

Please add to city file 09 0234-51

I am here today to ask your help. We, as Occupy LA, have adopted a Principle of Solidarity regarding "individual and collective responsibility". I need your help in holding some LAPD officers accountable.

It is with heavy heart I speak to you today. I've been coming to you since before the Occupation began at LA City Hall. And repeatedly, my concern has been about individuals from the Police Department abusing their power.

First, I spoke before you on Sept 30<sup>th</sup> to tell you that the LAPD had threatened to arrest us if we sat, laid, or slept in the park or on the sidewalks surrounding City Hall. Thanks to members of this council, those arrests were avoided.

I have spoken several times during general public comments to express my concerns for the police brutality and abuse of power that we have seen in a variety of occupation locations.

So far, OLA has had a reasonably decent interaction with LAPD. No major problems to report until now. Yesterday, I was informed of an incident in which one of the occupiers was approached by officers who has quickly pulled up to the curb on Spring Street near the southern Potta Potties.

This occupier had just used the porta potties and was washing his hands. The officers quickly handcuffed the occupier, put him in the back of their car, and rushed off with him in the back. They drove him near the jail, removed him from the vehicle, frisked, searched and questioned the occupier.

They told him that they saw him roll a marijuana joint from a far via bronchiolers or a camera. But in reality he was rolling tobacco. He had gathered some discarded butts and emptied the contents into a new rolling paper. I don't believe this warrant probable cause to detain, search, and question him.

Their stated reason for detainment was possession of marijuana. It is my understanding that possession of anything illegal was found on the occupier. Despite that, the Occupier was still cited for possession. After some time, the officer(s) in question put the occupier back in the car, returned to City Hall and picked up an officer that stayed behind at City Hall.

After picking up that officer, they then drove the occupier back to where they had taken him in the first place and told him if they catch him back at the occupation he will be booked. They released him with the seemingly illegal citation.

To me, this seems to be an abuse of power by at least a handful of LAPD officers. I fear that if these small violations are not addressed and handled in a timely manner that other office will begin to think that they can abuse their power towards the occupiers and that we will start to see some of the brutality that has plagued other occupations.

My biggest fear is that I too, someday, may be at the end of police abuse and brutality for simply exercising my First Amendment Rights to Freedom of Speech, Freedom to Peacefully Assemble, and Freedom to petition my government for Redress of Grievances.

**I need your help in holding a few LAPD officers accountable.**