



Written by [William F. Jasper](#) on May 2, 2012

May Day Fails to Revitalize Occupy Wall Street

The massive May Day protests and the general strike that Occupy Wall Street organizers had been calling for didn't materialize. Perhaps as many as a thousand or more protesters, bolstered by union members, turned out in New York City. In [Los Angeles](#), a similarly-sized crowd, estimated by the *Los Angeles Times* as "more than 1,000 immigrants rights protesters and Occupy activists" marched through the downtown area to Pershing Square. Turnouts in other cities were much smaller.



The demonstrations were generally peaceful, although confrontations and dozens of arrests were reported in New York, Los Angeles, and elsewhere. In [Oakland](#), California, which was the site of violent protests last year, police used tear gas and flash-bang grenades to disperse crowds that reportedly were throwing bottles and attacking the police. Some protesters also, it has been reported, were attempting forcibly to close businesses that had chosen to stay open, in violation of the OWS call for a May Day "general strike."

Across the bay, in San Francisco, a flash mob of black-clad anarchists attacked shops and businesses along a swath of the Mission District. The *Los Angeles Times* [reported](#):

More than 100 masked protesters — dressed in black and gray and wielding crowbars and paintball guns — descended on a busy restaurant and retail stretch in the city's Mission district. Vandals smashed windows, defaced cars and attacked the neighborhood police station.

The attack, which vandalized small mom-and-pop businesses, did nothing, of course to harm Goldman Sachs, Citibank, JP MorganChase, or any of the other Wall Street behemoths that are the ostensible targets of the OWS activists' rage.

The *Times* interviewed Jeffrey Garcia, who provides battery service to a tow truck company. Two of his vehicles were damaged in the melee.

"He was at a loss to explain the vandalism and the protesters," the *Times* reported, "'We work 20 hours a day, and they have nothing to do,' he said. 'I don't know. It's just crazy.'"

Another victim interviewed by the *Times* was similarly nonplussed by the attack:

Brittney Nicolulis, manager at a home furnishing boutique on Valencia Street called Therapy Home, said she and her colleagues heard a rumbling about 9 p.m. Monday and looked out the window to investigate.

"Our first assumption was peace marchers," said Nicolulis. "We get those all the time. We ran to the door and heard smashing and gunshots and sounds that were not about peace."

Nicolulis, who was with her colleagues at Therapy's clothing store next door, took shelter behind the cash register as vandals smashed windows at both stores.



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“They came really fast and left really fast,” she said, “like a hurricane. It was really scary. It felt apocalyptic and primal. We keep hearing this was Occupy Wall Street and against the corporations. But this is a locally owned business. You’re not putting any corporation out. We’re the little guys. Everyone I talk to, nobody gets it.”

In Seattle, a group of black-clad activists with clubs, hammers and other implements broke windows at the Federal court house (see video [here](#))

As we reported here on April 3 (“Call for May Day Offensive Reveals Communist Direction of Occupy Wall Street Movement”), the Occupy Wall Street (OWS) leaders have been searching for a way to reinvigorate their campaign since last November when their ragtag activists were evicted from Zuccotti Park in New York City, as well as from other encampments in cities across the country.

The plan for an “Occupy Spring” campaign centered on a May 1st “general strike” nationwide to shut down all school and business activity. The plan was hatched and promoted by May Day New York City ([MayDayNYC.org](#)), a coalition of Marxist-Leninist groups that include the Communist Party USA, Revolutionary Communist Party, Socialist Workers Party, Progressive Labor Party, Workers World Party, and the Committees of Correspondence (a spinoff of the Communist Party USA). An Internet and print flyer put out by MayDayNYC in April declares:

MAY DAY 2012?OCCUPY WALL STREET STANDS IN SOLIDARITY
WITH THE CALLS FOR A DAY WITHOUT THE 99%
WHEREEVER YOU ARE
NO WORK
NO SCHOOL
NO HOUSEWORK
NO SHOPPING

“ON MAY 1, 2012,” the flyer goes on to state, “Millions of people throughout the world — workers, students, immigrants, professionals, houseworkers — employed and unemployed alike — will take to the streets to unite in a General Strike against a system that does not work for us. Don’t go to work. Don’t go to school. Don’t shop. Take the streets!”

It’s no secret that the OWS ranks are filled with cadres that are openly hostile to free enterprise capitalism; many of the leaders identify themselves as socialists, Marxists, or even communists, though most march under the more vague banner of “progressive.” The home page of the official OWS web site declares: “The Only Solution is World Revolution.” And the OWS teach-ins feature revered revolutionaries of the 1960s: Tom Hayden, Bill Ayers, Angela Davis, Todd Gitlin, Bettina Aptheker, Frances Fox Piven, Barbara Ehrenreich, Mark Rudd, Marcus Raskin, Arthur Waskow, Stanley Aronowitz, et al.

Tom Hayden, a founder and president of the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and an organizer of riots and mayhem at campuses across the country during the 60s, was in New York, speaking on April 30 at NYU, on the relevance of the Port Huron Statement (the SDS’s founding document) to OWS. Hayden, who traveled to communist North Vietnam to support the Vietcong against our soldiers during the Vietnam War, was the object of a [fawning piece](#) in The Daily Beast, by Jeff Smith, who is identified thusly in his bio: “Jeff Smith, a former advertising professional, is a freelance writer and Occupy Wall



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Street activist.”

The Daily Beast is one of the “alternative,” “progressive” web sites that has lavished a great deal of supportive coverage on OWS activities. Of course, many of the Daily Beast readers are probably unaware that the Beast, which poses as an “anti-establishment,” “anti-corporate” news source is just the hipster subsidiary of Newsweek, the very establishment-oriented mouthpiece of the corporatism OWS claims to oppose.

[The Daily Beast](#), like the [Huffington Post](#), [The Nation](#), [Mother Jones](#), the [Village Voice](#) and other far-left publications and websites, is trying to put as much of a positive spin as possible on the failure of the OWS May Day campaign. However, in spite of all of the supportive media treatment the Occupy activities have received, and even with the OWS efforts to combine immigration activists, union members, anti-war protesters, and other disparate constituencies with their anti-capitalist Occupy troops, OWS was unable to bring out more than a tiny fraction of the millions they had hoped to activate.

For a movement that claims to represent 99 percent of the global population, OWS is looking pretty meager. The Occupy leaders are, no doubt looking for other issues they can co-opt to expand their diminishing ranks. Perhaps some are thinking that Al Sharpton and the Trayvon Martin case may provide the catalyst and the street army the foundering Occupy movement needs to rejuvenate itself?

Photo of Occupy Wall Street protestors in Oakland, Calif.: AP Images



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