OPINION Movement is a Voice to the Vulnerable

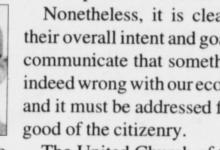
BY BENTLEY DE BARDELABEN

Pondering the Occupy movement, I find that I am excited that members of our great republic are

continuing to protest as a way to make their frustration known about economic inequality.

Being a proponent of activism and advocacy, I realize that demonstrations can be a tool to demand change to tax, civic and corporate laws. As month urging members and the race for the White House begins a countdown to the 2012 elections, I watch how the etythrough creative vision, faith-President and Congress might ful action and prayer. address the concerns of those feeling unheard, invisible and that it is my responsibility to live taken for granted.

ethnicity, age, religion and income, these protesters have assembled vowing to remain nerable are. It is not possible for there was no one left to speak present until their concerns are anyone to say that they have no addressed. Unfortunately, there awareness of such need or sufis still no cohesive message be- fering. With the change of sea- our freedoms for granted; they ing released to the media, gov- son, it is my hope that these ernment agencies or elected of- courageous individuals will not ficials. Moreover, the violent be deterred from continuing to fringe element connected to the let their voices be heard. occupy movement has been



national staff has heard from many that we must support those who are feeling marginalized and overwhelmed in this economy. licly without those fears. With Our five-person Collegium of this right, comes responsibility. officers issued a statement last churches to "seek the common good as the church and in soci-

out the mandate of Christ to Varying in political outlook, stand with the vulnerable in our communities. The occupy movement has identified who the vul-

Nonetheless, it is clear that honor the ways we have been their overall intent and goal is to blessed as family, community or communicate that something is nation. While for people in other indeed wrong with our economy countries, the opportunity to proand it must be addressed for the test could come with the threat of bodily harm, imprisonment, or The United Church of Christ perhaps even death. Yet in our democracy, in most instances, we can disagree with the ruling establishment and protest pub-

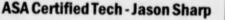
German pastor and theologian, Martin Niemoller, wrote: "First they came for the communists, and I didn't speak out because I wasn't a communist. Then they came for the As a Christian, I understand trade unionists, and I didn't speak out because I wasn't a trade unionist. Then they came for the Jews, and I didn't speak out because I wasn't a Jew. Then they came for me and out for me."

Friends, we must not take can be taken away from us if we aren't paying attention. I am confident that with our help the demonstrators will continue to As we embark upon the holi- challenge the establishment and

counterproductive to the brand. day season, I hope that we will thereby remind us of who and executive with Justice Miniswhose we are. tries in the United Church of

Bentley de Bardelaben is an Christ.

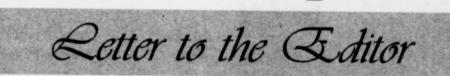
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Occupy Portland Response

Kudos to Portland Mayor Sam Adams and Police Chief Mike Reese for their respectful, appropriate and successful handling of the Occupy Portland ad hoc campground event time don't have a clue how in the parks near City hall. Congratulations also to Lt. care. About 18 percent of age-Robert King whose graceful eligible citizens don't even president perform as a very bad and subdued work as a TV bother to register to vote in reality TV show where ignospokesperson was exemplary Portland. It stands to reason rance, deception and the assault

bag. Local television news is fix it. mostly about "blood" and "puppies." There wasn't much of land, despite its reported lack either at the Occupy Portland of focus has accurately and encampment. Nevertheless, authentically expressed the one reporter in a hyper excited frustration and anger of the 99 voice tried her best to find con- percent, the "rest of us" - an troversy where none existed. apt phrase once used by Apple greed is killing us." She clearly would have rel- computer. ished a fight or a fire. She wondered on camera why so news crowd doesn't get it - the many of the Occupy Portland rest of us do. America's national folks didn't like the media.



government works nor do they in helping to keep things calm. that if you don't know how TV reporting was a mixed something works it's hard to tions.

political and economic system is

Most citizens, most of the broken. Our Congress is dysfunctional. Our President seems more a bystander than a player. The Republican candidates for on reason are the main attrac-

We mere citizens can't com-Nevertheless, Occupy Port- pete with those individuals and corporations that have most of the money and the power to keep getting more. The best we can do is stand up in public and shout, "We are in pain. Your

That shout from Occupy Even if most of the local TV Portland was heard around the world. Thank you. **Richard Ellmyer** North Portland

Wednesday - Thursday 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Morning into early evening

Friday and Saturday 10:00 a.m. to 7:00

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