

THE HOMELAND SECURITY ***NEWS CLIPS***

PREPARED FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY BY BULLETIN NEWS WWW.BULLETINNEWS.COM/DHS

TO: THE SECRETARY AND SENIOR STAFF

DATE: TUESDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2011 7:00 AM EDT

TODAY'S EDITION

[Redacted text block 1]

[Redacted text block 2]

[REDACTED]

Wall Street Protesters Hope To Plant Seeds Of A National Cause (WP)

By Colum Lynch
[Washington Post](#), October 4, 2011

NEW YORK — New York’s budding anti-capitalism protest movement began last month with a vague sense of grievance over the widening gap between the rich and poor in America.

But in three weeks, it has provided fuel for a broader national anti-corporate message, drawing inspiration from the Arab Spring but struggling to define its goals beyond a general feeling that power needs to be restored to ordinary people.

Now similar protests are springing up in Boston, Los Angeles and Chicago, and organizers in Washington plan a march at Freedom Plaza on Thursday to “denounce the systems and institutions that support endless war and unrestrained corporate greed.”

On Monday morning, the scene at the heart of the self-styled Occupy Wall Street movement — Zuccotti Park, two blocks north of Wall Street — had the feeling of a street fair, with women in brightly colored wigs playing with hula hoops.

A collection of protesters wearing white face paint with streaks resembling blood at their lips conducted a “zombie

parade” down Broadway to underscore what they see as the ghoulish nature of capitalism.

Despite having no single leader and no organized agenda, the protesters insist they are on the verge of translating their broad expression of grievance into a durable national cause. “The criticism has focused on the lack of cohesion in our message and demands,” said Arthur Kohl-Riggs, 23, a political activist from Madison, Wis. But what the critics don’t understand, he said, is “the value of forming a direct democratic movement” that is not controlled by political elites.

The protests have drawn an assortment of anarchists, anti-globalization activists and disaffected 20-somethings from North Carolina, Minnesota and Wisconsin — the type of polyglot crowd that has been known to disrupt International Monetary Fund and World Bank meetings. But the efforts have also drawn support from union members, including New York transportation workers who allowed some of the protesters to take shelter inside the subway system.

Brought together by outlets such as Twitter and Facebook, participants hope the New York protests can plant the seeds of a permanent national movement. The site [www.occupytogether.org](#) serves as a clearinghouse for information on the movement and includes a list of events around the country.

The primary theme is that corporate capitalists, backed by corrupt politicians, have tipped the balance of the economic system too far in favor of the powerful, thus condemning the regular guy to a sea of debt and little opportunity. As one sign put it: “The loan shark ate my world.”

“The American dream is dead or dying,” said Max Richmond, 26, a New York City-based carpenter from Millerton, N.Y. “Four or five weeks ago, I was just another apathetic, defeatist member of my generation. Being here, I’m not. We were all just waiting for something like this to happen.”

The movement has struck a chord in some liberal New York circles, attracting celebrities such as actress Susan Sarandon and former New York governor David Paterson. It also got a seal of approval from one of the world’s most successful capitalists, billionaire George Soros, who said the demonstrators had every reason to be angry at the U.S. financial system for jeopardizing their future.

“I can sympathize with their grievances,” Soros told reporters at U.N. headquarters Monday, faulting U.S. banks for driving small businesses out of existence by boosting credit charges to unsupportable levels. Soros, who has profited during the financial crisis, suggested that the banks’ selfish conduct has provided grist for powerful anti-

establishment movements, from the tea party to Occupy Wall Street.

Jay Benson, a 25-year-old from Minnesota, said he drove to New York several days ago with a friend to participate in the demonstrations. A forklift operator whose father worked for 35 years at the same railroad job, Benson voiced frustration at the piecemeal jobs he has had to take to make ends meet. "One week I get 34 hours; the next week I'd have 12."

Not everyone was impressed.

Christopher Dilmer, 44, a steamfitter who works at the World Trade Center site, said he had trouble figuring out what the hubbub was all about.

"I don't know what they are protesting," Dilmer said, adding that everyone seemed to want something different. Dilmer said he spoke to one 21-year-old protester "who said he'd quit his job to come here. I said, 'You have a job, and you quit it to protest joblessness?'"

Dilmer said he's not disputing that the country's "economy is in the tank," but he thinks most of the young protesters could find work if they put their mind to it. "If you want a job, you can find a job," said Dilmer, who said he had traveled to Detroit and Denver to get work. "It might not be the job you want. I did what I had to do."

The New York protests started after an anti-consumerism online publication, Adbusters, issued a call for people to occupy Wall Street to protest corporate greed. The hacker group Anonymous promoted it on its Twitter feed, and people began showing up nearly three weeks ago.

The protests had largely gone unnoticed outside New York City until New York police officers pepper-sprayed a couple of participants last week and arrested more than 700 protesters marching across the Brooklyn Bridge on Saturday. Officers and protesters differ on what happened.

But the scene was calm Monday morning as hundreds of protesters shook off the autumn chill, slipped out of their sleeping bags and gathered around a makeshift kitchen, where they snacked on donated food. Nearby, someone had set up a board for people to write suggestions for what the movement's goal should be.

They included calls to "demand jobs for all," to "talk about imperialism," to "talk about campaign finance reform" and to "give out chalk to everyone to write slogans on all walls as we march."

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]