

Mr. Mayor, Tear Down Those Tents

Hoovervilles, the unfortunately named shantytowns that dotted the country during the Depression, were places of desperation. But the tent city (Obamaville?) that has sprung up in Zuccotti Park is something else altogether. Most of its residents aren't homeless, merely shiftless, and instead of sleeping in shacks of scavenged tin and board situated between the city's fringe and the nearest soup kitchen, the Occupy Wall Street campers are famously well-fed, live in a desirable neighborhood, and sleep in high-end camp gear we can only assume was purchased from the dread corporations.

The occupiers have made themselves so thoroughly at home that their village boasts named thoroughfares. Here, at the corner of Jefferson Street and Trotsky Alley [sic], one can find not only a glorious nexus of historical illiteracy and irony-proof earnestness, but a living, breathing blight: barricades and booming drums, the hum of generators and the smell of burning fuel, respect for the conventions of hygiene that is uneven at best, and increasingly, the threat of theft, assault, and even rape.

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