

The Oscar Grant Plaza Gazette



Please send submissions to oscargrantplazagazette@gmail.com or drop a hard copy by the information tent at oscar grant plaza. We will endeavor to publish all materials received. For the purposes of collective self-defense we will reserve the right to decline to run materials which would render us legally liable.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 23RD, 2011 - DAY 14 - "THE COMMONS IS BACK"

ANOTHER LETTER OF SOLIDARITY AND SUPPORT – IDEAS FOR THE FUTURE – QUESTIONS OF TACTICS AND LOGISTICS

Dear Occupiers,

I am writing as an ally, I don't live in the plaza but my thoughts and heart are with you. I have heard of the eviction notice. I imagine the tension within the camp is higher than ever. I imagine the lines of conflict amongst the occupiers are clearer, as well as the common ground and the desire to heal the wounds inflicted by this capitalist society that values profits over people. I hope you are taking care of yourselves and each other, learning to communicate and respect each other, forming bonds that will last. Above all else, I hope you are thinking about tactics. 'Should we stay in the plaza and resist the eviction, or leave the plaza and spread the spirit and energy and direction of the movement all over the bay area? Should we risk going to jail or stay free to fight another day?' They can evict the people from the plaza, but they can't evict the movement from the people. The movement can leave the plaza and occupy the world. Everything you're doing in the plaza (providing free food, safe spaces, free medical care, shelter, information, media, etc.) can be done outside the plaza, if you work with others with trust and respect and self-care. You can help communities resist foreclosures, move money from the big banks to credit unions, share resources, house the homeless, form cooperatives for economic justice and direct democracy. Don't be stuck in the plaza like the rich are stuck in their mansions and empty possessions! IMAGINE THE OCCUPATION BEYOND THE OCCUPATION! Consider guerilla tactics, keep moving, fight and survive!

A SALIENT PERSPECTIVE FROM THE PAST: SELECTIONS FROM HOWARD ZINN'S *DISOBEDIENCE AND DEMOCRACY* [1968]

It is strange. On Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, thoughtful Americans speak earnestly about how much *change* is needed, not just elsewhere but in the United States. On Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, disturbed by the tumult of the previous evenings, when various people (blacks, students, draft resisters, mothers on welfare) have, in a disorderly way, *demand*ed change, the same people call for "law and order."

On Sundays, our dilemma is solved. The *New York Times*

tells us change is necessary and protest desirable, but within limits. Poverty should be protested, but the laws should not be broken. Hence, the Poor People's Campaign, **occupying** tents in Washington in the spring of 1968, is praiseworthy; but its leader, Ralph Abernathy, is deservedly jailed for violating an ordinance against demonstrating near the Capitol. The Vietnam war is wrong, but if Dr. Spock is found by a jury and judge to have violated the draft law, he must accept his punishment as right because that is the rule of the game.

Thus, exactly at the moment when we have begun to suspect that law is congealed injustice, that the existing order hides an everyday violence against body and spirit, that our political structure is fossilized, and that the noise of change—however scary—may be necessary, a cry rises for "law and order." Such a moment becomes a crucial test of whether the society will sink back to a spurious safety or leap forward to its own freshening. We seem to have reached such a moment in the United States.

The signs are everywhere. Urban uprisings, exploding out of poverty and racism, have brought a flood of contrite words (the Kerner Commission report), but no concrete action to redistribute the enormous wealth of the nation; in the Civil Rights Act of 1968, the most enforceable section will be that which provides five years in prison for those who "encourage" a riot, and one of the Titles of the Act is called, appropriately, Civil Disobedience. Student rebellion, culminating in the **occupation** of various university buildings all over the nation, has evoked from those who once decried student silence, not praise, but a shower of Commencement Day warnings of going "too far." [...]

I do not think civil disobedience is enough; it is a way of protest, but in itself it does not construct a new society. There are many other things that citizens should do to begin to build a new way of life in the midst of the old, to live the way human beings should live—enjoying the fruits of the earth, the warmth of nature and of one another—without hostility, without the artificial separation of religion, or race, or nationalism. Further, not all forms of civil disobedience are moral, not all are effective.

However, when one looks around and sees the condition of the black person, the existence of poverty, the continued stupidity of war, the growing blight of an unnatural life in malodorous, crowded cities or inhuman suburbs—and when one considers the impotence of our existing political institutions in affecting this, we know that not just mild, petty, gradual steps, but revolutionary change are needed.

PEOPLE of OAKLAND
Assembled Participants of Occupy Oakland



CIVIC HALL · 1 Oscar Grant Plaza · Ground Floor · OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA, MOTHER EARTH

ATTENTION ALL WHO HAVE BROUGHT US TO THE BRINK OF DISASTER

Date: NOW, before it's too late!

NOTICE TO STEP UP TO YOUR TRUE RESPONSIBILITY

*The **People of Oakland** are committed to facilitating peaceful forms of expression and free speech rights, and protecting personal safety and property for the 99% (+1 if you will join us!) and future generations.*

From the outset of the demonstration on October 10, **Occupy Oakland** has maintained its commitment to facilitating the peaceful expression of First Amendment rights, balanced with our equal commitment to protecting and maintaining public safety, public health, and **self-organization of responsible collective alternatives**. While **all who have brought us to the brink of disaster** have a right to peaceful expression, the **People** have a responsibility to ensure a public health and safety plan during **these perilous days and years ahead**.

During the past **days, years and decades**, **sane, reverent, responsible citizens** have provided **oral and written documentation**—handed out in person and posted **just about everywhere corporate media does not control**—outlining specific public health, safety, and **social, environmental and economic justice** issues to be addressed by our **governments, institutions and corporate entities**.

We believe that after **so long tolerating abusive, irresponsible, neglectful, and willfully short-sighted behavior**, the **People** can no longer uphold public health and safety **without demonstrating in this manner**. In recent years, **social and economic** conditions and occupants' behavior have significantly deteriorated, and it is no longer manageable to maintain a public health and safety plan **throughout the current system**. These conditions, which have not been sufficiently addressed, include:

- **FIRE HAZARDS: recklessly burning fossil fuels**, improper storage and disposal of **toxic waste in vulnerable communities, air and natural areas**, inadequate **response to climate change**, density of **poverty** and flammable **despairing citizens**, **smokescreens when caught**, piles of **transparent lies**, and **denial of our right to yell "Fire!" and "Wake up!"** as the world burns around us.
- **SAFETY HAZARDS: increasing frequency of violence, assaults, threats and intimidation against workers, foreclosed homeowners, immigrants, women, indigenous people, all races, and the natural world.**
- **DENIAL OF MEDIA ACCESS: to emergency citizens, artists and journalists to honestly diagnose and discuss what causes injured persons under this system** and to police to patrol **rampant corporate crime**.
- **SANITATION HAZARDS: corporate urination and defecation (hey, they're "people" – we just call it like we see it!), litter, improper food preparation and destruction of rural and urban farming capacity.**
- **HEALTH HAZARDS: existing corporate greed and political gridlock** problem has been exacerbated and is endangering public health. **Civic groups attempting vector control are unable to implement measures to control the corporate greed and political gridlock problem under current conditions.**
- **PHYSICAL DAMAGE: mounting damage to national and local infrastructure and our historic democracy**
- **DISRUPTION OF THE COMMUNITY'S DEEP ADAPTIVE AND CREATIVE ABILITY TO OFFER VIABLE ALTERNATIVES FOR PUBLIC USE: many alternatives proposed by citizens and groups who have complied with Status-Quo regulations have been dismissed, ignored, deemed impossible, and declared illegal.**

As a result of these serious conditions, the **People** have determined that allowing **current political, business and social leaders** to facilitate **the necessary changes to our current system on their own without our constant presence, participation and oversight** is no longer viable, nor in the interest of public health and safety. **Peaceful collaboration on solutions** will continue to be allowed between **anyone who cares to participate**. No more **denying that our economic, social and natural world is hanging by a thread** is permitted.