

## **On the Occupy Wall Street movement**

Resolution passed by the Social Democrats USA on November 4, 2011

While the Occupy Wall Street movement started with little media attention and public notice, it has now grown to such an extent that most Americans are aware of it and moreover a majority of Americans approve of it. Currently the Occupy Wall Street movement with active branches in over 200 American cities easily dwarfs the conservative Tea Party movement in popularity.

The Occupy Wall Street movement with its attendant Occupy Buffalo, Occupy Los Angeles, Occupy Columbus movements, etc., clearly is being supported by the majority of the public because its slogan of "We are the 99%" representing the people not enjoying the full benefits of the system as opposed to the 1% of Wall Streeters, CEO's who are enjoying the lion's share of the system's benefits resonates with the beliefs of the majority of Americans at this time. The Wall Street protests have given voice and a living face to this discontent.

Furthermore, the Occupy Wall Street movement is important because it is the most significant rising of the Left in the decades since the Vietnam War. This is not to dismiss major and significant progress made by certain advocacies of the Left over the past forty years. The hard won gains by those advocating of women's and gay rights are some of the most prominent examples. And currently in states such as Ohio, workers and unions are struggling to roll back anti-labor legislation intended to cripple their future. However the emergence of Occupy Wall Street movement seems to be something new. It seems to be the one nationwide movement which offers the promise that the very politics and economic life of this nation could be ultimately changed.

For this reason the Social Democrats USA fully embraces the broad anti-corporate vision of the Occupy Wall Street movement and the positive actions of the movement itself. The SDUSA endorses to work of its comrades who already have immersed themselves in the struggle. The work of the Chair of the Young Social Democrats, Michael Mottern is an example.

Of course, as in all of the causes which it supports, SD support will not be uncritical. The SD knows that for the Occupy Wall Street movement to reach its potential it must develop organizational forms that can reach out and can engage people more directly in political struggles to support laws and legislation which concretely can make an anti-corporate vision a political and economic reality. Obviously it must proceed to turn its vision of freedom and community into real political programs. In other words it must ultimately institutionalize. If it doesn't then all of its energy and potential will ultimately dissipate.

Everything in its time and place. The Occupy Wall Street movement will learn from its experiences and the Social Democrats USA will assist in whatever way it can.