

Good News: victories, push backs, good deeds, and other hopeful signs

If we remember those times and places—and there are so many—where people have behaved magnificently, this gives us the energy to act, and at least the possibility of sending this spinning top of a world in a different direction.

—Howard Zinn

Rebuilding among the Ashes

Stating that Palestinian children deserve the right to a quality education, 17-year-old Malala Yousafzai, recipient of the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize, donated all the proceeds of the \$50,000 World Children's Prize to the rebuilding of dozens of United Nations schools that were bombed in Gaza by Israel last summer.

Homeland Dignity Defended

On November 2, a massive march led by Native Americans defended against the racist name, with all its connotations of genocide, of Washington's football team when the team came to Minneapolis to play against the Minnesota Vikings. Indigenous people were joined by nonnative people in solidarity.

Refusing to Do Harm

A group of 43 Israeli reserve officers from an elite, secretive intelligence unit sent a letter on September 13th to their commanders as well as Israel's prime minister and army chief stating they would no longer serve in the "state's actions against Palestinians" because of "our moral duty to act."

Send in the Cubans

Instead of sending in military with weapons, the impoverished (impoverished through decades of punishing U.S.-driven sanctions against its socialist government) island nation of Cuba, sent medical professionals to assist West Africa with the Ebola epidemic.

(We'll Be) Watching You

Thirty-six police officers in Minneapolis in October and dozens of Washington, D.C. police began wearing body cameras in pilot programs in November. Other cities are also sampling body cameras, shown to decrease the use of the excessive force from increasingly aggressive and militarized police nationwide. Wearing cameras may become policy in police forces nationwide.

Boats Blocked

Block the Boat actions have continued on the West Coast of North America, in protest of the blockade of Gaza and occupation of Palestine. The movement has successfully disrupted the unloading of Israeli ships from the Zim commercial container line in Oakland and Long Beach/Los Angeles, California; Tacoma, Washington; and Vancouver, British Columbia, proving that when people unite, justice can triumph.

Grassroots Saving the Net

Nearly four million people throughout the country worked to demand “net neutrality,” reclassifying the internet as a common carrier and putting in place strong regulatory rules to protect equal use for all, instead of a two tier system benefiting giant communications corporations. According to Popular Resistance, as long as people keep it up, saving the internet for everyone “has gone from being politically impossible to seemingly inevitable.”



Flood Wall Street shut down a portion of New York’s financial district on September 22 to expose finance capital’s role in climate destruction.

Photo: Mary Beaudoin

People Activated by Climate Crisis

300,000 to 400,000 people marched through the streets of New York on September 21 to demand a halt to the climate crisis. The next day in the action, Flood Wall Street, 3,000 held a portion of the financial district from morning till 7:00 p.m. Indigenous people, often the first victims of climate disaster, took leading roles in both actions.

National and International Solidarity against Racism Continues

People have continued to protest on a grassroots level throughout the U.S., refusing to accept the injustice in the shooting of unarmed black teen Michael Brown on August 9, 2014 in Ferguson, Missouri. The U.N. Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination urged the United States to halt the excessive use of force by police.

U.S. Senate Says No to Keystone XL Pipeline

Construction of the environmentally-damaging Keystone XL pipeline was defeated on November 18 by the U.S. Senate, whose members were under pressure from a nationwide movement.