, 91711. Tel. 626-9151. Cost is ten dollars; meal is served family style. No pork on menu; some vegetarian dishes.

Friday, March 16, 2012, 12– 2 PM

Rabi's Café, 930 Central Avenue, Upland

**Issues Committee Luncheon**

No speaker: Bring your issue

Friday, March 23, 2012, 12– 2pm

Rabi's Café, 930 Central Avenue, Upland

**Issues Committee Luncheon**

No speaker: Bring your issue

Monday March 26, 2012, 7 – 9:30pm

**Monthly Membership Meeting at Porter Hall**

Speakers: A panel made up of Claremont High School students, all members of the Student Democrats Club.

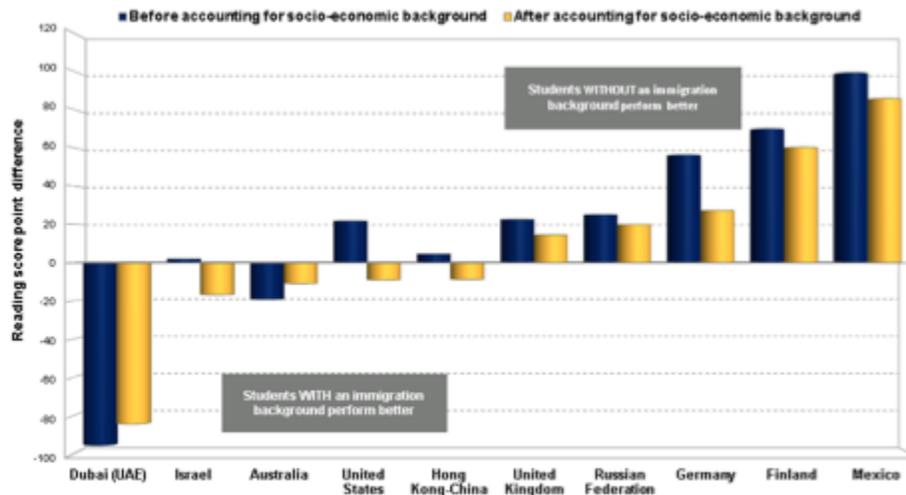
They will share their knowledge of the opinions of their peers on a variety of topics.

601 Mayflower Rd., Pilgrim Place Campus, Claremont

Access Porter Hall from the west side of Berkeley St. at 6th Street

Friday, Mar. 30, 2012, 12– 2pm  
 Rabi's Café, 930 Central Avenue, Upland  
**Issues Committee Luncheon**  
 No speaker: Bring your issue

## Immigrant Children Outperform Non-Immigrant Children in Reading



Histogram Above: In the United States immigrant children appear to learn to read less readily than non-immigrants until control is made for socio-economic origins. After controls, immigrant children learn to read somewhat more readily than non-immigrant children. The USA has this result in common with Dubai, Israel, Australia, and Hong Kong.

Source: Migration Policy Institute, [www.mpi.org](http://www.mpi.org)

## Occupy Must Organize

by Naomi Wolf

*[Naomi Wolf's article, abridged below, points out that, thanks to the NDAA, anyone declared a domestic terrorist is now eligible for indefinite detention without trial in a military prison. Occupy participants have recently been called domestic terrorists. Ed.]*

The violent crackdown against the Occupy movement in the USA, which began last year, represented the first salvos of a civil war initiated by political and allied economic elites against protesters whose still-not-fully articulated agenda threatens their profits.

In February, 2012, 2,000 citizens marched in support of Occupy Oakland; they were met by flash grenades and possibly rubber bullets. The LAPD is training with the US military for crowd control. At a parallel march in support in New York City, large groups of masked participants for the first time joined the protesters. Masked participants signal the presence of provocateurs intent on violence,

possibly police officers in disguise. . . Reports continue to surface around the nation, most recently from Atlanta, of law enforcement investment in surplus military weapons for possible use against domestic dissenters. Predictably enough, after Congress approved and Obama signed the NDAA bill, a clause of which authorizes the indefinite detention by the military of anyone declared a domestic terrorist, an Oakland City Council member referred to the Occupy protesters as “domestic terrorists.”

. . . . As the power of global corporations transcends the political power of nation states, global corporations are simply rewriting legislation in advanced democracies behind closed doors, and leaving the people - of Greece or the UK, America or Italy - out of the decision-making process altogether; then presenting the need for cutbacks as a *fait accompli*. It is this lack of financial transparency and accountability that Occupy's movement threatens, and there are truly billions of dollars at stake should they succeed. . . Media exposure, a clear message, smart sound bites, clearly stated demands, and, most importantly, tasked, empowered negotiators working on the inside in concert with mass disrupters applying pressure from without - this equals political life [for Occupy].

Source: Abridged and edited from The Guardian UK

## Trader Joe's Signs with CIW

Trader Joe's and the CIW have just signed a Fair Food agreement! As Gerardo Reyes of the CIW stated, “We are truly happy today to welcome Trader Joe's aboard the Fair Food Program.” [You can read the press release here.](#)

Without a doubt, this incredible victory occurred in great part due to the outpouring of support from the Southern California community. From the Monrovia march, to the letter writing and calling, to the countless delegations to headquarters, you demonstrated to Trader Joe's the moral imperative before them and guided them to where they have arrived today.

The DCC participated in the grass roots support of this movement last year *when their speakers attended our Friday lunch*. Give yourselves a pat on the back, Democrats.

## Why Does Occupy Use Tents?

By Charles Bayer

Why tents? Obviously, if a demonstration intends to occupy a piece of real estate, such as a park or an area adjacent to a city hall, the occupiers need some place to sleep. To occupy doesn't mean to visit or to hold a rally some afternoon. “Occupation” means a commitment to remain at the occupied territory 24/7. The poor people's campaign on the Washington Mall in 1969 went on for two months using a community of rough huts called “Shantytown.” While the huts provided living space for the occupation, more than that, they symbolized what it was like to be poor.

For Occupy, the tents have a far more important symbolic significance. They are metaphors for poverty, for being left out, unemployed, foreclosed out of one's home, the 99%, the nobodies. They are a visible representation of free speech. To reduce them to “camping” is to avoid what they are really about. Symbols are speech. The American flag is speech. These tents are speech. The

assumption that they are only camping paraphernalia is to miss the point altogether.

A good illustration of this misunderstanding recently rang through my community. Claremont, California is a progressive small city dominated by five colleges, a seminary and a graduate university. For several weeks the porch adjacent to its City Hall has been the site of a small Occupy demonstration. There are three tents, a multitude of signs, but no debris, no blocking of access to the building, no filth, no violence—in fact according to the police, no violation of any law. It has been simply a demonstration of free speech, with the tents as symbols.

But Claremont has a small contingent of tea-party supporters who hate what Occupy stands for, and have found a way to badger the City Council into ending the demonstration. The five Council members are all solid open people. At least three of them claim to be supporters of Occupy's goals. The City, however, has a camping ordinance adopted just a few years back to keep a few transients from sleeping on the streets or on City property. To my knowledge the ordinance was never enforced, and the City attorney held that Occupy was not in violation. But the pressure was on the Council which decided to revise the Ordinance for the single purpose of ending the Occupy demonstration. Sometime next month the tents, sleeping bags and anything else covered as "camping" equipment will be forcibly removed and sold.

To call this exercise in free speech "camping" for the purpose of curtailing it, violates reason. The Ordinance lists the things objectionable in so-called public camping such as: generating health, safety and welfare concerns through the creation of unsanitary and unsafe conditions, including but not limited to products of urination and defecation—the accumulation of litter and waste, making the areas appear disorderly and unkempt—interfering with the rights of others to use the areas for their intended purposes, etc. While you can't find a scrap of paper on the ground or any of the other objectionable things listed in the ordinance, the demonstration is now called "camping," and the campers and their gear are subject to the penalties imposed by the law.

One can debate the merits of what Occupy stands for, but one can hardly argue against the Constitutional right of free speech. My guess is that when the Ordinance goes into effect those involved in Occupy and the scores of people in our community who support them, will take whatever steps necessary to expand the demonstration far beyond tents on the porch at City Hall. Occupy will not go away, and while it may have been unclear about specific goals, it has changed the national conversation. We are now all talking about the inordinate mal-distribution of America's economic resources. And this is the first time in many years that this conversation has dominated our national rhetoric. Tents are powerful symbols of that conversation, not simply camping gear!

## **Overview of the U.S. Occupy (Wall Street) Movement**

By Andrew Winnick

*The author is Professor of Economics at California State University, Los Angeles, and President of the American Institute for Progressive Democracy. [Ed.]*

### **Origins of the U.S. Occupy Movement**

Ironically, the U. S. Occupy Wall Street (OWS) movement has its origins abroad. The events of the Arab Spring and the Spanish *Indignados* movement, which began in Madrid in May 2011, had begun

to spur discussions among progressives in the U.S. as to why similar demonstrations had not begun in the U.S. We observed the widespread economic distress that had followed the financial crisis of December 2007 and was continuing for millions of Americans despite what was formally called a recovery (which technically began in July 2009) and we wondered why so little outrage. We understood that since the 1970's, the American middle class had been under increasing economic pressure, with the distribution of income growing steadily more inequitable, especially since the 1980's. Academics had written books and hundreds of articles about this, but with little political or public effect. Then, on July 13, 2011, the Vancouver, Canada-based, anti-consumerism Adbusters Media Foundation created the Twitter hash tag #OCCUPYWALLSTREET and via Twitter and emails sent out the proposal to begin a demonstration in New York City on September 17th (U.S. Constitution Day) to express outrage over "the growing disparity in wealth and the absence of legal repercussions for the bankers behind the recent global financial crisis." Via emails and social networks, with the hackers group Anonymous jumping in to help, the idea spread quickly. And on the day suggested, in Zuccotti Park near Wall Street in New York City, the Occupy Wall Street movement began its encampment and demonstrations. (This site was chosen because it was a privately owned public space and not subject to the city's curfew policy for public parks.) Immediately, regular marches from the park to Wall Street began, with demonstrations in front of various financial institutions. While there was some media attention, it was initially quite muted and limited.

Nevertheless, what was amazing was that within weeks, similar Occupy demonstrations and encampments sprang up in more than 800 cities in the U.S. spurred on by communications via the Internet. Virtually instantaneously, the tent became Occupy's symbolic form of free speech, the symbol of their determination to stay in place until change occurred. By January 2012, only four months from its beginning, there were (and in many cases still are) Occupy efforts in more than 1400 U.S. cities, including in at least 59 California cities. Also, within a month or two of the initial OWS effort in September 2011, there were Occupy demonstrations in at least 135 cities in 35 European nations, including 17 cities in England, plus others in 32 cities in 16 Latin American countries and others in 14 Asian nations. By mid-January 2012, the Occupy movement identified efforts in 2,773 communities across the world. This had truly become a global phenomenon.

One does need to acknowledge immediately, that the OWS movement cannot and does not "claim credit" for most of the European efforts. Clearly, as noted, some of these (Spain in particular) preceded and inspired OWS. The austerity programs initiated by the British government clearly provoked many demonstrations in the UK long before OWS emerged. Nevertheless, many of the demonstrations in Europe since September 2011 took on the title and tactics of the OWS movement, chose to label themselves with the "Occupy" designation, and adopted the "We are the 99%" slogan.

### **"We are the 99%"**

The awareness of the growing disparity in income and wealth between the richest 1% of Americans and the other 99% certainly did not gain notoriety only with the Occupy movement in the fall of 2011. Many books and articles had been written about this for years. The issue was raised as far back as 1987 in a book by Professor Batra of SMU (*The Great Depression of 1990*) that was # 1 on the New York Times best seller list, and in a book I published in 1989, entitled *Toward Two Societies: The Changing Distributions of Income and Wealth in the U.S.* In the 2000 Presidential elections, Al Gore accused George W. Bush of supporting "the wealthiest 1%." There was a documentary film entitled *The One Percent* by Jamie Johnson in 2006. In May 2011, Joseph Stiglitz, the Nobel prize-winning economist, published the article "Of the 1%, by the 1%, for the 1%" in *Vanity Fair* magazine. But

then, in August 2011, an “anonymous 28-year-old New York activist name ‘Chris’” launched a *Tumblr* blog with the title “We are the 99%” and this instantly became the political rallying cry of the Occupy Wall Street movement.

The facts validating the concern over the growing gap between the 1% and the 99% are well known. According to official U.S. government data, the richest 1% held a peak proportion of U.S. income of 23.9% in 1928. This proportion then fell rather steadily to only 9.1% by 1980. But then, starting with the Reagan Administration, the proportion increased again to reach 23.5% in 2007, before pulling back a bit with the financial crisis. Indeed, the Congressional Budget Office, a respected non-partisan agency, reported that from 1979 to 2007, the income of the top 1% increased by 275% while that of the poorest 20% increased by only 18%. During the same time period, the average pre-tax income of the bottom 90% actually decreased by \$900, while that of the top 1% increased by more than \$700,000. The after-tax proportions were even more striking as the income tax rates paid by the richest Americans fell steadily from 1980 to the present. In fact, Obama is the first U.S. President in more than 30 years to propose raising the taxes on the very rich. According to the most recent Commerce Department figures, the share of income produced in the U.S. that is flowing to workers as salary and wages has been steadily shrinking since the mid-1970s and is now the lowest since record-keeping began in 1947.

Moreover, both public and private agency studies (including work by the OECD) have confirmed that inter-generational income mobility has slowed greatly in the U.S. and now lags that in many European nations. That is, it is growing less likely that someone born into one of the lower income categories will move into a higher one as a result of their own efforts and circumstances. In addition, recent opinion polls in the U.S. have revealed that for the first time ever, the current generation does not expect its children to lead a better life. So, not only has the extent of inequality (which many feel is really inequity) gotten much worse, the hopes of the American people that “things will get better” for their children have dimmed. In fact, in a January 2012 study by Charles Murray (*Coming Apart: The State of White America: 1960-2010*), it is argued that, even setting aside racial and ethnic differences, a new, mammoth cultural and economic gap has emerged since the 1960’s between the top 20% and the bottom 30% that is unlike anything that has occurred in the U.S. before. This study confirms and expands upon a trend I wrote about in 1989, reflected in the title of my book (mentioned above) *Toward Two Societies...*

The point is that the facts have been well documented for a long time, but it was not until the Occupy Wall Street movement took up the issue and chose, brilliantly in my view, to identify themselves with the slogan “We are the 99%,” that the issue really captured the public’s attention. By choosing this slogan, OWS avoided the divisiveness of pitting the poor and working classes against the middle class and avoided ethnic and gender divisions. They chose a unifying slogan that allowed the majority of Americans to feel that the OWS movement was speaking on their behalf.

But who are the Occupy Wall Street demonstrators? What are the goals of this movement? What had it achieved in only its first four months of existence (mid-September 2011 to mid-January 2012, as this is being written)? And what role will this movement likely play in the future?

### **Who are the Occupy Movement Demonstrators?**

From my own observations, and from many articles about and videos and pictures of the demonstrators, a pretty clear picture begins to emerge. To understand who is participating, it is

important to note that while large groups of people have been involved in the actual encampments in cities across the U.S., the demonstrators regularly leave their encampments to march in protest to key sites: city halls, large banks and other financial institutions, the U.S. Congress, etc. For example, demonstrations occurred on January 17 (the four-month anniversary) at each of the eleven Federal Reserve System regional bank headquarters. These marches attract many who cannot or will not engage in the encampments themselves, but who nevertheless clearly want to demonstrate their identification with the Occupy Movement, and with the slogan, "We are the 99%." (It should be noted that in other cities, the movement takes on the name of the local site: Occupy L.A., Occupy Cleveland, Occupy (Washington) D.C., etc.

So who are these demonstrators, many of whom are also staying at the encampments for various lengths of time? While they are primarily young, mid-teens to early 30s, in fact observations and pictures show many with gray hair, including many who are clearly quite old. In interviews with these various demonstrators, one soon hears the voices and sees the faces of:

- young recent college graduates who cannot find work in their professions, or often cannot find any work at all
- college graduates who are overwhelmed by student loans that they cannot repay because they are either unemployed or earn too little to make the payments and survive.
- high school graduates who cannot afford to go to college and who cannot find work
- retirees who have lost their life savings and cannot survive on Social Security, and who often have lost their homes in the housing crisis
- working people who lost their jobs and are unemployed, or who have found work, but at less than half what they had earned before, and as a result may have lost their homes
- couples who are working at such low wages that even with two full-time salaries they cannot earn much more than the poverty level of income, and again may have lost their homes
- veterans of the Iraq or Afghanistan wars who cannot find work
- school teachers, all with Bachelor's degrees, many with Master's degrees, who have been laid off as the money to support education has been cut back drastically because of budget crises at the state and local levels
- other public employees who have similarly been laid off, and again many of these people have either lost their homes or are about to
- construction workers who have in many cases not worked since the housing industry collapsed some four years ago. Why build new houses when millions are on sale as foreclosures at a fraction of the price they originally sold for?
- workers who built or installed carpets, household appliances, roofing materials, or plumbing fixtures, but who are unemployed since there is no demand for these products or services since new housing construction is at the lowest level since World War II
- auto and steel workers who are either unemployed, or who have been re-hired but at wages about half what they earned before being laid off – and who now cannot afford the payments on their homes
- occasionally, small business owners who have suffered during this economic crisis and whose once reliable ties to banking institutions (for small business loans) have collapsed, even as those banks (which caused the crisis) were bailed out by the government
- a surprisingly large number of people who have not been particularly impacted by the financial crisis, but who are very upset by the growing inequity in the distribution of income and of political power

- and finally, in many cities, officials and rank-in-file labor movement members who recognize in the Occupy Movement allies in the labor movement's own on-going struggle for the interests of working people.

The list goes on and on describing a broad cross-section of the American public, across all ethnic lines, and from both big city and small town America. These encampments and demonstrations truly do encompass much of the 99% of the American people. In fact, this broad participation in the Occupy movement is a testament to the accuracy and relevance of the "We are the 99%" slogan, and at the same time is proof of its widespread appeal.

An interesting sidelight of this phenomenon is to watch the reaction of U.S. politicians. Most of those in the U.S. Senate and many in the U.S. House of Representatives are clearly in the 1%, many in the top 0.1%. Some react by objecting to the slogan as un-American class warfare; some simply ignore their own income level and say they support the 99%; others, including Obama, concede that they are in the 1% (in his case due to the royalties from his books), but make it clear that they support the analysis and goals of the Occupy movement and the 99%. But since September 2011, none of them can any longer ignore this divide.

### **Who are the Top 1%, and the Top 0.1% of the Income Distribution?**

When one hears the term "the richest 1%," the inclination is to immediately think of millionaires, even billionaires, in terms of wealth and/or income. But that is not factually correct. To be in the top 1% of income recipients in the U.S. in 2009 took less than \$350,000 in income. (It is estimated that at the moment, early 2012, it takes a bit more, \$380,000, to qualify.) On the other hand, while that was the minimum in 2009, the average income of the 1.4 million households in this group then was \$960,000; that is, just under the \$1 million mark. This threshold changes every year, primarily due to changes in the stock, bond and various secondary markets where these folks hold much of their wealth and from which they derive much of their income. But what is even more interesting is who these 1%ers are. Financial professionals (the bankers, hedge fund managers, stock brokers, etc.) make up only about 14% of this group, while executives, managers and supervisors outside the financial industry make up more than twice this proportion, 31%. Interestingly, medical professionals make up another 16%, while lawyers constitute about 8%. That leaves 31% to be found scattered among the rest of the occupational categories.

It turns out that the really influential group is those in the top **0.1%**, not 'merely' in the top 1%. These 150,000 households earn a minimum of around \$1.6 million per year; while a yet wealthier group, the top 0.01%, have minimum incomes of \$5.5 million and account for about 11,000 households. It is really the latter who can afford to give campaign contributions of millions of dollars, often tens of millions, emboldened by recent Supreme Court decisions that for the first time allow for unlimited contributions. This is happening in the Republican Presidential primary campaign now underway.

## What are the Goals of the Occupy Movement?

One keeps hearing the questions: But what do they really want? What are their goals? What do they expect the 1% to do? What do they really think the political establishment and political institutions can or should do? How can they expect to achieve much of anything if they do not present a clear list of well thought-out demands? Given the breadth, depth and diversity of people who identify with the Occupy movement these are not easy questions to answer, but in fact the answers are there and are really quite discernible.

First, in looking for the Occupy movement's goals or demands, the issue is where to look, to whom to talk, what to read. The point is that a foundational element of the Occupy movement is its structure, in particular its decision-making structure. A key element of the movement is its commitment to grassroots, participatory democracy and its sincere and deep-seated aversion to the identification of visible leaders or spokespersons. At each of the Occupy encampments, the only decision making-body is the General Assembly, whose meeting time and place is very publicly announced in advance. This group consists of whoever shows up. Everyone has equal rights to speak, and having any one individual dominate a discussion is not tolerated. Civility of discourse is a priority and to this end they have developed a series of silent hand gestures that are used when seeking to speak (these run from a simple request to talk, to a desire to directly respond to a previous point, to seek to clarify a point, or to raise a point of order) or when expressing one's views on an issue (including hand signals for agreement, simply not agreeing, strongly opposing, or being willing to try to block an action). Use of these hand signals is a way to prevent shouting and yelling out and to encourage civil discourse, while still being focused on reaching a consensus when possible, or at least a strong majority, on a given decision.

Media and other observers who come to an encampment or to a meeting of its General Assembly are encouraged to talk to whomever is there: typically no one is designated as "the spokesperson" and certainly not as "the leader." (There is sometimes a "media group" that is designated to interact with reporters on a particular day.) Nevertheless, each group makes clear decisions as to the site of a demonstration, what key slogans to emphasize, what points need to be made to those encountered along the way or at the demonstration site. While some strong personalities can often be identified at a given site at a given time, and these may be sought out by the media for their comments, the movement has been remarkably able to prevent the emergence of visible leadership per se. Many in the movement have indicated that this is a conscious reflection of the desire to maintain their broad base and broad appeal and to live the ideal of being "we the people" in the democratic sense in which that term was used in the U.S. Constitution.

Moving from the issue of process within the movement to an examination of its goals, one of the movement's influential members (Robert Jensen, a professor at the University of Texas in Austin) has stated:

"There's one question that pundits and politicians keep posing to the Occupy gatherings around the country: What are your demands? I have a suggestion for a response: We demand that you stop demanding a list of demands. The demand for demands is an attempt to shoehorn the Occupy gatherings into conventional politics, to force the energy of these gatherings into a form that people in power recognize, so that they can roll out strategies to divert, co-opt, buy off, or – if those tactics fail – squash any challenge to

business as usual.”

Instead, Jensen urges the movement to focus on sharpening its understanding that the problems that stem from the concentration of wealth and power in the U.S. have to be understood as being systemic in nature, and not simply the result of some group of corrupt or greedy corporate executives or politicians. His overarching point is that issuing demands while the current political-economic system remains in place is a useless exercise. Even more useless is to demand a change in personnel within the system, while leaving the system intact, since others who would be subject to the same political-economic pressures and values would quickly replace them.

More broadly, at every Occupy site one hears the clear message that the overarching systemic change that must be wrought is to severely limit the influence of the rich and powerful and of major financial and other corporations on American society, on its government at all levels, on its cultural, educational, political, journalistic and other institutions. There is a growing awareness throughout the U.S. that a series of recent Supreme Court decisions (the best known of which is the *Citizens United* decision in January 2010) have established that money is an expression of free speech, that corporations and the rich can use unlimited amounts of their own money to influence elections, and that it is permissible to keep secret the sources of massive contributions of money used to support electoral campaigns. The Occupy movement around the country has often joined voices with many others to call for a constitutional amendment to overturn these decisions. (For example, official resolutions to this effect have been passed by city councils in New York and Los Angeles and even by states such as Montana -- and are pending in many other jurisdictions.)

Balancing the emphasis on severely limiting the influence of the rich is the clearly and often expressed desire to re-focus society's institutions on addressing the needs of the 99%. Particular emphasis is put on the need to end, indeed to reverse the terrible housing foreclosure process that has driven literally millions of American families out of their homes in the last 3 or 4 years. At virtually every Occupy demonstration there are calls to force the banks to renegotiate people's home mortgages to reflect the drop in housing prices (of 40% or more since 2008) and to reduce the interest rates (to the current level of under 4%).

But beyond these specific issues, the Occupy movement reflects a growing awareness that the political economic system in the U.S. is fundamentally broken (as seems true in many other nations as well), and that the recent financial crisis (of December 2007 through 2009 in the U.S. – and on-going in Europe) is something much more than just another in a long list of periodic crises and recessions. Rather one hears more understanding that the shift toward a growing middle class and a shrinking gap between rich and poor in the U.S. which had occurred from 1945 to the mid-1970's has been reversed since then. Instead, the gap has been widening for more than 35 years, during which time the wealthiest elements in American society have steadily undermined the sense that there is an effective, functioning democracy. So the concerns of the Occupy movement go far beyond calling for a list of specific, marginal changes within the current structure of American society, rather what is being sought is a major restructuring.

Some (Jensen, Bayer) have suggested that those structural changes which the Occupy movement seeks can be grouped into three topic areas: **economics**, **empire**, and **ecology**. Under **economics**, it is argued that it is not merely the distributions of income and wealth that need to change, but rather it is the underlying capitalist economic structure that has generated those distributions, and will always tend to do so, that needs to be changed. It is not that economic markets and private property are not a

viable form of organization; Occupy is not a socialist movement. Rather, the Occupy movement argues that those markets must be closely and continuously monitored and regulated in the interests of the 99%. Occupy contends that taxes and government spending must support the needs of the 99%, especially in the areas of housing (particularly forcing the renegotiation of many mortgages to end many of the foreclosures and to provide housing for the homeless), education (including colleges), healthcare, the improvement of the public infrastructure, and also support for small businesses which employ the majority of workers and whose owners are also part of the 99%. We can see how difficult waging this argument will be as the topic begins to be debated in the current Presidential campaign. The Republican party takes as its central focus attacking President Obama for the steps he has taken to pursue some modest regulation of the financial sector, stronger enforcement of environmental and product safety regulations, and slightly higher taxes on the rich and corporations. He is accused of waging “un-American class warfare,” being “anti-American and anti-capitalist,” and of wanting to move America to be more like the “failed socialist nations of Europe.”

The focus on **empire** is revealed in the many signs and comments that state the need for the U.S. to withdraw from its empire and use the money for “nation building” at home, to stop viewing itself as the self-appointed policeman of the world, and to resist the claim of “American exceptionalism” in foreign policy generally. On the **ecology / environmental** front, the Occupy demonstrators consistently support moving to green energy sources, environmentally safe production technologies and products, and efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emission and slow climate change.

For an example of the articulation of many of these, dare we say “demands,” see the **Declaration of the Occupy D.C.** group which has been encamped in Washington, D.C. since October 1, 2011 and which adopted its statement on November 30, 2011. (<http://occupydc.org/community/declaration/>)

### **Tactics of the Occupy Movement**

With a few rare exceptions, the Occupy movement has been committed to non-violent protest and demonstration, and to doing so in a legal manner. In most circumstances, the groups have not chosen the route of civil disobedience. There have been a few exceptions when the authorities sought to close encampments and move people out of them – but even in those circumstances, most Occupy groups and participants chose to leave peacefully and did not seek to be arrested. Oakland, California has sometimes been an exception to this pattern, in part due to harsh police tactics and the presence of some provocateurs. In every encampment and at every demonstration, all members of the public are invited to join in, visit, talk and even participate in the General Assemblies. The primary tactic, other than that of “occupying” public space (and occasionally foreclosed housing properties), has been communication via open face-to-face discussions, the Internet, signs and marches.

The success of this movement has been remarkable. Until its beginning in September 2011, the focus of most political discussions in the U.S. was on reducing government expenditures and the size of government and on fiscal austerity generally, with only a few, lonely voices calling for higher taxes on the rich and corporations. But even these modest calls attracted little support from Democrats and were rarely discussed in the media. Now that has changed dramatically as much of the nation is focusing on the concerns articulated by the Occupy movement. The change in the tone and content of political dialogue in the U.S. has been astonishing. One example was the sudden plethora of media articles, often in depth, about the growing inequality in income and wealth and about the influence of the rich and powerful on the political process. Even within the Republican party there has been an impact. Many doubt that Gingrich would have attacked Romney so strongly about his wealth (which

is more than that of the last 10 Presidents combined) had it not been for the Occupy movement. As a leader of the Communication Workers of America union, Robert Master, said: "In three months, this movement succeeded in shifting political discourse more than labor had been able to accomplish with years of lobbying and electoral campaigns." (New York Times, Feb.12, 2012)

At the same time, many of the encampments, that initially were often supported by their local city governments, soon became unacceptable to those same agencies. While they all said that they supported the "right to demonstrate," they were unwilling to allow "camping," that is sleeping and eating in tents over an extended period. Some acknowledged that the tents were a form of symbolic speech, others refused to accept that premise. (In part, each encampment became a focal point for the local homeless to stay at, which was welcomed by the Occupy people, but resisted by city officials, who claimed deteriorating health and safety conditions.) But the Occupy movements in virtually all of these cities have stayed intact in various forms and continue to mount regular demonstrations, putting down roots in city after city, sometimes working out of donated office space and meeting in churches and other public spaces. In early February, OWS activists, mainly from New York, undertook a five-week bus tour to forge personal links, exchange ideas and hold training sessions with like-minded activists.

What impact the Occupy movement will ultimately have on the American public, on the various agencies of government, and on the Congressional and Presidential election campaigns now underway remains to be seen. But it is quite clear that this movement seems determined to endure, and most observers expect it to expand anew in the spring and summer of 2012. The New York Times recently (2/12/12) reported that "Far from dissipating, groups around the country say they are preparing for a new phase of larger marches and strikes this spring that they hope will rebuild momentum and cast an even brighter glare on inequality and corporate greed." Building on a proposal that originated in Portland, Oregon, groups in 34 cities have reportedly agreed to "a day of nonviolent direct action on Feb 29th against corporations working against the public interest." Plans are currently underway for large demonstrations across the nation on May 1st . This includes a possible call for something in the nature of a general strike where the 99% show their power by withholding their labor for a day. However, so far, the labor movement, which would be crucial to the success of such a strike, seems cool to the suggestions. Nevertheless, as the labor leader quoted above said: "We have different roles – as labor we are much more embedded in mainstream politics. But we understand that without the pressure of more radical direct-action tactics, the debate in this country won't change substantially." The Occupy Movement remains alive and well, and we shall all simply have to wait to see what its future will be.

## **Delegates endorse Chris Holden at Pre-Endorsement Conference**

*Pasadena, January 23, 2012* - Chris Holden, a candidate for State Assembly in the 41st district, has received the backing of the majority of the district's delegates to the Democratic Party, a precursor to receiving the party's formal endorsement at its state convention next month.

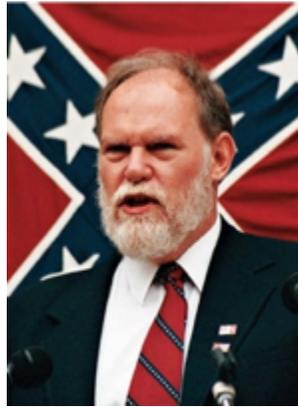
Holden received the support of 95 percent of the area's party delegates, who are responsible for recommending local candidates for endorsement by the state party. This means that Holden will be the sole candidate for the 41st Assembly district recommended for endorsement on the consent

calendar at the party's state convention on February 12 in San Diego.

The newly drawn 41st Assembly district includes Altadena, Claremont, La Verne, Monrovia, Pasadena, San Dimas, Sierra Madre, South Pasadena, Rancho Cucamonga and Upland.

## A Second Secession

Below: League of the South founder Michael Hill used to invoke a possible second secession as a solution to purported federal abuse of the Southern states. But that message gave way to railing against racial intermarriage, and then calling for a Christian theocracy in Dixie. Recently Hill indicated that violence may be necessary even without secession.



Source: [Southern Poverty Law Center](#)

## Weak Economy Most Harms Young Adults

By Rebecca Trounson

The Pew Research Center reports that young adults (ages 18-34) are having the toughest time of any age group gaining a foothold in the recovering economy. Those difficulties, in turn, are shaping their decisions about careers, schooling, marriage and parenthood, according to a new report. Nearly half say that in recent years they've taken a poor job just to pay the bills. More than a third has gone back to school because of the poor economy. About a third have postponed either their plans to get married or have a child, and one in four say they have moved back in with their parents after living independently. And fewer than half of young people who are now employed say they have the education and training necessary to get ahead in their jobs.

Large majorities of Americans of all ages believed it was harder for today's young adults to reach basic financial goals that their parents' generation took for granted, including saving for the future, paying for college or buying a home.

Source: *LA Times*, Feb 9, 2012

# Why the Constitution Did Not Prevent the Military Industrial Complex

By Ivan Light

It is now 52 years since President Eisenhower warned about the risk of an “unwarranted acquisition of power by a military industrial complex.” In that **52 years**, we have witnessed the maturation of the Frankenstein monster that Eisenhower feared. In addition to undermining the civilian economy and infrastructure of the United States, the damaging consequences of our warfare state include prodigal waste of human lives through the prosecution of useless and even counter-productive wars, all initiated on trumped-up grounds by the executive branch with the tacit or explicit concurrence of Congress. The military monster thus created is still strong and dangerous, and, unless defeated, it threatens finally to destroy both our liberty and our prosperity.

Reflecting on this disaster, the existence of which is not breaking news, I asked myself whether the framers of the U. S. Constitution were aware of the risk of creating a permanent garrison state, and, if so, how the framers proposed to prevent it? In answer to the first question, it is clear that the framers of the U. S. Constitution openly feared and hoped to prevent the existence of “standing armies in peacetime.” Their repugnance to standing armies arose in part from their study of Roman history, and their awareness of the disastrous consequences of standing armies in that history. However, their repugnance to standing armies also arose from their understanding of Britain’s Glorious Revolution of 1688, then only a century distant. To prevent the monarch from turning the armed forces against the British people, Parliament had lodged the entire legal right to raise and support armies in itself, stripping the monarch of this authority. Parliament jealously protected this exclusive authority over the military, considering that a bastion of British liberty. The framers of the Constitution intended that Congress should have the same exclusive and jealously safeguarded authority to raise, equip, and pay armies.

However, although the framers dreaded the creation of standing armies in peacetime, and hoped to prevent it, the U.S. Constitution has clearly failed to prevent the birth and metastatic development of the very warfare state the framers loathed. We have just what the framers hoped to prevent! How did this failure occur in the light of the framers’ firm and conscious resolve to prevent it? Although an academic question, even a hazy answer may suggest ways that contemporary Americans can utilize to extricate ourselves from the clutches of the military industrial complex.

Writing in the *Federalist Papers* (numbers 24, 25, 26, and 34), Alexander Hamilton ably explained to contemporary skeptics just why the proposed Constitution, which is now our Constitution, could be relied upon to prevent the fearsome growth of standing armies in peacetime. Hamilton did not dispute the grave risk of standing armies in peacetime; he shared that concern; he just argued that the proposed Constitution would suffice to prevent that dreadful outcome. One of Hamilton’s arguments was geographical in nature. Thanks to its geographical isolation, once the United States built a strong navy, the nation could rely on its navy to destroy invasion flotillas at sea. No foreign state could attack the United States by land. Therefore, since the United States would not need standing armies to prevent foreign invasions, there was no reason to fear the creation of standing armies in peacetime. That said, Hamilton wanted a standing navy. He reasoned that the United States would need a permanent and powerful navy to defend its international commercial interests; he observed that a standing navy would never turn against the people of the United States as might standing armies. A

navy could not enslave the mainland. Hamilton was a strong supporter of the U. S. Navy for both reasons.

Hamilton's was a convincing argument at the time, but it plainly did not anticipate that the commercial and political interests of the United States would someday eventuate in a world-spanning empire whose defense would require the projection of military power overseas, not just naval protection against invaders. Neither Hamilton nor the other framers envisioned the United States as an imperial power with worldwide geopolitical and economic interests to protect and advance if need be by military force. Had the Vietnamese, the Iraqis, or the Afghans launched invasion flotillas directed against our coasts, the U.S. Navy would indeed have protected the United States at sea just as Hamilton expected; but Hamilton did not anticipate that the United States would use its navy (and air force) to land ground troops in Vietnam, Granada, Panama, Iraq, and Afghanistan in the pursuit of imperial ambitions. In effect, then, this geographical argument of Hamilton's proved defective in the long run because the republic became an empire, and the Constitution was built for a republic.

Hamilton raised another argument intended to set at ease disquiet and uncertainty about the ability of the proposed Constitution to prevent the creation of standing armies in peacetime. Hamilton's main argument depended heavily, as he himself acknowledged, upon the legislative history of Great Britain in the aftermath of the Glorious Revolution of 1688. There Parliament had stripped the monarch of authority over the military, and Americans should take their cue from this enactment, Hamilton declared. As long as the exclusive authority to raise, pay, equip, and maintain armies rested in the legislature, Hamilton argued, the American people need not fear standing armies in peacetime. That is, they need not fear that the executive would turn the standing armies against the people in a tyrannical usurpation of power as, indeed, we now witness in both Syria and Egypt. Under the proposed Constitution, Hamilton observed, the people elected legislators who alone had the authority to raise and maintain standing armies. The Legislature was expected jealously to guard all its powers against encroachment by the President under the separation of powers theory. Therefore, the people could rely on legislators to prevent a power-crazed or megalomaniacal executive from unleashing military violence against them.

Curiously, Hamilton did admit one exception that threatened his argument. If there should arise "a combination between the executive and legislative in some scheme of usurpation," he acknowledged (*Federalist #25*), the consequences would be grave, and would include what he called trumped-up "provocations" intended to bait foreign nations into military responses. The foreign nation's reaction to our provocations would then justify standing armies. In other words, by creating a permanent fear of external military aggression, the federal government could wheedle from the American people the authority and the resources to support a permanent warfare establishment. Here was a nasty potential problem, Hamilton conceded, which, if it could not be solved, would imply, said he, that voters should reject the Constitution. Hamilton was so distressed by this possibility that, although a supporter of the Constitution, he would have preferred to see it rejected rather than accepted with a standing army. Happily, Hamilton found and proposed a solution to the problem he posed. In his estimation, the likelihood of a combination of Congress and the President was exceedingly small. After all, he reasoned, such a legislative/executive combination would require time to mature, and it was exceedingly "improbable" (*Federalist #26*) that a legislature could persevere in such a self-weakening course over a lengthy time period. Even "one man, discerning enough to apprise his constituents of their danger" would suffice to terminate the odious collaboration of legislature and executive in standing armies in time of peace.

Hamilton was right in a limited sense but wrong in the big sense. We actually had the man Hamilton predicted. His name was Dwight David Eisenhower. But we also understand now, through bitter experience, that Eisenhower's Cassandra warning was not enough to protect the United States against the unwarranted growth of a vast military industrial complex over five long decades. In fact, a protracted collaboration of the legislature and executive in the maintenance of standing armies is exactly what followed Eisenhower's prescient warning. Congress surrendered its right to declare war, and ignored most recently the War Powers Act that limited the President's authority to commit troops abroad. This long train of events proves that the dreaded legislative collaboration in abrogation of its own powers and authority was actually much more probable than Hamilton realized in 1784. We now know that Hamilton's arguments were inadequate. The Constitution he proposed did not offer the people of the United States a secure protection against standing armies in peacetime.

The take-home message depends on one's mood. If one is in a pessimistic mood, the sad reality of our healthy military industrial complex and sick economy reminds one of classical Greek tragedy in which a tiny flaw in the youthful protagonist contains the seed of his or her final destruction decades later. Moreover, also as in Greek tragedy, destiny overrules human contrivances. The framers hoped to avoid standing armies in peacetime, and tried to prevent that outcome, but, despite their intentions, their republic could not evade this tragic outcome.

On the other hand, if in an optimistic mood, we can take courage from the direction in which the framers wanted to go. Our military industrial complex is legal all right, but it is hostile to the spirit of the Constitution and to the plain intentions of the framers. Americans still treasure the wisdom and insight of the founders. The founders are on our side in this political fight, and progressive people should invoke the founders' wisdom and intentions when debating this crucial issue of our times.

## **Renew Your DCC Membership Now**

by Carolee Monroe

Do you wonder why we the DCC asks you to join or rejoin and to make an additional contribution to the DCC this year? Basically, it's because we deliver high political value for your dollar. Moreover, we confront extraordinary expenses this year, a presidential election year.

We conduct meetings each month. Our general membership meetings (on the last Monday of each month at 7 PM at Porter Hall, Pilgrim Place) and our luncheons (on the second Friday of the month at noon at the LYL Garden restaurant) feature speakers who inform us of topics of current interest.

We keep our members and the community at-large informed through our monthly newsletter, The Voorhis Voice, relevant emails and Sunday tabling in the Village during the hours of the Farmers Market. We maintain a website, [www.claremontdems.org](http://www.claremontdems.org), and an email address, [claremontdemocrats@yahoo.com](mailto:claremontdemocrats@yahoo.com). We maintain a telephone number, 909 632-1516, where messages are received. Through our Issues Committee, we generate resolutions about topics of relevance. These are disseminated as needed. Members of our Issues Committee frequently write letters which are published in local newspapers.

Because of concerns about the environment, along with printing and mailing costs, we have "gone green" – our newsletter is emailed to our members and is [available](#) on our web site. For those members who do not have internet access, a few copies are available at our monthly meetings. Prior to an election, we invite Democratic candidates to club meetings and community forums. We plan endorsements. We distribute appropriate candidate literature and information about propositions. Redistricting has placed us in newly drawn Congressional District 27, State Senate District 25 and Assembly District 41, all districts favorable to Democrats.

We maintain a community presence through our Sunday tabling and our booths at Earth Day, Independence Day and Village Venture. We take part in the July 4 parade. We mentor the Claremont High School Student Democrats Club and maintain contact with the Claremont College Student Democrats. We also provide about one-fourth of the staff needed for the Los Angeles County Democratic Party's booth at the Los Angeles County Fair during the month of September. We celebrate ourselves with an annual holiday party in early December. Now, in this important election year, we will need to pay for a temporary headquarters. Besides rent, utilities and insurance we will have office expenses. (If you want to designate your gift for this effort, write "For Office" on the form.)

For these reasons, please consider participating in our club with a contribution of both time and money. Please use our [online form](#).

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**Any registered Democrat may join the Democratic Club of Claremont on our web site!**

Access our website: [http://www.claremontdems.org/e107\\_plugins/survey/survey.php?1](http://www.claremontdems.org/e107_plugins/survey/survey.php?1)

P.S. – Part of your dues and contributions may be contributed to Federal and State candidates. Individual contributions will be deposited into the club's Federal account, subject to the Federal Elections Campaign Act. Non-individual contributions and contributions of individuals who so request will be deposited into the club's State account. Contributions are limited under State law. No anonymous contributions of more than \$50 will be accepted. Federal law requires us to use our best efforts to collect and report the name, address, occupation and employer of each individual contributor. Political contributions are not tax-deductible. FPPC #841491. FEC #C00404319

