Thankstaking

Thanksgiving was first celebrated, so the story goes, by the Pilgrims and Native Americans in the fall of 1621. The bountiful harvest of that fall gave the European settlers at Plymouth Rock hope for a brighter tomorrow. They had seen [46 of their original 102](http://wilstar.com/holidays/thankstr.htm) aboard the Mayflower die during their first year in the new world. Rather than hold a day of complaint, they opted for a three day feast of thanksgiving.

President Lincoln made Thanksgiving a national holiday in 1863. At that time, the country was torn apart by a very uncivil war. The economy was in shambles with rampant inflation and people were being drafted against their wills into military service. Yet, people expressed thanks for what they did have. President Roosevelt (FDR) changed the dates of Thanksgiving a bit during the Great Depression, but never abandoned the idea. Even when unemployment reached 25% people still gave thanks for their many blessings, both monetary and non-monetary alike. My, how times have changed.

What are the members of the Occupy movement going to do for Thanksgiving? Will they occupy the Macy’s Day Parade? Will they pause from their complaining that they don’t have enough cool stuff to give thanks for the cool stuff they do have? The occupy crowd *is* the 1% if you compare them to the Pilgrims who gave thanks. They would still be in the top 1% compared to the average American in Lincoln’s day who paused to give thanks. How can people with so much, do so much complaining? How can [someone staying in a 5 star hotel complain](http://www.foxnews.com/us/2011/11/20/occupy-wall-street-leader-reportedly-pitches-golden-tent-at-5-star-hotel/) that they need more of other people’s stuff? Is it really possible that the same people who receive taxpayer funded cell phones can complain that they aren’t getting their “fair” share? The US government is spending $1 billion annually on providing [free cell phones to the poor](http://news.yahoo.com/free-cellphones-welfare-recipients-tool-toy-224000616.html). Maybe the Pilgrims would not have bothered to give thanks for maize if they could have called their legislative representatives to ask for pizza.

I suggest that the Occupy movement come together this Thanksgiving and all sign their names to a really big thank you card. Here’s a short list of who they could thank:

1. Providence/God for being so lucky to be born as an American – millions of people every year long to gain the instant wealth that comes from being a US citizen

2. The 1% - for creating jobs for people who were unable or unwilling to create them for themselves

3. The US Federal Government – for not having run up $30 trillion in debt – the economy is in much better shape having *only* borrowed $15 trillion. (I suppose you could argue that there is no place for sarcasm at the Thanksgiving table, but if you invite me over for Thanksgiving, you’ll find that I can’t help it)

4. Our country’s forefathers for not going overboard in the adopting of French culture ([The French hate work](http://www.economist.com/node/21538733))