

YDS Endorses Occupy Wall Street

The Young Democratic Socialists endorse the Occupy Wall Street movement and its demand for justice. We join the demonstrators in taking a stand against corporate power and neoliberal politicians. These protests have been condemned in the press as class warfare, but in the words of a protestor on Wall Street, "they only call it class warfare when we fight back".

It was class war under the Carter administration when the government deregulated the airline, trucking, rail, communications and finance industries in favor of capitalists over workers and consumers. It was class war when Ronald Reagan fired over 11,000 striking air traffic controllers and signaled the beginning of an era of relentless union busting by employers. It was class war under the Reagan administration when the government dramatically cut taxes on the rich and raised them on the poor, while slashing Social Security survivor and disability benefits. It was class war under the Clinton administration when the government repealed the Glass-Steagall Act, legalized over-the-counter derivatives trading, crippled cash assistance to single parents with infant children, raised taxes on Social Security benefits and engineered the pro-business North American Free Trade Agreement. It was class war under the George W. Bush administration when the government further cut taxes on the rich, engineered unnecessary foreign war while ignoring domestic need, and bailed out the very banks that caused the financial crisis with trillions of dollars of taxpayers' money. It was class war under the Obama administration when the government extended the Bush tax cuts, bailed out the banks without any strings attached, failed to end foreclosures, drastically slashed funding for essential federal programs and failed to reverse a Supreme Court decision that lifted all restrictions on corporate involvement in political campaigns.

We must draw on the great traditions of resistance in our history - the Patriots, the Abolitionists, the Suffragettes, Industrial Unionism, the Civil Rights Movement, and the feminist and LGBT movements - and engage our creative imagination in forming a movement for the 2010s. We must bear witness, but we must moreover build power that can challenge the commanding heights of capitalism, and succeed in changing laws in the people's favor. We must make demands on the state, and we must win. In the spirit of solidarity, we encourage the movement to demand:

- A public jobs program
- Medicare for all
- An end to foreclosures
- The nationalization of failed banks
- The forgiveness of student debt
- Substantial investment in clean energy

We can fund these vital public policies if we reverse the Bush and Reagan tax cuts for the top two per cent, restore effective corporate taxation, and end wasteful military spending. And we can only reverse the decline in working people's standard of living if we restore the democratic right of working people to unionize.



This is the crossroads of our age. Before us lie two divergent paths. One leads to further domination of capital and the descent of our society into a world of "have-nots" dominated by a handful of "have-lots", a world where the government values bombs over books, where the poor pay more taxes than the rich, and where racist, patriarchal and homophobic structures grow stronger. The other path leads towards greater freedom and democracy, guided by the vision of a democratic society. We must refuse to continue down the established road of increasing injustice and instead choose the difficult trek towards liberation. As Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. said, we are facing a choice between "chaos or community", and we must choose community.

The Young Democratic Socialists enthusiastically support the Occupy Wall Street movement. Together, all the democratic forces of the 99% can remake our society, and remodel it in keeping with our age-old values of liberty, equality and solidarity. Let us show them that "we the people" are still a force to be reckoned with!

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