



Anti-Semitism in the Occupy Wall Street Movement

For the past three weeks, protestors of various stripes have made their way to New York City's Financial District as part of the movement known as "Occupy Wall Street," a self-described "people-powered movement for democracy inspired by the Egyptian Tahrir Square uprisings." Democratic Party bigwigs such as Al Sharpton, former Speaker of the House Rep. Nancy Pelosi, and countless other elected officials have lent their support to the cause, which has also merited the participation of numerous labor unions, and a host of socialist, communist, and other radical leftist political parties and groups, including the International ANSWER Coalition (which has demonstrably provided much support and strategic input to the Islamist and communist forces protesting in Cairo).



In addition, however, the Occupy Wall Street movement has also included a fair deal of anti-Semitic protesters, who rely on classically leftist and communist anti-semitic arguments associating Jews with capitalism, and who are informed by the anti-Israel, pro-Palestinian rhetoric espoused by those leftist coalitions fueling the Occupy Wall Street movement.

As the protests enter their fourth week, centered around Manhattan's [Zuccotti Park](#), several videos of participants spewing anti-Semitic rhetoric have surfaced, sparking new concerns about the groups and ideological positions represented at the protests. In addition, there are inexorable ties between the Occupy Wall Street movement and the "Arab Spring" protests threatening geopolitical stability in the Middle East. According to an undercover [investigation](#) conducted by *National Review* columnist Charles C.W. Cooke, protesters — including [Danny Cline](#), who has emerged as a social media figurehead of sorts for the movement on YouTube and other forums — have routinely spewed anti-Israel and anti-Semitic messages. Cline has produced obscenity-laden diatribes against the perceived injustices of capitalism, and in one video, he is seen berating an elderly Jewish counter-protester, calling him a "bum," mocking the man by asking him if he speaks English, and telling him to "go back to Israel." Cooke says that Cline also shouted the "n-word" at the gentleman, and has been a fixture of the protests from their inception.

Another [investigation](#) discovered that on October 3, a protester described as homeless and out of work screamed to a sizable crowd that "the Jews control Wall Street," and told counter-protesters to "go back to Israel," and called them "greedy pigs," saying that "this is not Israel." The same protester also alleged that Jews control the media and blamed "Jewish bankers" for the nation's economic woes.

Anti-Capitalism and Anti-Semitism

While a casual observer might believe that these incidents are mere isolated examples of hate-filled extremists attempting to co-opt an otherwise innocuous movement, an analysis of history and political



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thought demonstrates that anti-Semitism has always been a core element of anti-capitalist, socialist, and communist ideology. Anti-free market theoreticians have long spewed vitriol against the Jews. Historic examples are such figures such as Karl Marx, John Maynard Keynes, and Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, whose ideas on political authority and economics constitute the basis of the radical agenda which the protesters seek to impose even further on the American people.

Such statist ideologues find themselves at odds with Judaism because unlike statism, Judaism, as a cohesive religious system, focuses on objective truth, earthly tyranny giving way to Divine omnipotence (as evident in the Exodus narrative), individual responsibility, the rule of law, the primacy of the individual and the individual's dignity (the human person is seen as being created in the image and likeness of God, with religious and moral obligations incumbent upon each individual), charity that encourages ultimate self-sufficiency for its recipients (enshrined in Maimonides' *Hilkhot Matanot Aniyim* 10:1), and encourages hard work and the entrepreneurial spirit. The antinomian, atheistic, and anarchistic tendencies found within classical socialist and communist thought obviously run counter to Judaism's moral framework and teachings against a progressive/graduated income tax, excessive taxation, public entitlements, state-forced altruism, and income equality. Indeed, historian Jerry Muller has pointed out, in his analysis *Capitalism and the Jews*, that free-market policies have greatly benefited the Jews, while Benjamin Ginsburg, in his study *The Fatal Embrace: Jews and the State*, points out that it is authoritarian regimes of any variety (which are inherently anti-free market) which have proven disastrous for Jewish survival.

The protesters identified as espousing classically anti-Semitic tomes are merely perpetuating the socialist belief that Jews are to blame for "social injustice," an idea that began with Proudhon. Proudhon is best known for being the first self-identified anarchist, and in 1840, he published *What is Property? Or, An Inquiry Into the Principle of Right and Government*, which inspired Karl Marx, who maintained a years-long correspondence with Proudhon. In it, he asserted that property is theft, and argued for mutualism, where each person is equally doled out some of society's "means of production," with trade representing equivalent amounts of labor, and where religious and ethnic identities are eradicated in favor of global revolutionary fervor and "brotherhood." Proudhon scholar Stewart Edwards notes that Proudhon's diaries (carnets) reveal his paranoid feelings of hatred against the Jewish people, and in 1847, considered publishing an article which called for the expulsion of the Jews from France, labeled them "the enemy of the human race," and said that "this race must be sent back to Asia or exterminated." Later that year, Proudhon's disciple, Alphonse Toussenel, in his diatribe "Les Juifs, Rois de l'Epoque," ("The Jews, Kings of the Era"), expanded upon Proudhon's anti-Semitism, from a broader economic basis.

Karl Marx's anti-Semitism is ubiquitous and is clearly laid out in his 1844 work *Zur Judenfrage* ("On the Jewish Question," alternatively entitled "A World Without Jews.") In it, Marx (whose parents were Jewish converts to Lutheranism) blames the Jews for income inequality (which communism sees as a grave evil), and sinisterly condemns Judaism as a societal opiate which is a mere reflection of "bourgeoisie" socioeconomic circumstances. Marx accuses Jews of being "capitalist hucksters," viciously perpetuating a nearly 2000-year long canard of Jewish financial largesse, and articulates a position that was later used as anti-Semitic propaganda by the Nazi regime. Marx's anti-Semitism falsely sees the modern commercialized world as a Jewish undertaking, and accuses Jews of worshiping the dollar, as the embodiment of capitalism and the representation of all of its purported evils. Scholar Bernard Lewis sees *Zur Judenfrage* as classically anti-Semitic propaganda, which would later be used by Hitler's propagandist Joseph Goebbels as further anti-capitalistic vitriol against the Jews.



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In addition, John Maynard Keynes, whose collectivist advocacy of bailouts, central banking, and massive governmental intervention to “stabilize” output over the business cycle has directed American economic policy in every presidential administration since FDR, was also known for strong biases against the Jews. Keynes, the left’s intellectual hero, infamously [stated](#) that “It is not agreeable to see civilization so under the ugly thumbs of its impure Jews who have all the money and the power and brains,” essentially equivalent to what many Occupy Wall Street protesters are spewing. Keynes also advocated segregation, in the same manner as Proudhon and the Nazis.

When understood that the collectivist left’s towering ideologues saw hatred of the Jews as essential to their ideology of global anti-capitalist revolution, it becomes clear that the anti-Semitism observed in the Occupy Wall Street movement has a blatant historical basis in the thought of Proudhon, Marx, and Keynes, the fathers of the anarchism, socialism, and economic collectivism driving these protests.

Photo: NYPD officers attempt to push back a crowd after demonstrators from the "OccupyWall Street" protests began harassing police officers for arresting two men outside Zuccotti Park in New York, Oct. 10, 2011: AP Images



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