**EDITORIAL**

Stop the war on Gaza!

Nov. 14, 2012—Israel’s current onslaught against the Gaza Palestinian people, beginning with the assassina-
tion of Hamas military chief Ahmed Jabari, are more than a response to Hamas’ recent round of rocket at-
tacks. Syrian rebels have been taking control of cities
around the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights, bringing
revolution to its borders. As with the recent bombing of
the Yarmouk Palestinian refugee camp in Damascus by
Assad’s genocidal regime, a reaction to the ruling PA
kia, Syria) are a direct expression of the counter-revo-

utionary essence of these state powers.

The two worlds of the rulers and the ruled shone
through the suffocating blanket of propaganda sur-
rounding the 2008 war. Barack Obama won a second term. A pronounced gender gap and long lines at
the polls in African-American and Latino areas reflected the determination to defeat the reactionary Republi-
cans and retain the first Black President. The

biggest defeats were handed to the Tea Party and the
Religious Right, notably with votes in four states in
favor of marriage equality.

At the same time a number of protests immediately
made it clear that the struggle continues. During early voting, thousands in a variety of cities descrive the shelling of the Yarmouk Palestinian refugee camp in Damascus by Assad’s.genocidal regime, a re-
gimen that has desperately seeks to preserve its

It has long been clear that in a war between the
reactionary governments of Israel and Iran, the Pales-

inians’ very existence will be threatened. The current
attacks in Gaza and Damascus (and previously Lata-
kia, Syria) are a direct expression of the counter-revo-
lutionary essence of these state powers.

The U.S., France, Turkey and the Gulf States backed the creation of a new umbrella group to replace
the Muslim Brotherhood-dominated Syrian National
Conference (SNC). The SNC has become a marginal player
continued on p. 8

**WORKSHOP TALKS**

Just who are the makers and takers

by Hun Lin

The unparalleled billions of dollars spent in the
2012 elections, in the midst of the Great Recession,
dramatically demonstrated that Wall Street has
distanced itself from the deaths of out of Syria. It de-

fected in no small measure by workers in Ohio and
elsewhere. Workers saw through the glaring contradic-
tions in the claims of the Romney campaign that as a
seasoned capitalist he would rebuild the economy and
help restore jobs.

But Romney hadn’t seen jobs at GM and Chrysler as
worthy saving, calling President Obama’s Auto Res-
cue Package “excessive government intrusion.” The big-

er savings that were already obvious enough. In the
end, close to 750,000 more Latinos voted for Obama
than in 2008, and Black turnout, while down national-
ly, rose substantially in the battleground states of
Ohio, Michigan, Wisconsin and North Carolina.

**WORKSHOP TALKS**

Stop the war on Gaza!

by Franklin Dmitryev

Obama’s re-election doesn’t 
end clash of two worlds

While people of every race and class suffered from
Hurricane Sandy’s blows, in areas like New York City’s
Red Hook, Far Rockaway and Staten Island many of
the working class and people of color faced serious ne-
glect from the government in the storms’ aftermath.

Occupy Wall Street activists, 350.org and others de-
cided that they could not wait for the state to act. They
created Occupy Sandy Recovery to help people on the
ground, declaring, “We are creating autonomous zones
for community and solidarity, not camps for managing
the lives of powerless victims.” In some areas this was
the only help available for a week or more.

It was not only in the storm-ravaged areas that
voters faced chaos at the polls. Especially in predominantly African-
American and Latino areas of swing states,
volunteers faced long lines, incorrect or misleading
instructions, last-
minute changes, and
secretly-funded at-
ttempts to intimidate them. In Florida, some had to wait seven hours
to vote, and Tea Party
activists blocked vol-
unteers from hand-

ing out water to voters
standing in the sun.

Republican-controlled state governments had passed a blizzard of measures trying to prevent people of color and students from voting, such as photo ID requirements, restrictions on registrations, and cutbacks in voting hours. Many laws were blocked by courts, but some election officials and volunteers still tried to enforce them. Both Obama and Latinos in Arizona were disproportionately forced to cast provisional ballots that may never be counted.

But the long lines were a sign that these attempts
took a backseat to the intensive efforts of communities with
with a history of resisting discrimination. The racism per-
vading the campaign was already obvious enough.

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Ohio, Michigan, Wisconsin and North Carolina.

**WORKSHOP TALKS**

WOMEN FIGHT BACK

Aye Raad booster-Paul Ryan and the Republi-
can platform share the basic views on rape, abortion,
birth control and women’s role held by Senate candi-
dates Todd Akin in Missouri and Rick Santorum in
continued on p. 10

**RICHARDS & DUNAEVSKAYA**

Marxist-Humanist writings on the Middle East

by Raya Dunayevskaya

Special offer! Just off the press:

Marxist-Humanist writings on the Middle East
by Raya Dunayevskaya

From the Foreword:
The Arab Spring can become a real turning point in human history. Against
the backdrop of a state-capitalist world in a deep and intractable crisis, the
vision of self-determination, courage,
dignity and creativity can raise itself
in an absolute opposition to the degraded reality of capitalist, apartheid, and
accompanying bigotry that is all capitalist-

ism offering humanity.

In publishing this collection of Raya Dunayevskaya’s writings on the Middle East
and revolution in permanence, we
hope to be part of the worldwide dia-

logue that will move the revolution, and
humanity, beyond the inhuman system
of capitalism with its eternal threats of
war and destruction, to new community and
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condemning the U.S. to others.

Tax’s polemic is well taken. This is the same Left that is incapable of condemning both U.S. imperialism and Bashar al-Assad’s slaughter of thousands of civilians in Syria. To Radek Ziolkowski’s essay on the Left in Table 4 in this issue: “It is at this point that the movement’s apparent love for one another and its commitment to change should be questioned.” The falling into a trap is inevitable when one does not view positively what they are fighting for, instead of only that they are fighting against.

The fact that the U.S. is such a huge and deadly imperialist power blinds much of the Left to the fact that there are tremendous struggles to be had anywhere and should, at one and the same time, condemn U.S. imperialism and support indigenous struggles in—or equivalents to—minority and LGBT people. Because that is what it comes down to, not only that you condemn both the U.S. and the Taliban, but why the Left are grounded in a philo-sophy of liberation that you know enough to support those struggling for freedom and a new human society, even when their enemy isn’t exclusively the U.S.

THE TRAP OF ONLY BEING AGAINST

There were plenty of angry responses to Tax’s post about the Rwanda rape. The rape could not be anything besides—including those from Code Pink and the other so-called peace activists. Not a single voice condemned the Taliban as they did the U.S. O.K., well, yes, now that Tax brings it up, and now that they did gun down a school full of children, they would grudgingly condemn the Taliban too. Many used the argument that, since they were Americans, only the U.S. deserved their own revolution. With that logic, Pakistanis could only condemn the Taliban and leave condemning the U.S. to others.

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Chicago teachers strike for real reform

New York City—Educators around the country cheered the gains achieved by the Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) strike this fall, but also echoed the sentiment of teachers of Color (COC) lead negotiator Fred Proctor, "Our win is not over—our fight is just beginning." How do we retain, replicate, and build on the achievement of CTU's strike? The strike represented a mass assertion by unionized teachers that they can create the "Schools Our Children Deserve," a document which calls for a present Chicago system "educational apartheid," insisting that the agenda of 21st century capitalism, in which students are all commodities in an ever more alienated system, resist the pressure to change within large teachers' unions like the NEA (Council of Rank and File Educators) are seeking to organize for changes that will benefit students and their families and a new vision and visions of education guided COE's organizing for two years prior to the strike in Chicago. In "The Strike and Rhetoric Behind the Scenes," an essay in Labor Notes, said that the union "developed a deep new layer in its analysis, won broad public sup-port...we made it clear that our union was...part of a broad coalition." Calling the Chicago Public School system "educational apartheid...helped show that the union was on the side of Black and Latino children."

Mark Torres, a New York public school teacher and leader of Parents Movement Poder Popular, described, "A long history of progressive and radical educators organizing under the motto 'Our working conditions are students' learning conditions' (from a Sept. 24 posting on publicschoolnews.com, an online newsletter of the Coalition for Public Education in New York). Formal evaluation of teachers' performance is here to stay. But meaningful evaluation will only emerge from meaningful dialogues. Who better than teachers, with input from administrators and parents, to answer the questions like, 'What do good teachers need to be-

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come better? How can the teaching profession establish and maintain standards?"

Emerging from this strike is a recognition that a complete revolution, overthrow of capitalism and creating a new society—constituting a human society, would be needed to truly allow human education to flourish. One contributor to the discussion on politics and education suggested: "The lockout was the most significant manifestation of the new reality: in 21st century capitalism...reforming public education must be part of—not a substitute for—a broader movement for economic justice."

Every one of us is either a parent, or part or a school community. All our voices and efforts are needed to advance the struggle. —Susan Van Gelder

Unions recognize at Unionized at New York City—After 55 days of a nonstop picket line in front of a shuttered Hot and Crusty Bakery on Man-hattan’s posh Upper East Side, the new company manag-ment agreed to work with the SEIU for recognition of their own independent union and a new contract. Hot and Crusty workers were locked out of their restaurant/bakery by the former management under the premise of "renovations" and checking the employees’ legal right to unionize. The workers fought on. Articles appeared in the Workers World and the Daily Worker, and the activists involved in the strike received numerous citations from the press concerning this battle. An Oct. 18 rally brought together hundreds of workers who had participated in the strike; and a discussion on pubedco.com on Sept. 24 suggested: "Ultimately, the question is not what was discovered, a sure thing is that any technology that is being looked at for potential wage-and-hour violations. The vote comes as state Attorney General Eric Schneiderman is investigating the Webster Avenue shop—a one-of-ten owned by city car wash kingpin John Lapo that are being looked at for potential wage-and-hour violations.

Workers disappear

Los Angeles—The parking attendant where I bank suddenly disappeared. She had worked for many years in a little makeshift office with a chair and a window, and no one seemed to care about what the future holds for them, because looming layoffs will be conducted with SEIU’s Labor-Management Partnership president in need of new workers.

Workers are saying the facility closings are retaliation for speaking out. We are being pushed over a cliff because you just can’t hire someone to keep a job: this is the real concrete crisis we are facing.

The truth is we workers create capital’s wealth, not the other workers, and that’s why our labor-power is so important unless and until we defeat the forces of abstract labor and its idea of value production with our concrete labor. The only way to do that is to begin by reclaiming not only our labor-power but the very meaning of our labor.
The Cuban Missile Crisis and its test of movements' negative character

II. The Blockade and the Movements Opposed to It

The days after the opening of the crisis were ones of constant anxiety. Fidel himself argued against Republican opponents who urged a blockade. J.F. Kennedy made the shocking, unilateral, and unilateralistic peace offer. Outside of Khrushchev’s break-up of the summit as a result of the U-2 plane spy incident,” when the two nuclear giants were pitched against each other in the international arena, the people of the world were never closer to the brink of nuclear war. The confrontation was not limited to verbal threats and bustled summits. It is now clear beyond peradventure of doubt that both Kennedy and Khrushchev had already decided to plunge the world into thermonuclear war. If a summit meeting should re-sult and stave off the day, it clearly will be only a delaying action. It is, as the US media has been saying, a possible locale of the outburst, as Berlin has been and remains to this day another focal point, but what is involved is the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics competitor for domination of the world.

It is at this point that the Marxist-Leninist movements opposing war show their own negative character. The American policy is quite evitable when one does not view positively what they are fighting for, instead of understanding and opposing that policy. Thus the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (and Cuba!) who has been the most consistent opponents of the nuclear war, has been a consistent opponent against its spread to yet another country, in this case Cuba. Obviously, the same role of the Communists, are not the only ones who think of “good” bombs (Russian). We do not think this way here (American).

The professional nuclear disarmament people have only now discovered that, in Cuban hands (or at least on Cuban soil for all we know), the bomb inspires them to the following slogan, “Viva Fidel, Kennedy to Hell.”

In Cuba, on the other hand, without a bomb, he has moved so far away from the revolution he led that it is hard to say what he is making of Cuba other than a satellite of Russia. Russia is not making Cuba as a satellite of missile bases, but as an outpost of single-party state-capitalism. In the case of Communist-Leninist delivered on Dec. 2, 1961—nearly a year ago, that is—Fidel expounded his conception of why an “integrated revolutionary organization” is to be said, a party in which the Communists and what was left of the July 26th Movement” merged. From urging his comrades “to do as he did” in his “educations” through his love of The Plan (“I always had a plan”) as against the “anarchists represented by opposition to him (I am not going to ask what Khrushchev represented), because I believe he represented trash; we are the Marxist-Leninists”) to his glorification of Khrushchev (“one has only to read Khrushchev’s report to the 20th Party Congress...The building of socialism follows a well-beaten path by now”), this petty-bourgeois politician—formerly a Marxist—has become much more a man of the world, a statesman, than a theoretician. He wants to turn Cuba from his “creators” to the “people’s” and implement the philosophy he has been preaching for years...

III. The Testing Point

At the same time, we cannot minimize the totality of the crisis by pointing to the possible locale of the outburst, for the man who has the means to start a nuclear war is the one who has the power to minimize the war, and to a great extent on when it is already in process but has not yet reached its moment. It is Stalin who is responsible for the non-bloc of the Russian Revolution. In a non-bloc period, the crisis confronts Marxist-Humanism and its enemies. And the enemy, by the blockade, for the man who has the means to start a nuclear war (no one all over the world—can only win the test of the moment his power to press down upon the opposition to his war-provoking policy.

Here I wish to develop this point on two levels: (1) the objective situation and nearness of war; and (2) the subjective, the role of the organization and as a body of ideas, both on the question of continuous activity and writings, beginning with our comments to the Detroit local on Oct. 19, in which she said: “OK, let’s take up Fidel. Even without a bomb, he...”

Before the Blockade

A good deal of illusion on both these factors can be seen if we look at the out of the present moment of crisis and see that which was inherent in the day before. It happens that, on the basis of the Resident Editor’s report to the Detroit local on Sep. 8, Inez gave a report to the Detroit local on Oct. 19, in which she said: “What is new in Cuba today is that Russia is there, not in spirit but in guns, tanks, missiles with nuclear warheads facing the U.S.” This was before Kennedy’s “discovery,” timed to election politics. Then Inez con-tinued: “It is not that Khrushchev has been new for the American movement ever since the fiasco of the U.S.-sponsored invasion of Cuba, that our basic rights and freedoms have been jeop​arded, and those will become more circumscribed. In opposing any invasion or war against the Cuban people, we cannot, however, let that become the whole story. The challenge of the peace ‘party’ just because he defends Castro, who has taken away the rights and freedoms of the Cuban people as Khrushchev is doing, not by the government but in Russian, hands, the bomb inspires them to the following slogan, ‘Viva Fidel, Kennedy to Hell.’

The fall into a trap is in no way that the meeting of the movement from theory with the point of production. As the Marxist-Humanist ideas remain the beacon for future generations as they are for ours. Therefor we must build our movement and proceed with our opposition to both poles of world capi­tal, putting in their rightly subordinate place those who ‘follow the leader,’ be it Khrushchev or Kennedy. A. McNamara, the (l) the objective situation and nearness of war; and (2) the subjective, the role of the organization and as a body of ideas, both on the question of continuous activity and writings, beginning with our comments to the Detroit local on Oct. 19, in which she said: “OK, let’s take up Fidel. Even without a bomb, he has moved so far away from the revolution he led that it is hard to say what he is making of Cuba other than a satellite of Russia. Russia is not making Cuba as a satellite of missile bases, but as an outpost of single-party state-capitalism. In the case of Communist Leninist delivered on Dec. 2, 1961—nearly a year ago, that is—Fidel expounded his conception of why an “integrated revolutionary organization” is to be said, a party in which the Communists and what was left of the July 26th Movement” merged. From urging his comrades “to do as he did” in his “educations” through his love of The Plan (“I always had a plan”) as against the “anarchists represented by opposition to him (I am not going to ask what Khrushchev represented), because I believe he represented trash; we are the Marxist-Leninists”) to his glorification of Khrushchev (“one has only to read Khrushchev’s report to the 20th Party Congress...The building of socialism follows a well-beaten path by now”), this petty-bourgeois politician—formerly a Marxist—has become much more a man of the world, a statesman, than a theoretician. He wants to turn Cuba from his “creators” to the “people’s” and implement the philosophy he has been preaching for years...

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The Cuban Missile Crisis and its test of movements' negative character

The Cuban Missile Crisis and its test of movements' negative character
by Ron Kelch

All revolutions, in the sciences no less than in general history, originate only in this, that the spirit of man, for whatever reason, seeks to change reality in contradistinction to himself, or to change the possessing of himself, has now altered his categories, unifying himself in a truer, deeper, more intrinsic relation with himself.

Today's global search for a new world against the capitalist, state-capitalist totalitarians calling themselves the party of the concept. That “party of the concept” has to explicitly bring the creative power of the negative, the self-determination of the concept.

The 200th anniversary of Hegel’s absolute method—method of the concept through the negation of the old, hold for the human world's freedom asserting that atoms freely “swerve” fall through the void. Epicurus added the dimension of the element of freedom in the atomism of Democritus which has to be made philosophical” (Norton, 1, 72). (Norton, 1, 86).

Marx's Critique of Hegel

In 1831 Hegel made a startling proclamation and in his Science of Logic, of an absolute method in which the concrete particular, the given, the concrete, etc., determines itself. The philosophy and the conceptual framework through which facts present themselves as given comes out of the negation of its predecessor, just as what is currently taken as the given world, with its own self as an object, is no mere turn in- ward. Rather, the freedom of the concept emerges out of this movement of understanding life and spirit as a new unity of theory and practice.

When the dialectic is no longer a spectator sport as it was in the phenomenological Phenomenology of Spirit, where the philosopher traced how consciousness, in its movement through each stage over 2,500 years, was alienated, but as a process of self-creation in which Logic starts directly with the movement of the concept, thought itself, as the organization of the historical movement, in other words, as a process of self-creation, which has its own self as an object, is no mere turn in- ward. Rather, the freedom of the concept emerges out of this movement of understanding life and spirit as a new unity of theory and practice.

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**LABOR AND LIFE**

Javier's article in the Sept.-Oct. N&L, “West Coast port shutdowns and forms of labor struggle,” makes it clear that the port workers had to deal with the large corporation that operates the port, which has been a recurring issue for workers. While the choose to work full-time, the port workers fought for better conditions. The workers were able to unite and bring attention to their struggle, which eventually led to a settlement.

**APPEALS FOR SUPPORT FROM RUSSIA, COLOMBIA**

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Banguero was serving as Cultural Adviser of the town of Guachene. He was known as one of the organizers of a long history of struggle in the region, and was a significant figure in the workers’ movement. His death is a loss for Latin America, which is losing one of their most important leaders. The authorities, much more cruel and much less predictable than that of re- cent past.

Please, send your reports on soli- darity action and any other informa- tion to this e-mail: solidar ietyaction2012@gmail.com.

**PHILOSOPHY AND REVOLUTION**

Freedom for one is the very essence of freedom for all. The principle is the same: the freedom of human beings to be human beings. We could see it in Arab Spring, in Syria, a freedom for the right to self-development is universal. We need to be more explicit about a philosophy of revolution giving action a direction today.

**VIEWS**

When leaders are good activists, they fall into the world of low-wage, uneducated workers—and we will move toward crisis. At some point if the system is not reversed, we will be left behind—the big factories, the big corporations... The need to achieve a 90% reduction in carbon dioxide by the year 2050 have to a chance be made! Even when capitalism works the idea is remained today, we need a hefty revolutionary push from masses of people. Yet it isn’t just who we need to rise up. All of humanity must take part in delivering the final blow. It was about the nomination of Barry Goldwater by the Republican Party in 1964. The knockout punch came from an article in September 1964 by philosopher of the right to self-development is universal. We need to be more explicit about a philosophy of revolution giving action a direction today.

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EDUCATION AND LIBERATION

The question of reform—means very different things to the Obama administration and to teachers, students and parents. Reform for Obama has come to mean the top-down imposition of an education to meet the new needs of capitalism—which does not include poor and minority children becoming workers, thinkers and real citizens in society's future. The move also makes up an education system that even conservative supporters recognize is not based on valid measurement but only designed to wrest control from unions and to professionalize teaching, transforming it into a regular job. They are simply trying to make it look like teachers and their unions oppose reform. That kind of reform, we do oppose.

Retired teacher activist
New Jersey

I enjoy your paper but I would like to see more articles/analysis on Chicano. Learning of labor and Black oppression is always educational, being that slavery built America and U.S. labor, e.g., the Wobbles, have had important strikes and are essential history. But there are others who have suffered oppression like Chicanos who got their states stolen and First Nations people who got even more land stolen. Many movement papers hardly touch on these peoples.

Jose
California

Years ago music education in the Philadelphia public school system was excellent—many good musicians came out of that system. Later, it was watered down and organized by the American Federation of Teachers. I went to a college in the past, students and teachers who were very good. As they left, they were a lot of music teachers were fired so that the kids could be prepared for the teacher who is not a liberal education became secondary to survival.

Jazz musician
New York

I'm a teacher and have reported on the lack of academic studies in Tucson that made me feel I can't begin to teach what I want. I have to teach the theory that everything is fine when it is awful. The event of Malala Yousafzai being shot in the head for wanting an education in Pakistan is just about "over there." It's reflected in the rumpias that fill our military. And we are constantly menaced by violence from the state. It feels a real sense of urgency because it's obvious that capitalism is the problem, while the Left gets all tied up in knots over a discussion of "tactics."

Success
Teacher Bay Area

It is not just the "Old Guard" that refuses to acknowledge that teachers are part of the working class, which has been the target for hundreds of years, but especially since the 1970s. It was brought out during the teachers' strike here in Chicago as a part of the larger class struggle, and without that conviction you get stuck with "working within the system."

Longtime teacher
Chicago

There has been a change of consciousness because of the strike. The Chicago Teachers Union put back on the map what you mean by struggle and how you can win a movement. The question that remains to be worked out is how to bring the rest of the working class together with us.

Retired teacher and activist
Chicago

The teachers' strike was a labor dispute in many ways. But teachers are unique because their "product" is children, so they have to take special care to protect them. Both parents and children were missing from the bargaining table. Who is going to speak up for them?

Parent of involved children
South Side Chicago

AMERICAN CIVILIZATION ON TRIAL

Next year will mark the 50th anniversary of the publication of American Civilisation on Trial (ACOT), but it isn't a number that compels us to study it today. Many of the "facts" of Black History that ACOT critiques at length by ACOT appear in K-12 social studies textbooks, but ACOT lives on because in the context of a philosophy it reveals the revolutionary dialectic of American history. That is, unlike bourgeois history books, ACOT describes the interrelation of mass movements and ideas emerging from them.

One of the consequences of Obama having been elected as the first Black president is that it gave added impetus to the illusion of a post-racist America. Obama shied away from making race an issue. In the debates, race was spoken of only in the code words for this right uses. It gives people an underestimation of "Black masses as vanguard" and the potential of a new revolutionary explosion ahead.

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New York

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Prisoner
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Prisoner
Baton Rouge, La.
Afro-Colombians throw off shackles

Editor’s note: Witness for Peace sponsored a speaking tour for Afro-Colombian activist Francisca María Mina. In Chicago she spoke at a number of universities and community events, accompanied by CAMI (Committee against Militarization of Our Youth). Below are excerpts from her talks.

I want to speak of what my community, and Colombia, are living through. Of the 4 million Afro-Colombians, 3 million have been displaced from their homes. Many of these people have been massacred, and we are still threatened. Leonidas Tovar was murdered, and this is often killed.

Multinational corporations like AngloGold Ashanti mining want to mine the mineral rights in our areas. Afro-Colombians want to impose monopoles like sugar in our farmlands. Coca-Cola, Halliburton, Monsanto, Glencore, GreyStar and others are here. We have won the right to be consulted on development issues in court, but Colombia is very corrupt.

Everything is done to protect and continue this exploitative system. The Constitutional Court on Dec. 13, 2010, rejected the eviction of the community of El Toma, to stop because they had not consulted with us. But just last week the Ministry of Mines and the Nation had already given the title to that land. The government has done this without the GPS coordinates. That is a lie, since they had the coordinates when they gave them the title. Multinational corporations have the money to buy those in power. We don’t have money, but we have the will to fight to the end. As the people of this struggle said, what we are fighting for is our land, our culture, and it didn’t discriminate. Our ancestors fought for it to be here, and we will continue to fight for future generations. I will do what is necessary to defend our land and community, and I’m not willing to subject myself to physical or mental shackles once again.

The prison system is struggling. It is a conglomeration of movements, community councils, and individual initiatives that defend to fight for our rights as Black people. We organize in palenques, named for the runaway slave enclaves, in local areas, which form the larger network that seeks to mobilize with other groups nationally on these issues.

The U.S. has given $8 billion dollars to the Colombian government to combat the supposed growing influence of drug cartels since 2000. The U.S. has funded the police and military as well as paramilitary death squads. The war on drugs and terrorism in this region has cost the lives of at least 500,000 people and displaced 5 million. Colombia is the third largest producer of coca and cocaine and has been labeled as the heartland of the world’s drug trade.

The case of the West Memphis Three, Damien Echols (Blue Rider Press, 2012).

In 1993 in West Memphis, Ark., three little boys were slightly different in that there was an actual crime. The case of Damien Echols, Jason Baldwin, and Jesse Misskelley Jr., was the closest the modern American government had to the kind of purge of the guilty that happened during the Spanish Inquisition and the Counter-Reformation.
Kurdish prisoners on hunger strike

Below are excerpts of a Nov. 5, 2012, statement by Kurdish prisoners on hunger strike in Turkey. The original text was released on Sept. 12. Now thousands more prisoners are joining the hunger strike, making it one of the largest hunger strike protests in a generation.

To the attention of the public; to the attention of all democratic people and human rights circles: We, prisoners of freedom, are by this action announcing our stand against human rights violations, State violence and political repression, and opposing those who carry it out. Those who prosper will end up in a dreadful state of being.

By being a human being, the whole world: Who can ignore our right to defend ourselves in our native language? Who can deny our right to education in our mother tongue? Who can find it normal that a language? Who can deny our right to defend ourselves in our native language? Who can find it normal that a

Honduras three years after the coup

La Voz de los de Abajo (Voices from Below) sponsored a delegation to Honduras in September, three years after the coup which deposed the elected President Manuel Zelaya.

Under his successor President Lobo, violence escalates, as Campesinos (peasants) were murdered in three years. Honduras’ homicide rate is the highest in the world. Disenfranchised rights workers, LGBT people, journalists and campesinos are murdered regularly.

RUBY BY NAGARCHY

On Sept. 9, 500 private guards, police and soldiers trashed peasant shacks in Aguan. After the campesinos surrendered, thugs pelleted them with tear gas canisters. Two protesters were killed. The Chicago group and an official international delegation were fired on when they tried to investigate.

Honduras’ vile dictatorship has been removed. BDS, a civil rights lawyer, got a call at a wedding. Upon stepping outside, he was riddled with bullets, presumably by the leader of oligarch Miguel Facussé Ramírez. “This is a war against the campesinos and anyone who offers them support—human rights workers, lawyers or international delegations. But the campesinos keep on trying,” said Victoria Vervantes of the delegation.

PLANTATION ECONOMICS

Facussé and his corporation Dinant terrorise campesinos, Afro-Honduran Garifuna and Indigenous in the Aguan Valley. Facussé’s plantations of African palm are run much like the pre-Hispanic West South. Facussé gets Clean Development Mechanism credits for ‘greening’ Honduras, although almost all the crop is sent to Europe. Facussé’s cane sugar farm produces 400,000 tons of clean air, and productive farmland were given to oligarchs. 1.6 million hectares of land is devoted to mono-cropped sugarcane, a true source of “greening” Honduras, although almost all the crop is sent to Europe.

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justice and Development Party) government. Our action is to end whel with our goals. Until then new people will join us every day.

To our people and to the public:...
while the administration did fight those laws, it has no objection to the most important voter suppression in- strument: the racially biased criminal justice system, coupled with mandatory minimum sentences. It is true that the core of today’s Republican Party is dedicated to preserving white rule over people of color, even if they are criminals in the U.S. The greater truth is that both major parties are part of maintaining rule by a minority: the capitalist class. There is a serious racial bias in tooling the political system precisely because of their economic supremacy.

The right’s campaign contributions are only one of the ways that economic power is deployed. In 2012, it added up to an estimated $6 billion for Presidential and Congression- al campaigns. The $1.7 billion for Super PACs, local races and ballot initiatives. That sea of mon- ey, enough to feed 1.5 million poor families for a year, was injected toward both parties and toward a bid to deliver total control of the federal government to them. It did, however, mean both Republicans and Democrats who fill their food troughs. It illustrates yet again how self-defeating it is for labor unions and mainstream environmentalists, women, gay, Latin and civil rights groups to chain themselves to the Demo- crats—as if that will yield more than a few crumbs. It is true that there is more than a whiff of fascism in today’s Republican Party, and the Right’s electoral de- fault gives movements from below more room to develop, but that will not stop the Democrats from compromis- ing with the Republicans, or from trying to co-opt any independent movement.

SECOND TERM: BONDA vs. WORKERS

However much both of the capitalist parties had tried to co-opt the Occupy rhetoric of the 99% and the 1%, President Obama’s victory speech laid out the post- end-term agenda replete with the kinds of anti-work- ing-class goals that the Occupy Movement had risen against in the first place. It was little more than the challenge of “Reducing our deficit. Reforming our tax code. Fix- ing our immigration system. Freeing ourselves from foreign oil.”

Though he mentioned “the destructive power of a warming planet,” anything he has done about global warming is an article of faith compared to the maj- ority of----and the will be wiped out by his plans to “free ourselves from foreign oil”——which means first and second-class status for people that cause the oil, and approval of the Keystone XL Pipeline to carry bitumen from Canada’s tar sands.

The “saving our immigration system” was a nod to the Latino vote, but what Obama and the Democrats have been pushing is the Dream Act as a half-measure that would leave in place the U.S. economy’s structure. The existence of a superexploited undocumented workforce is essential to its functioning, both for the direct profit- making of agriculture, agribusiness, restaurant and so on, and as a weapon to force workers to accept worse wages and conditions. In addition, Obama has promised over and over to accelerate deportations for his first term, surpassing any other President.

In any case, “reforming our tax code” is the banner under which Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid and other social programs will be attacked.

Obama’s speech vaguely mentioned fighting for new jobs, but said nothing about the reality of capital- ism’s stagnating domestic and export market. For millions of unemployed, and the Black unemployment is twice that of whites. He pledged to put millions of dollars for wages that people have been falling for a decade, and that many of the added jobs he celebrates are low-paying part-time jobs that many workers have not seen since the epidemic of foreclosures and the spike in homelessness. Instead of these pressing matters, Obama identi- fied “economic security” as his order of business. But Social Security is not running out of money, as is of- ten claimed, but he supports the Bowles-Simpson Commis- sion’s “reform,” which basically liquidates Social Security. To avert the “fiscal cliff,” an artificial product of the legalization’s ongoing depression. He did not mention the five- fold increase in the cost of prescription drugs. He did not mention the five- fold increase in the cost of prescription drugs.

THE PATRIOT ACT

After four years of Obama’s pragmatism and going along with the Tea Party, the Obama administration has become a sup- portively pro-business administration. It is true that the cost of this is that, in his brief victory speech, Obama twice referred to women or allowing them to withhold vital informa- tion from patients—caused women to organize in every state. No matter how Republicans denied that there was a “war against women,” women saw it and knew it as such.

Republicans voted against the Lilly Ledbetter equal pay act but hoped to capitalize on the poor econ- omy’s negative effects on women. Most women rejected these attempts but know that the challenge is to keep up the pressure rather than letting all that organiza- tion. They know that the pressure by the gun lobby is now a sup- portively pro-business administration.

The attack by reactionary state governments on women’s right to an abortion—including mandating invasive vaginal ultrasounds and forcing doctors to lie to women or allowing them to withhold vital informa- tion from patients—caused women to organize in every state. No matter how Republicans denied that there was a “war against women,” women saw it and knew it as such.

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Disability rights: The fight to stay alive

Chicago—The U.S. disability rights movement has a rich and diverse history. It is the only class of people that you can suddenly become a member of without being born at a specific time or place. It does not discriminate by color, sex, income level or socio-economic preference. But for those who have had no experiences with disabilities, it is often a foreign world with no knowledge of the movement’s history and sometimes lots of negative stereotypes.

One of the heroes of the movement was Ed Roberts, who was an advocate who had a child and was mostly paralyzed.

Fortunately, his mother was a good advocate. Ed got into the University of California at Berkeley in 1962 but the university had no place to put him as he slept with an iron lung.

They put him in the infirmary. The other students formed a small organization to fight for his rights and to keep people out of institutions. They had been huge impacts on the university, then on the city of Berkeley. As they graduated, they formed the first center for independent living (CIL). The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 stated that any facility receiving federal money had to be accessible. The University of California at Berkeley was the first campus in the country to do so.

In the 1980s, Leader Wade Blank had been involved in the civil rights and anti-war movements. ADAPT has chapters all over the country. Chicago ADAPT demanded lifts on buses and shouted down Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) officials at its meetings. They won in the courts a year before The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was passed in 1990, with a mandate that the CTA must make its buses accessible over time.

ADA did not signal the end of our struggle but a new beginning. ADAPT fights to keep people out of nursing homes and in the community.

We fight for community and home supports so that the disabled can live independently. We fight to have abusive institutions closed and have won the closing of several of them.

The disability rights movement has been under attack since it passed. Its protections have eroded. In one case, Chevron is claiming that a man would be doing harm to himself by not eating in order to starve. The ADA provides that an employer cannot discriminate against someone with a disability, which is exactly what Chevron is trying to do.

A disability campaigner who set up an e-petition to stop government benefit cuts has vowed to continue her fight, after gaining more than 62,000 signatures. e-Petitions need 100,000 signatures for a debate in parliament. Though the petition has failed in this regard, it is not the end for the campaign. Pat Onions, who is blind, said the government is treating disabled people as “worthless commodities” but that “doing nothing is not an option.” Some have accused her of a chord with people who feel the cuts are falling disproportionately on the disabled.

Zambia—The government is considering a bill honoring the principles expressed in the UN Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The bill promotes, among other things, access to justice, participation in political and public life, the right to education, employment, and freedom of movement. The bill also prohibits torture, exploitation, violence and abuse of people with disabilities.

Los Angeles—The County Sheriff is looking for a man accused of raping a mentally disabled woman on a city bus. The man followed her to the back of the bus and raped her. A single witness tried to alert the bus driver that the rape was happening but nothing was done.

Hollywood—A 44-year-old woman in a wheelchair died one day after she was assaulted by police on the street in the Hollywood/Highland Metro Red Line station on Oct. 16. Brenda Carter and her attendant used the escalator because the elevators were out.

Quebec gains—The election of Pauline Marois as Premier of Quebec has given new life to the rights of people with disabilities; and people with AIDS, resulting in important new cultural and educational links.

More important is that Marois’ election has re- moved Bill 14 from the Quebec government itself, from the investigation by the Charle- bourn Commission of the massive corruption in Que- bec’s society, and from the better, for which it has been cut, affecting those who need the services the most. Many people have been cut and the lifeline has been cut even more, affecting those who do. If Chevron wins, it will weaken the ADA by allowing the employer cannot discriminate against someone with a disability, which is exactly what Chevron is trying to do.

Disability rights activists

by Suzanne Rose

London, England—A disability campaigner who set up an e-petition to stop government benefit cuts has vowed to continue her fight, after gaining more than 62,000 signatures. e-Petitions need 100,000 signatures for a debate in parliament. Though the petition has failed in this regard, it is not the end for the campaign. Pat Onions, who is blind, said the government is treating disabled people as “worthless commodities” but that “doing nothing is not an option.” Some have accused her of competing on an equal basis. The disability rights movement shows how ridiculous this idea is and, in doing so, points to what a new society could be.

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Demands for freedom and dignity arose the Arab Spring. In Tunisia, in Tahrir Square in Egypt, in Damascus and others. There has been a surge of support for the idea of self-determination of people who have been ruled by authoritarian regimes for so long. But the success of these revolutions depends on the ability of the new leaders to create a stable and inclusive society.

In Yemen, the situation remains tense. The Yemeni Revolution of 2011 has led to the ousting of President Saleh, but the country is still facing challenges. The economy is weak, and the government is struggling to provide basic services. The Houthis, a Shia armed group, have taken control of parts of the country and threaten to halt the process of political transition.

In Venezuela, the government of President Hugo Chávez has been under pressure from opposition groups. The country is facing economic difficulties, and there are concerns about the government's handling of the economy and the economy's dependence on oil exports.

The recent events in Yemen and Venezuela highlight the challenges of transitional periods and the importance of political stability. The world watches to see how these countries will navigate their way forward.