



The Dominion

news from the grassroots

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SEPTEMBER: Attempted coup in Ecuador, more G20 arrests in Canada, austerity protests in the EU

Police in **Ecuador** staged a strike in six cities across the country, and trapped President Rafael Correa in a Quito Hospital in an attempted *coup d'état*. Thousands of people assembled in the streets in defense of Correa, and the coup attempt was condemned by various civil sectors, including Indigenous organizations who have struggled against his policies. After 12 hours in a police hospital, Correa was freed and returned to the presidential palace.

An **Ontario** court judge struck down three of Canada's prostitution laws in a case brought by a woman who works as a dominatrix and two other sex workers. The decision invalidates the laws in Ontario, but not in the rest of Canada. The federal government said it will appeal the ruling, which was met with mixed reactions. While conservative groups roundly condemned the decision, opinions were mixed among many feminist and sex-work support groups: some celebrated the ruling as a step toward more secure working conditions for and less criminalization of sex workers; others said it would disable the restrictions used to arrest pimps and sex-worker abusers.

Environmentalists criticized the Canadian government for not taking action to stop the shipment of radioactive materials through the **Great Lakes**. Bruce Power, a private nuclear energy company in southern Ontario, plans to send contaminated generators by ship to Sweden for decontamination, but critics say such shipments open up the possibility of spills as well as more hazardous shipments. Bruce Power says the radiation contamination of the shipments is minimal, equivalent to an x-ray.

Canadian-Iranian blogger Hossein Derakhshan was sentenced to a



Protesters in Dublin, Ireland, on September 29. Hundreds of thousands took to the streets in Europe to protest EU-wide austerity measures.

William Murphy/Informatique

19-year prison sentence in **Iran**. The 35-year-old was found guilty of collaborating with enemy states, creating propaganda against the Islamic regime, insulting religious sanctity and creating propaganda for anti-revolutionary groups. Derakhshan is known as the blogfather of Iran, having inspired other Iranians—often critical of the current government—to launch their own blogs. Derakhshan was originally threatened with a death sentence; he is also able to appeal the current verdict.

Hundreds of thousands of people in **Europe** protested EU-wide austerity measures. Actions took place in Portugal, Ireland, Slovenia, Lithuania, Greece, Spain, Britain and Belgium. In addition, at least one million people took to the streets and paralyzed France over a proposal to raise the retirement age from 60 to 62.

The **US Department of Defense** bought and destroyed all 10,000 copies of "Operation Dark Heart,"—the first edition of an Army Reserve officer's memoir—citing the need to protect classified information. International anti-corruption group, Wikileaks,

responded by tweeting, "Burn all the books you want, Nazi punks. We already have a copy."

Simon Fraser University (SFU) announced a \$10 million investment from mining company **Goldcorp** to fund SFU's Art School, which will be renamed the Goldcorp Centre for the Arts and will be located in the Woodward's complex in Vancouver's Downtown East Side. Proponents hailed the investment as a sign of the company's efforts to foster and support community development, but SFU administration is being criticized for ignoring Goldcorp's record of human rights and environmental abuses in Latin America and the US.

A report by a UN fact-finding mission about the Israeli raids on the **flotilla of boats bound for Gaza** last May concluded that the five Turkish citizens and one US citizen killed by Israeli soldiers were shot execution-style, some while lying wounded on the deck of the *Mavi Marmara*.

A top Canadian oil executive met with David Suzuki to convince the environmentalist to help reach a

"progressive solution" to conflicts over the **Athabasca tar sands**. Marcel Coutu, CEO of Canadian Oilsands Corporation and Chairman of Syncrude, approached Suzuki for help in striking a deal between oil companies and environmental organizations (ENGOs), similar to the Canadian Boreal Forest Agreement (CBFA), a wide-ranging agreement between Canada's forestry industry and large ENGOs (including the Suzuki Foundation). While some have called the CBFA historic, many have criticized it as silencing environmentalists and for excluding front line, affected communities. Suzuki immediately rejected the overture from Coutu.

James Cameron, director of 3D blockbuster *Avatar*, visited the tar sands region in **Alberta** and met with Indigenous peoples to learn their perspective on the development. "It will be a curse if not managed properly or it could be a great gift if managed properly... Right now it's going in the wrong direction... I think the federal and provincial governments need to play a stronger role," said Cameron, though he also expressed his support for "sustainable industry development."

The UN's special rapporteur on food reported that natural disasters and market speculation are leading to another **global food crisis**. According to Olivier De Schutter, "A significant contributory cause of the price spike [has been] speculation by institutional investors who did not have any expertise or interest in agricultural commodities, and who invested in commodities index funds or [who invested] in order to hedge speculative bets."

More than 100 people were arrested *en masse* in front of the **White House** while protesting mountain-top removal coal mining. Part of the Appalachia Rising series of events, the protest



More than 100 Appalachian residents and retired coal miners were arrested at a protest calling for the abolition of mountain-top mining in Washington, DC.

Rich Clement/Rainforest Action Network

was attended by people from Appalachia, which has been hardest hit in the US by mountain-top removal mining, one of the most destructive extractive processes.

A mudslide in **Chiapas, Mexico**, killed 16 people. The extreme weather event was the latest in a series of floods and storms in Mexico that have killed 96 people and displaced 81,000 since May 2010.

Vancouverites continued to demonstrate their solidarity with the 492 **Tamil migrants** who arrived by boat in Vancouver on in mid-August and who remain in prisons in Burnaby and Maple Ridge, BC.

Elroy Yau, the **Toronto Transit Commission employee** arrested while in full uniform on his way to work during the G20, published an open letter about the continuing trauma from his arrest and detention. He has refused to sign forms from the Ontario Worker's Compensation Board that would block him from suing the Toronto Police Services, and has therefore been denied worker's comp coverage.

Toronto police made more arrests in relation to the **G20 protests**. Alex Hundert was preemptively arrested on the morning of June

26, 2010, and re-arrested—after speaking on a panel at Ryerson University—for allegedly breaking bail conditions that forbade him from participating in public protests. He is still in jail. Jaroslava Avila was arrested on her way home from a health advocacy event at the University of Toronto (U of T). A prominent Indigenous solidarity activist and political science student at the U of T, she is facing conspiracy charges related to the G20.

The federal government announced its "legacy of care" program, devoting \$52.5 million over five years to helping injured Canadian **veterans** and their families. Veterans recently spoke out about their mistreatment in the medical system—especially under the new Veterans Charter—after former veterans ombudsman Pat Strogan was not reappointed to his post in August 2010.

Canada's **student loan** system maxed out at \$15 billion. A Stats Canada report concluded that last year was "the worst labour market" for students: unemployment reached 55 per cent. Although student unemployment in the '70s was 75 per cent, tuition fees are ten times higher now than during the Age of Aquarius, and student debt has doubled since the '80s.

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Showdown in the Far North

First Nations oppose Ontario's Far North Act, while some environmental organizations lend support



A young member of the Nishnawbe Aski Nation opposes Ontario's Far North Act at an August 2010 press conference. NAN chiefs worry the act will override treaty rights.

Nishnawbe Aski Nation

by Jon Thompson

KENORA, ONTARIO—Following the third reading of the Far North Act, the Chiefs of Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) in Northern Ontario have vowed to “unanimously oppose the introduction of Bill 191 into law, and will continue to do so by any means necessary.” NAN represents First Nations that are signatories to Treaties 5 and 9, covering two-thirds of the land mass of Ontario.

The Far North Act, provincial Bill 191, is said to have been designed to protect at least 50 per cent of this territory north of the 51st parallel, and to arrange for First Nations to lead land use plans. While the government and environmentalists insist the land use plans would be constructed, led and finalized by the First Nations, NAN's leadership believes the Minister of Natural Resources will have the final say in development, overriding treaty rights.

As the 225,000 square kilometre space is set aside, First Nations expressed concern that they would be ceding territory outside of the protected land use area to development.

Dalton McGuinty's Liberals passed the bill in a 46 to 26 vote on September 23, despite opposition from not only First Nations, the Progressive Conservatives and the New Democratic Party but seemingly unanimous opposition from those who live and do business in the North, including the Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association, the adjacent Treaty Three Grand Council, the Ontario Prospectors Association, the Ontario Forestry Industries Association and the Northwestern Ontario Associated Chambers of Commerce.

“It is a disappointing day for all of us who spent tireless hours opposing Bill 191 as our opposition was obviously ignored,” said

NAN Deputy Grand Chief Mike Metatawabin. "As we have stated time and time again, NAN First Nations and Tribal Councils do not and will not recognize this legislation on our homelands. We will continue to uphold our Aboriginal and Treaty rights and jurisdiction over our land. The real fight is just beginning."

From the government's

"NAN First Nations and Tribal Councils do not and will not recognize this legislation on our homelands. The real fight is just beginning."

corner, the intention with the bill has always been straightforward: to establish a clear set of rules in order to develop the Ring of Fire, an estimated 72-megatonne chromite deposit located 500 kilometres northeast of Thunder Bay. Minister of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry, Michael Gravelle, has called it "the largest economic development opportunity in Northern Ontario in a century." More than 30,000 mining claims have been staked in the area in the past seven years alone.

A week before the passage of the Far North Act, the "unanimous" voice of Treaty 9 opposition to the bill was split when the two closest First Nations to the Ring of Fire, Marten Falls and Webequie First Nation, broke rank and signed Letters of Intent with Minister Gravelle. These Letters of Intent are the precursors to Memorandums of Understanding regarding land use planning. Marten Falls First Nation Chief Eli Moonias and Webequie First Nation Chief Cornelius Wabasse were promised skills training and finances to develop land use plans that address hunting and trapping sustainability.

"Whether the Far North plan gets moved forward, we're still going to be using our land use plan," Wabase said. "The main purpose of us signing with the government is to work with the government on our issues and that includes land use plans."

A week after the act was passed, McGuinty was in Thunder Bay, announcing Christine Kaszycki as the Coordinator of the Ring of Fire. The Ontario Prospectors Association endorsed Kaszycki, who has been a leader of the revamped Mining Act and is former Assistant Deputy Minister in the the Ministry of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry.

However, NAN Grand Chief Stan Beardy responded angrily to her appointment.

"We should have been a part of the selection of the person to fill this critical position," Beardy said. "We are disturbed that the Premier can express his willingness to create a true partnership and yet leaves us out of this critical process. We need to ensure that our objectives and our plans for anything in our territory are adequately represented."

World Wildlife Fund (WWF) president Monte Hummel was one of the architects

"In the old view, you'd always get outgunned by big government. Now you engage. You move to the centre."

of the bill and has taken offense to opposition allegations that the act is neocolonial.

According to Hummel, the 50 per cent figure in the Far North Act was born from the seed of the 2003 Boreal Forest Conservation Framework. The environmental movement wanted a place at the table but to get it, they needed to have a quantifiable demand. To meet that end, the University of Central Florida's Reed Noss was brought in and produced the 50 per cent protection estimate to maintain biodiversity in the Boreal Forest. It was then adopted by the

US-based Pew Foundation, which spends \$2 million annually funding most of the widely recognized environmental organizations in North America, including the WWF.

"Pew has not called the tune but they've said, 'If you want to be funded by the Pew Foundation, you have to come forward with a plan and proposals that make sense, that provide for industrial interests, First Nations, environmentalists and governments, and are going to produce something,'" Hummel said.

The four-cornered model of bringing industry, First Nations, environmentalists and government to the table emerged from the conservation framework and became the basis for the Far North Act. The willingness to accept industrial development puts environmentalists at the table and in exchange they have a guarantee that 50 per cent of the Far North will go untouched.

"In the old view, you'd always get outgunned by big government," Hummel recalled. "Over the years, we've gotten a lot stronger. Now, the game isn't sitting on the margins and complaining. Now you engage. You move to the centre. Rather than letting all these mega-organizations make decisions, you go to the centre and

"You'd better think about the state you're going to be in if this bill gets rescinded. You're going to be in a *de facto* development run by development interests, possibly under a Conservative government which doesn't have a history of championing First Nations issues and being twisted around by government departments with no planning framework or final say in land use plans," Hummel said.

"I can't imagine this act being rescinded is going to leave [NAN Grand Chief] Stan Beardy or his communities in a better position. I appreciate they don't agree with me and it's their opinion that really counts but the stakes are very high and my caution based on 40 years experience is, before you kill this, you want to think long and hard about what's going to replace it."

Jon Thompson is an award-winning journalist and author in Northwestern Ontario. Jon's reckless, freelance adventuring pseudonym is selling his book at www.tommyjonsson.ca.

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Regardless of the bill's controls from the beginning to the end of the land use planning, NAN believes the philosophy behind it overrides treaty rights to land ownership and so are vowing to fight its implementation. With First Nations being brought into a process in which industrial interests are assured, they are in no position to maintain exclusive stewardship over the land.

With NAN having rejected the development framework, Hummel warned they would be pushed back to the sidelines.

At the Heart of Mapuche Resistance

For Indigenous people in Chile, the struggle for life is labeled a terrorist activity

by Dawn Paley

Editor's note: At the end of September, the Chilean government agreed to make changes to the country's anti-terrorism laws, and proceeded to drop the terrorism charges against Mapuche political prisoners. They will still, however, be tried under common criminal law.

The government's decision led 26 of 38 Mapuche prisoners to end their hunger strikes. The remaining hunger strikers continued to call on the government to go further to reform their anti-terrorism laws, to abolish military tribunal hearings for civilians and to end the use of secret witnesses, among other issues.

The government reacted by proposing the constitution officially recognize Indigenous peoples. The last of the hunger strikers ended their fasts on October 12, citing health reasons.

VANCOUVER—As of September 18, more than 34 Mapuche political prisoners in Chile have entered into day 75 of a hunger strike. They are seeking significant changes in the way the Chilean state treats Indigenous Mapuche people.

The hunger strike has entered into a critical and possibly deadly phase: Bobby Sands, an Irish revolutionary and a well known casualty of hunger striking, died after 66 days. Other hunger strikers have survived for longer, including ex-political Mapuche prisoner Patricia Troncoso, who refused food for 112 days to protest the "predatory and inhumane economic model" in Chile and the still active anti-terrorist laws used to criminalize the Mapuche people.

The central demands of the hunger strikers and their supporters are that Mapuche people be

tried in civil courts instead of in both civil and military courts, and that dictatorship-era anti-terrorist legislation not be used against them. Their struggle, at its roots, is in defense of Mapuche territory and culture, a plight common to Indigenous peoples around the world.

The Mapuche fight to maintain their freedom and independence dates back to the first Spanish invasion of their territory in 1541. Since then, their land base has been whittled down to a series of reserves, which, under the dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet, were broken up into individually held parcels.

Since the end of the dictatorship in 1990, laws have been passed that recognize the rights of Indigenous peoples to land. However, these laws have not been honoured, and Mapuche people have continued to organize against transnational corporate activities in their lands.

Clare Sieber, an anthropologist who graduated from UVIC,

The hunger strike entered a critical and possibly deadly phase.

has spent time working with the Mapuche people. "Although there have been many Chilean and international policies implemented to strengthen and support Mapuche communities... the dominant model of industrial development including foreign investment still imposes structures of power over, rather than collaboration with, the Mapuche people," Sieber explained in correspondence with the Vancouver Media Co-op.

Canada's relationship with



The Mapuche struggle, at its heart, is in defense of their territory and culture—a familiar theme of Indigenous struggles around the world.

Antitezo

Chile has long been based on mining and free trade, Canada having signed a bilateral Free Trade Agreement with Chile in 1997. In 2008, Canadian outward foreign direct investment in Chile

totalled \$8.346 billion. Canada's priority sectors in Chile are among those that have most aggravated the Mapuche conflicts, including "mining, forestry, fishing and agricultural industries."

Hydroelectric projects have also created tension and conflict between the Chilean state, private investors and the Mapuche people.

Dams have flooded vast expanses of Mapuche territory, displacing entire communities. In the 1990s, the Spanish owned

Empresa Nacional de Electricidad (National Electricity Company, ENDESA) began a project of building six dams on the Bio Bio River in the South Andean region of Chile, home of the Mapuche Pewenche communities. Some of these dams were funded through loans from the World Bank's International Finance Corporation and the Inter-American Development Bank.

The effects of the damming and flooding of Mapuche territory continue to be felt, according to Sieber. "Although ENDESA supplied some Pewenche in El Barco with new homes and electrical appliances... they did so not taking into account the seasonal mobility and community organization of the Pewenche." Sieber says electrical appliances are of limited utility without electricity or employment opportunities to pay electricity bills. "I have seen

continued on next page...

gas ovens and laundry machines used as cupboards." She also notes that the rectangular plots of land fenced with barbed wire offered by ENDESA are "contrary to the semi-nomadic and communal land organization of the Pewenche."

Forestry disputes also flared up during the late 90s, and in December 1997, the police fought Mapuche protestors from the Pichi-Lincuyan and Pilil-Mapu communities.

"The communities were claiming their lands, and this generated a conflict because the government ignored Mapuche demands," explains Mapuche writer Aldisson Anguita Mariqueo. He notes that at this time:

The response of the 'democratic' government of Chile was to arrest twelve Mapuche under the legal umbrella of the Internal Security Law. This law, inherited from the military dictatorship, allows the security forces to search private residences and to arrest and interrogate any "suspicious" individual without judicial intervention.

Road building and airport construction have increased the incursions into Mapuche territory, further threatening the survival of the Mapuche people. In a 2008 report, Amnesty International noted that unresolved territorial disputes related to the extractive and logging industries have caused "tension resulting in violence": Mapuche leaders have informed us that police officers have used excessive force, including tear gas and rubber bullets, and firing shots from moving helicopters, including lead shot, in order to suppress the protests...

The hunger strike that is ongoing in Chile today is a wake-up call to the world about the criminalization of Mapuche peoples who continue standing up to defend their lands.

Colombian supporter Manuel Rozental writes that for the Chilean state to put Mapuche resistance on trial "under anti-terrorist legislation is preposterous, and actually transforms the struggle for life into a terrorist activity, a precedent from Chile to the Continent and, indeed, the world."

Vancouverites Stand in Solidarity with Political Prisoners in Chile

by Dawn Paley

VANCOUVER—A small group of demonstrators gathered on September 24 in front of the Chilean Consulate in Vancouver to show their solidarity with Mapuche and anarchist political prisoners in Chile.

More than 30 Mapuche prisoners have been on hunger strike since July 12, and dozens more have joined the strike since then. Most recently, the anti-poet of Chile, Nicanor Parra, joined the hunger strike. He is 96 years old.

In some cases Chilean authorities transferred prisoners to hospital without informing their family members of where they were being taken.

On August 14, 2010, 14 anarchists were arrested and imprisoned. They were accused under dictator-era anti-terrorist legislation of being connected to a series of explosions in Chile. Supporters say the charges were fabricated.

"Today the strong connection in Chile is that the anarchists and the Mapuche Indigenous radical movement are the only two political movements in Chile that are really defying the status quo of capitalism, of neo-liberalism in Chile," said Claudio Escobar at the rally. Escobar is a Chilean living in Canada who helped to organize the action. "They are the only two real non-reformist movements in Chile, and they see that connection."

As those gathered handed out leaflets to folks passing by, the police kept a close watch on the demonstration and approached demonstrators a number of times.

Mario Hueche, a Mapuche man who lives in Vancouver, joined the picket. He described the life of Mapuche peoples on the land as "very difficult... They've been abandoned, just like



Residents of Vancouver protested the imprisonment of Mapuche prisoners in Chile. Some stood silently in solidarity (top), others hung banners (bottom).

Dawn Paley

the Indigenous people in Chiapas and in the rest of Latin America."

Hueche recently visited his uncle in a rural area in Chile, and said his uncle told him that the land is getting tired, and the crops they sow are not providing as much food as they used to. Hueche left Chile during the military dictatorship. He explained that many Mapuche are in exile in the US, Canada, Switzerland and Spain.

"We've had four governments of *Concertacion* [a coalition of left-progressive parties in congress], and not one of them said 'enough with humiliation'... They have all refused to give us the respect that human beings deserve," said Hueche. The right-wing government of Sebastian

Pinera assumed power in March 2010, and conflicts between the government and Mapuche people, as well as the anarchist movement, have continued to worsen.

Organizers of the September 24 demonstration have already been in the streets many times over the past months to raise awareness about the criminalization of dissent in Chile.

"We'll continue to stand here in front of the Chilean Consulate, and we encourage people to take their own initiatives as well, as was done yesterday by some group of courageous young people that apparently showed up and did a direct action in front of the entrance of the Chilean Consulate," said Escobar.

The Roots of Rage

Halifax's poverty, racism and "swarmings"

by Angela Day

HALIFAX—Halifax doesn't feel like a violent city. In fact, walking down North Street past jellybean-coloured houses and a view of the harbour, you can even hear birds chirping. But this is the same city—the same area of the same city—where seven violent attacks stunned Halifax residents over Labour Day weekend. All were perpetrated by groups of young people, most of whom are allegedly black.

"Violence can happen anywhere, but not with the volume and intensity that Halifax has for a city its size," says Jeff*, a recent victim who sustained severe injuries. Jeff will be unable to work for several months and says the recent attacks in Halifax have left him with conflicting emotions. "I love this city but don't want to live somewhere where I don't feel safe."

Jeff and his partner were walking in his North End neighbourhood early one September evening when they were approached by a group of young people who asked them for a cigarette. Before he could respond, Jeff was severely beaten by between six and eight young men and women.

His experience is typical in what have become known as "swarmings" in Halifax. Swarmings are violent physical attacks perpetrated by large groups of people upon individuals or small groups. These attacks are unprovoked and random: the perpetrators and the victims are unknown to each other and, while robbery has sometimes been involved, it does not appear to be the main motivation for the attack.

This kind of violence is not new to the city. In 2006, after several swarmings and an unrelated deadly bar fight, Halifax Mayor Peter Kelly initiated a Roundtable on Violence in the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM). Now, four years later, the roundtables are over and the report is written, but Halifax's

streets are still not safe. At the time of this article's release, an eighth attack—where injuries were sustained—and another attempted attack—where the victim escaped—were reported.

According to a 2005 Statistics Canada survey, Halifax has the highest rates of violent crime in the country—sexual and physical assault, homicides, robbery and break-and-enters. Furthermore, the locally-commissioned roundtable report, written by criminologist Dan Clairmont, states that the HRM is tied with Regina and Saskatoon for the highest percentage of youth (ages 19-24) involved with violent crime in the country.

"The causes of youth crime are hard to pinpoint in terms of finding a single, all-encompassing source," says Charys Payne, Dalhousie law student and youth worker. "However, one of the roots of crime is, of course, poverty. Furthermore, in the North End—a racialized community—this is coupled with the experience of racism." The Ryerson Anti-Racism Task Force defines racialization as "the social process by which certain groups of people are singled out for unequal treatment on the basis of race and other characteristics, whether real or imagined." The Task Force also says that racialization is a historical process.

In Halifax, the roots of this process are clear.

According to the website of the 2006 Racism, Violence and Health Project undertaken by Dalhousie University's Department of Social Work (for which Payne was a researcher), thousands of Blacks settled in Nova Scotia during the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, and thousands more settled here after the American Revolution. They were promised land and freedom

in exchange for fighting for Britain, but upon arrival were denied both land and equal rights.

In more recent history, the infamous destruction of the Black community of Africville in the late 1960s displaced citizens who were then relocated to the Uniacke

North End, she says, "intergenerational poverty begets systemic violence." Payne explains that poor, racialized youth "already face the strongly held stereotype that they are violent and angry so this behavior becomes a sort of armour which shields them from the pain of exclusion from middle class judgment."

In short, for symptoms to improve, the core issues need to be addressed. From Payne's perspective, "while the reality is sometimes bleak this does not mean that the situation cannot be resolved."

"It all comes back to issues that are unaddressed in our lives," says Marshall Williams Jr., suggesting abuse, discrimination and lack of self-respect as examples of the roots of violent behaviour. Williams is a resident of the Preston area, the largest Indigenous Black community in Canada and member of the IMove (In My Own Voice) youth group, a media-based program for at-risk youth. Unfortunately, young people don't get together on the streets to talk about their issues, according to Williams. "They're getting together and reflecting them back out."

Williams, 29, says more and better recreation facilities, community organizations, and an improved education system could give support to young people—especially to those who do not have their needs met within their homes. He has seen the decline of these supports as he has gotten older, with fewer recreation opportunities available, and decreased youth involvement in community organizations.

According to Williams, "The people in the position to address these things are not addressing them."



Square public housing project in the North End of Halifax. Former Africville residents and their descendants, according to the Racism, Violence and Health Project website, still face serious socioeconomic hardships, and many still live in public housing.

In 2007-2008, Payne was the Executive Director of Saint George's YouthNet, a youth organization a few blocks from Uniacke Square that offers free morning, lunch, after-school and summer programs. Reflecting on the causes of violence in the

The Roundtable on Violence was intended to locate and target the underlying causes of Halifax's crime and violence, but it is unclear whether or how the recommendations have been implemented. Mayor Peter Kelly did not respond to calls for an interview.

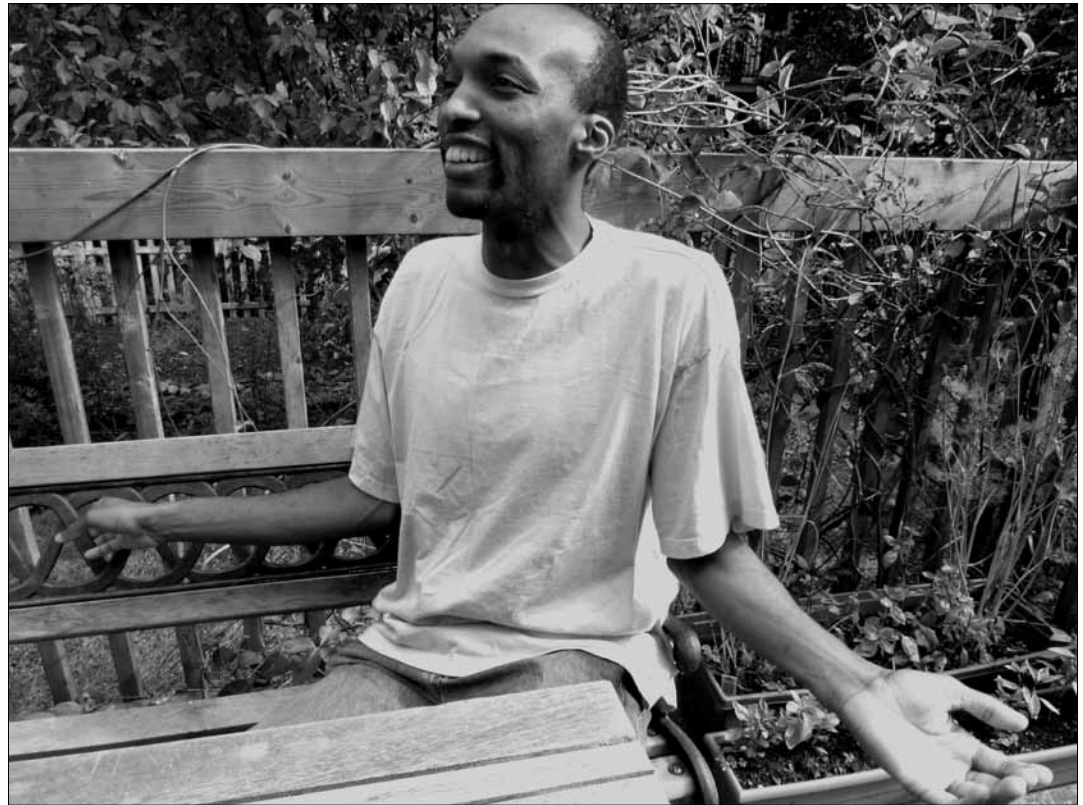
Sarah MacLaren, Executive Director of Leave Out Violence (LOVE) Halifax, says the greatest disappointment regarding the roundtable report is that it was released just prior to the city's 2006 budget, but appropriate funds were not earmarked to address the recommendations.

MacLaren also notes that when money is spent, it's not necessarily spent well. As an example, she points to new recreation facilities in the HRM: while some youth will benefit from these facilities, she says that those who can't afford new sneakers or sports equipment, or who don't have transportation to the recreation centres, are the ones who could really use them.

There is also the question of the education system. Rocking back in her chair behind a desk full of papers, MacLaren says she does not believe all the responsibility lies with the Department of Education, but "in terms of access to youth over years and hours, they have the most. Youth spend a lot of time at school." Unlike provinces that have publicly funded alternative schools, Nova Scotia lacks educational infrastructure for those students whose needs lie beyond the traditional classroom, or who have unique learning needs.

MacLaren asks, "Where's the formal curriculum around life skills? Where are the alternative schools?" She sees schools as a logical locale for prevention-based programming, but does not believe that they are the only place to engage disenfranchised youth. Most of the young people MacLaren works with have already been implicated in violence and, she says, "I have seen youth completely turn around when given the support they need."

LOVE, an organization that helps youth overcome the challenge of violence in their lives, is only one of the places young



Marshall Williams works with IMove, a program seeking to engage incarcerated and at-risk youth in media-based forms of self-expression. He sees discrimination and lack of self-respect as among the roots of violent behaviour. *Christopher Cohoon*

people end up. Many youth who have committed a violent crime end up negotiating the Youth Criminal Justice System, which MacLaren sees as being a prolonged and sometimes unhelpful process.

One of the recommendations of the roundtable report is a stron-

Executive Director of CJS. While CJS is a program of the provincial government, the roundtable report recommends that the municipality's role in furthering restorative justice in Halifax "would be an advocacy [role] vis-a-vis the provincial government."

So far, "we haven't seen any-

For Jeff, whose life has been turned upside-down by the attack, "the best type of punishment for this would be to give back to the victim."

In a recent email exchange he acknowledged his anger, especially given he is no longer able to do the work he loves. At the same time, he says he'd "like to have the opportunity to explain to [the attackers] and show them how I live and work in the hope that maybe it would restore what little empathy they have towards other people."

As complicated as it may be for the victim, Williams sees this kind of empathy as a two-way street. "It's really hard to hate somebody when you know what they've been through," he says.

**The victim's name has been changed to protect his or her anonymity.*

Angela Day is a writer, educator, urban gardener and community organizer with roots in Halifax. She currently coordinates programs for young women across HRM. This article was originally published by the Halifax Media Co-op.

"I have seen youth completely turn around when given the support they need."

ger focus on in-depth restorative justice programs through the Department of Justice and the Community Justice Society (CJS). In practice, restorative justice involves both those who have been involved in and affected by the crime—i.e., the perpetrators of the crime and the victim—in a cooperative process that determines the outcome for both parties, with the intent to seek true justice.

"Enforcement and accountability are necessary, but so are social development strategies that provide alternatives and opportunities," says Yvonne Atwell,

thing from the city whatsoever," says Atwell.

Williams believes that if the money spent to keep people in prison were redirected to community programs and supports, Halifax would see fewer people locked up. He says it costs around \$125,000 to keep someone in prison for a year—which, for five people, would be over \$600,000. "I guarantee," Williams says, "if you put half that money into community programs and supports, four out of those five youth aren't going to be in the criminal system anymore."

Climate Call

Environmental movement shifts focus from UN to grassroots organizing in lead-up to Cancun meetings

by Cameron Fenton

MONTREAL—Battle lines are being drawn as governments, environmental organizations and grassroots organizers are gearing up for the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Cancun, Mexico.

On one side, nations from the Global North—including Canada—are setting up to push the agenda of the Copenhagen Accord, an agreement that emerged from last winter's UN conference in Denmark, which failed to establish any binding terms for carbon emissions reductions. On the other side, many nations from the Global South have rallied around the Cochabamba Accord, the end result of April's World People's Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth in Bolivia. The final text includes calls for a global referendum on climate change, the establishment of an international climate justice tribunal and the recognition of a declaration on the rights of Mother Earth.

Civil society organizations in the north have also begun to lend support to the Cochabamba proposals. A statement from this summer's United States Social Forum in Detroit issued a call for "all governments engaged in the United Nations (UN) to incorporate proposals from the Cochabamba Protocol and to adopt and implement the Universal Declaration on the Rights of Mother Earth."

"After significant efforts on the part of the Bolivian government and social movements, text from the Cochabamba Accord, or People's Agreement, is included in the negotiating text for Cancun negotiations," said Andrea Harden, Climate Campaigner for the Council of Canadians. "While some commentators have framed

this as a step backwards...it is finally putting goals reflective of social movement demands and the gravity of the crisis we face on the

table."

Indeed, Bolivia and its allies have faced resistance from the governments of many wealthy,

highly polluting nations, in getting the Cochabamba text recognized for consideration at the Cancun round of talks.

The Canadian Government has been one of those opponents.

"Canada welcomes all input into the UNFCCC process; however, Canada remains committed to the Copenhagen Accord as the basis for a new global climate change regime," Henry Lau, a representative of Environment Canada, told *The Dominion*.

Harden points out that governments from the Global North cynically called the Copenhagen text an "Accord" even though it wasn't approved by the consensual process usually required to grant the "Accord" label, an indication of their lack of respect for the UNFCCC process.

Lau declined to answer questions about the Athabasca tar sands and its expansion projects, such as the Keystone XL pipeline, which were a focus of protests during the Copenhagen talks. Instead, he focused on draft regulations for personal vehicle tailpipe emissions and reductions in coal-fired power generation to "help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and improve air quality for all Canadians from coast to coast to coast." According to a 2008 report from the National Energy Board, around 13 per cent of Canada's total power generation capacity comes from burning coal.

These commitments are part of the Canadian and US strategy of setting "economy-wide emissions targets," a move that may have influenced the selection of Canada's new chief climate negotiator, Guy Saint-Jacques. A seasoned diplomat, he is also a vocal promoter of Canada-US economic interdependency. At a speech on free trade to US Chamber of Commerce in 2008 he noted that "as the new US administration defines its energy policy,



Heidi Haering

Via Campesina issued a call for "thousands of Cancuns to unite the force of peasant peoples of the world, who are already cooling the planet."

it is important to keep in mind that America's largest supplier of energy is your neighbour to the North."

The Canadian government

The Canadian government has pledged "\$400 million in new and additional climate change financing," a promise that many believe has a darker side.

has pledged to provide "\$400 million in new and additional climate change financing," a promise that many believe has a darker side.

Organizers point to these proposals as false solutions which fail to deal with climate change and have the potential to exacerbate existing economic, social and environmental problems. "This amount still pales in comparison to what the Global South is asking for," Harden said. "There is also a lot of concern as to where this money is coming from...such as the REDD program (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation), carbon offsets and other market based mechanisms to meet nation's climate debt."

During inter-sessional negotiations in Bonn, Germany in August, proponents of the Copenhagen Accord announced that access to financing coming from the Global North would be contingent on support for the Accord.

As Cancun draws nearer the United Nations is introducing stricter rules for civil society participation. Bright red text in the UNFCCC Information Note on Cancun warns that they hold "the authority to take any action necessary to maintain [their] security." Civil society representatives are barred from holding "unauthorized demonstrations." Limits have been placed on the distribution of materials or displaying of posters at the discretion of UN officials.

Many civil society delegates were excluded from the Copenhagen conference after participating in the Reclaim Power action—where organizers inside and

outside of the summit attempted to create a People's Assembly inside the Copenhagen talks—a precedent that has many organizers worried these rules are meant

to stifle political dissent.

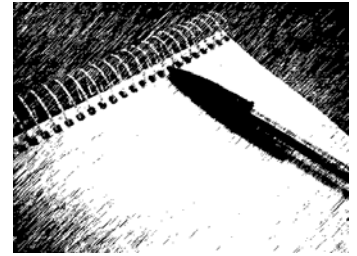
Cancun is not the only place where organizers are looking to mobilize. In late July, La Via Campesina, the international peasant network, issued a call for "thousands of Cancuns...[to] unite the force and resistance of peasant peoples of the world, who are already cooling the planet." Their call is for people around the globe to take action in support of grassroots solutions such as those articulated in the Cochabamba Accord.

This call represents shifting values within parts of what is being called the global climate justice movement. Many grassroots climate activists are seeing this summit as an opportunity to shift focus away from UN meetings towards local, grassroots community organizing.

"I don't plan to attend Cancun because it is not my place," said Dave Vasey, a Toronto-based climate justice organizer who was in Copenhagen last winter. "But it is important to respond to the vision and wisdom [of local organizers]."

Vasey, along with many other organizers, will be staying home this time. Instead, they plan on bringing the message of "System Change, Not Climate Change" to communities across Canada, and taking action against the root causes of a changing climate.

Cameron Fenton is a former intern and Membership Coordinator with The Dominion and a community organizer in Montreal.



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Water t

Goldcorp's Penasquito robs semi-de precious

by James I



Despite an annual rainfall lower than 400 millimetres, local *ejidos* have managed to subsist thanks to massive aquifers that provide vital groundwater, used primarily for the irrigation of crops. Joel Mancilla, Commissioner of El Vergel, accuses “the mining company of using in one hour the amount of water a local family would use in 25 years.”



From property taxes alone, the municipal government of Mazapil should be receiving one million pesos annually from Penasquito. Such revenues would come in handy in a municipality where 30 per cent of the population has running water, 65 per cent has electricity, 18 per cent has sewage systems, three per cent has a garbage pickup service, 50 per cent enjoys public security and seven per cent of roads are paved. Vicente Perez Esquivel, Mayor of Mazapil, said that since 2007, when the first stage of operations began at Penasquito, the municipal government has not received any tax payments from Goldcorp—not even the construction license fees.



“The mine’s wells reach 300 m while ours at El Vergel only reach 100 m,” according to Armando Gonzalez, a member of the Negotiation Committee.

ZACATECAS, MEXICO—Five years ago a new neighbour arrived in Mazapil, Mexico, promising employment, medical services and general development for the local peasant communities as it hoped to develop one of the world’s largest gold mines. The newcomer—Canadian mining company Goldcorp Inc—built its mine but has yet to honour its promises to the thousands of people of Mazapil. Particularly for the residents of Cedros, Las Palmas and El Vergel—communities adjacent to the massive industrial complex—hope for a brighter future has dimmed.

Goldcorp’s Penasquito Mine has turned out to be a troublesome addition to the community, guzzling the municipality’s scarce water sources, while causing contamination and social division.

“Even though it has been a mining town by tradition, [Mazapil] has never

to Mine

to project in Mexico
sert region of
resource

Rodriguez



metres below the surface,
reach 100 or 130 metres,"
zalez Alvarado, member of
with Goldcorp.



"Our life support system depends on water, because we live off what we harvest!" says Irma Hernandez Herrera, resident of El Vergel. "Here we grow chili peppers, alfalfa, corn, beans, squash..." Before mining operations began, a contract between the people of El Vergel and Goldcorp stipulated the perforation of 10 wells for industrial use. By the end of 2009, Goldcorp was operating 30 wells. Goldcorp's disregard for previous agreements and Penasquito's inordinate use of an already precarious groundwater supply have caused widespread unease among the local population.



"Penasquito is expected to produce about 500,000 ounces a year of gold, 28 million ounces a year of silver, 450 million pounds a year of zinc and 200 million pounds a year of lead," according to an article in miningweekly.com. If the price of gold per ounce remains this high, Goldcorp can expect to earn around US \$600 million per year from gold production alone.

been prosperous. Its population has managed to survive off agriculture and the raising of livestock," according to an April 2010 article in the local paper, *El Diario de Coahuila*. The *ejido* system still prevails in this part of the country. It consists of community members, known as the *ejidatarios*, sharing a common landholding, both for agriculture and residence.

"We have had a very hard life and struggled enormously to upkeep this *ejido*," says Hernandez Herrera. "We have already suffered so much[...] What will we do once the water runs out? And it is clear that it will run out! Because in every place where a mine establishes itself, the water eventually runs out."

James Rodriguez is an independent documentary photographer based in Guatemala. He authors mimundo.org.

Media Co-op Investor

What is a "stock market" and how is Potash Corp. doing on it?

by Geordie Gwalgen Dent

TORONTO—Welcome to Media Co-op Investor!

Media Co-op Investor aims to help the public understand the stock market, how it works and the major companies that benefit from it.

In each installment (every two weeks online) we examine an element or term in the stock market as well as the Toronto Media Co-op's (TMC) simulated investments. We also shed light on large Canadian companies and why their share prices have gone up or down.

What is a stock market? Every day we hear about the DOW, the NASDAQ, the TSX, about their going up or down; we hear about bull and bear markets, price corrections, rallies, and so on. But what does it all mean?

Stock markets started many centuries ago as a means for bankers to buy and sell government debt. Stock markets, in their essence, are ways for companies and governments to raise money. They are also means for investors to get a better interest rate on their money rather than, say, through a bank term deposit or Guaranteed Investment Certificate (GIC), where a bank holds an investment for an agreed-upon period.

Stock "markets" can also be called stock "exchanges." The Toronto Stock Exchange (TSX), Canada's largest exchange, allows buyers and sellers to exchange bonds and stocks. This exchange can be done on a trading floor, where men and women scream prices to each other. You've probably seen this type of stock exchange most commonly in movies about the stock market such as *Trading Places*. The New York Mercantile Exchange and several exchanges in Chicago still operate in this way.

However, most stock markets these days are being converted to virtual exchanges, where everything is done via computers, as seen in the Canadian drama *Traders*.

Companies can sell "shares" to the public to raise money for operations and have the public then share in their profits—or losses. They can also, like governments, sell a "bond," also known as debt.

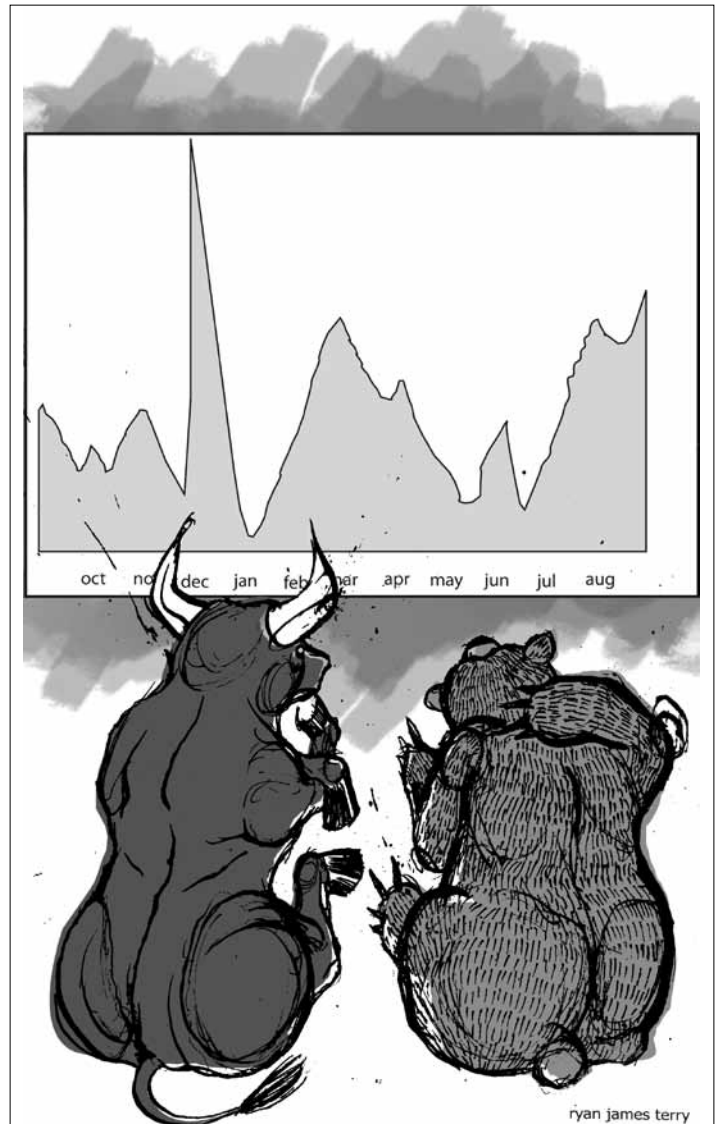
Before the 1980s, most people who bought and sold stocks were usually wealthy individual businesspeople and investors. Today pension funds, mutual funds, hedge funds, banks and a large number of other actors have linked the public to the stock market.

Stock markets don't just allow people to trade a share in a company or a bond. Futures contracts, currency, commodities, and real estate can also be traded.

The amounts of money being moved around are staggering: According to the Bank for International Settlements, the worldwide bond market was \$82.2 trillion in 2009. The world stock market was estimated at about \$36.6 trillion in 2008. And the really scary stuff, the worldwide derivatives market—the financial 'instruments' which are considered to be responsible for the financial crises—has been estimated to be worth \$791 trillion.

The TMC theoretically bought \$1,000 worth of close to 50 Canadian stocks (to a total of \$50,000) using a free internet stock game. As a test, we first bought \$10,000 of four companies' stock: Potash Corp., Bank of Nova Scotia, Suncor and Barrick Gold.

Our shares went up and down, but in the end we made 18 bucks on our theoretical \$10,000, or a 0.2 per cent profit. Our shares increased by as much as two per



Introducing Media Co-op investor: deciphering "bull" to "bear" and everything in between.
Ryan James Terry

cent, and there were a few points where we could have made big money, mostly when Barrick stock was up six per cent.

But the markets and companies are all in a state of great uncertainty. Barrick is facing questions about its debt (but not its human rights violations), Scotiabank is facing questions about its earnings (but not its Canadian government bailout money), Suncor is selling off assets to Russia (but not having to pay for environmental damage in Alberta).

The Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan has been in the news over the past few weeks mainly due to a hostile takeover attempt by Australian company BHP, the world's largest mining

company.

Potash is used mostly for fertilizer. Canada is the world's top potash producer and has the largest known reserves. Potash Corp. controls the largest reserve of potash in Canada and is the world's largest producer of fertilizer minerals.

The government of Saskatchewan heavily financed the potash industry in the 1950s and 60s and started the Crown corporation known as Potash Corp. in 1975. It was privatized completely in 1990. BHP is attempting to buy the company for \$39 billion.

It is little-known that Potash Corp. is part of the Canpotex cartel of Potash producers. A *Globe and Mail* editorial recently pointed out that while Canadian foreign

policy condemns cartels such as the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), Saskatchewan will not support BHP's takeover attempt unless the latter remains in Canpotex. If BHP leaves, which it is threatening to do, it could heavily drive down the price of potash, and tax revenues and royalties with it.

Lost in this shuffle is that the potash being taken from the ground is on First Nations land subject to treaties signed with the Canadian government. The Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations says the resources and money that come from this land actually belong to the treaty nations of Treaties 4 and 6. Neither the province nor Potash Corp. have been sharing royalties with Saskatchewan First Nations.

In addition, like many of our favorites on the S/P TSX 60 (the Standard & Poor/ Toronto Stock Exchange index of the 60 largest Canadian companies by capitalization), Potash Corp has been subject to its fair share of controversies. It has been accused of

helping fund the illegal occupation of Western Sahara by Morocco and of destroying wetlands in Saskatchewan.

The TMC theoretically bought Potash Corp. shares about a week after BHP's hostile takeover bid. At the time of the announcement, the share price shot up almost \$30 per share, from \$117 to \$147 in a day, an almost unheard-of rise for a normal day of trading. The TMC bought for \$157 (a really expensive stock) and sold at a loss for \$153 a share two weeks later.

In the meantime, it was revealed that the share price had been manipulated by insider trading of two Spanish men making trades in Chicago. One of the men worked as an advisor for BHP.

Visit toronto.mediacoop.ca to read bi-weekly installments of Media Co-op Investor, published every two weeks.

Geordie Gwalgen Dent is a contributing and sustaining member of the Media Co-op. He lives in Toronto.

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Silent Coup in Haiti

Experts, organizers assess the country's democratic crisis

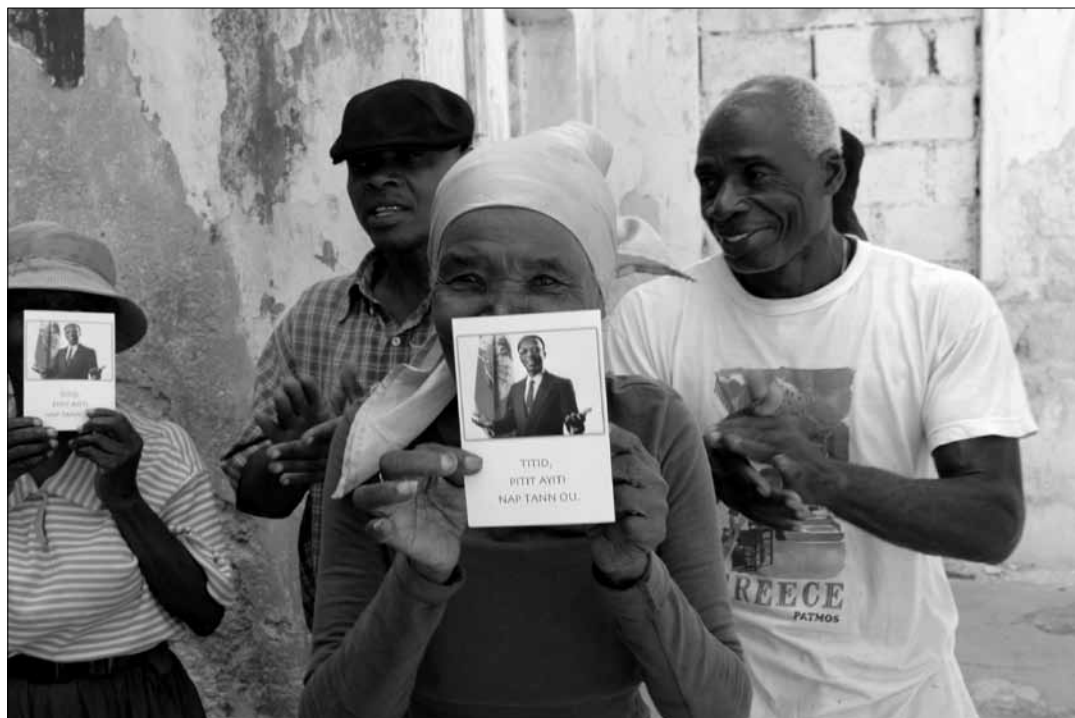
by Darren Ell

MONTREAL—Once again, the people of Haiti are being denied the government of their choosing. While mainstream media focused public attention on candidates such as hip-hop artist Wyclef Jean—ultimately declared ineligible—the most popular political party in Haiti, Fanmi Lavalas, has been banned from the November 28, 2010, Presidential and Parliamentary elections.

Fanmi Lavalas (Lavalas, or FL) grew out of the Lavalas movement that brought down the US-backed Duvalier dictatorship and ushered Jean-Bertrand Aristide to power in 1991. In 2000, during the last democratic election the party was permitted to participate in, it won 90 per cent of Haitians' votes, the equivalent of Canada's Conservative, Liberal, NDP and Green parties combined; or the equivalent of the US's combined electoral support for Republicans and Democrats.

Lavalas' progressive democratic program and Aristide's goal of lifting Haiti from "misery to poverty with dignity" has always been an unsavoury proposal for Haiti's narrow elite and their supporters abroad. Two bloody coups d'état have unseated Aristide: the first in 1991, backed by the US, and the second in 2004, supported also by Canada and France. In each case, thousands of FL activists and supporters were murdered and imprisoned, and Aristide was sent to exile in February 2004. Since the 2004 coup, FL has been banned from participating in Haitian politics.

Support for the party remains strong, though it currently faces significant challenges beyond its exclusion from the elections. The government of Rene Preval, on the other hand, is widely unpopular, especially in the aftermath of the catastrophic January, 2010 earthquake. An estimated 1.7 million survivors now live in unsafe, unsanitary makeshift camps for



Members of Fanmi Lavalas—banned from upcoming elections—at a 2007 meeting in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. Darren Ell

the internally displaced, facing food insecurity and forced evictions.

To discuss the crisis of democracy, *The Dominion* spoke with political figures on the ground in Haiti and abroad. Brian Concannon is a founder and director of the Institute for Justice and Democracy in Haiti (IJDH). Kim Ives is a member of the editorial board of *Haiti Liberte*. Roger Annis is a member of Canada Haiti Action Network. Akinyele Umoja is an Associate Professor of African-American Studies at Georgia State University and founding member of the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement.

For the full two-part interview, visit www.dominionpaper.ca.

Darren Ell: Is there any way of knowing if Fanmi Lavalas is as popular today as it was prior to the earthquake?

Kim Ives: Anybody doing a cursory sidewalk poll can establish FL's support in a few hours. In March 2010, I asked dozens of

people: "In the quake's aftermath, would you like to see the return of President Aristide?" The responses came back 90 per cent in favor, 10 per cent against. Another key indicator of that support was the success of the April and June 2009 nationwide boycotts of the partial Senate elections, where less than five per cent of the population participated because FL was excluded.

What is the reason for Fanmi Lavalas' popularity?

Brian Concannon: When I have asked this question, Haitian voters—many of them critical of some FL policies or leaders—usually say, "Because Lavalas (or President Aristide) has not betrayed the Haitian people." Voters believe that FL at least tries to implement progressive policies designed to promote social equality in Haiti and improve the lives of the majority of Haitians who are poor, and resists pressure from Haitian elites and the international community to increase social inequality.

What is the current state of Fanmi Lavalas? How organized is it and how did the earthquake affect it? Are there splits in the party?

Akinyele Umoja: As someone who has worked in the civil rights movement in the US where repression was long and intense, I know that repression has a negative effect on any such movement. Party representatives I met in Haiti suggested that this has occurred in Haiti and that the movement is not consolidated. Yet it seems to have widespread support. On the celebration of Aristide's birthday on July 15, 12,000 people marched. If they can do that, they can mobilize people politically now.

Why have so many observers stated that the Interim Electoral Commission (CEP), the organization that approves the official list of candidates, is not credible? Why has the CEP banned Fanmi Lavalas from the electoral

process?

Brian Concannon: The CEP was chosen in 2009 through an unconstitutional process that gave the president undue influence over the choice of councillors. Over the past year, the Council has confirmed the fears of observers across the political spectrum that it would advance the interests of the president's party over the interests of the constitution and Haiti's voters. The Council's most egregious act has been the unjustified disqualification of 14 political parties from across the spectrum, including FL, from the legislative elections.

FL was banned from the upcoming 2010 Presidential elections by a CEP decree that parties could not register unless the head of the party registered in person. Haitian law provides no basis for such a claim. In Haiti as in Canada or the US, people are freely allowed to delegate authority through authenticated written instruments. This action by the CEP was clearly aimed at FL, because it is the only party whose leader is in involuntary exile.

What has been the reaction in Canadian and American political circles to the banning of Fanmi Lavalas from the 2010 elections?

Roger Annis: I'm not aware of a single Canadian political party or representative aware of the undemocratic character of the upcoming election in Haiti or voicing concern about it. Interestingly, the federal government is by all accounts following developments closely. Minister of Foreign Affairs Lawrence Cannon was in Haiti for three days in early May to get a first-hand look at Canada's support for prisons and police training and equipping. He announced new spending in those areas and he was an early voice speaking in support of a sham election.

Brian Concannon: The US Administration, like much of the official International Community, believes that President Preval's team has done a good job managing Haiti, including advances in financial accountability and

transparency, and would like to see that team continue to run Haiti. This is a short-term expedient that will come back to haunt the US, Canada and other countries because the elections will not produce a government with the political or moral legitimacy to effectively implement a reconstruction plan. The government will have to make very difficult decisions (such as about rural versus urban spending, initiatives supporting the middle class versus the poor, etc.) and request its citizenry—already tired and angry—to make more sacrifices. This will be very difficult for a government lacking popular support.

To some extent, the Haitian government and MINUSTAH (the UN forces) will be able to keep basic peace by force of arms, but that will not allow effective governance. I also fear that citizens who feel they cannot choose their government through the ballot will engage in more disruptive tactics, which will lead to social unrest and possibly a violent response by the police and MINUSTAH, which will in turn touch off a cycle of violence.

How about Canadian and American media? We hear a lot about Wyclef Jean but nothing about Fanmi Lavalas.

Roger Annis: Canada's media has failed to inform Canadians about the flawed election in the making,

including the formal exclusion of Haiti's only mass representative party, Fanmi Lavalas. This is not simply oversight or ignorance. I have conducted extensive correspondence with programs and senior news editors at CBC Radio about this matter, for several months now. They are either disbelieving or uninterested. The same can be said for the editors of Canada's print media.

This is not a proper response from a serious media outlet, but sadly, Haiti does not seem to merit the same standard of journalism that might apply to similar situations in other countries. Imagine, for a moment, that the government in Venezuela was conducting that country's electoral affairs in a way similar to Rene Preval's discredited regime in Haiti. Canada's editors and news writers would be screaming, and writing, at the top of their lungs. And we wouldn't hear the end of it from the federal government.

Is it fair to say that the international community does not want to see democracy in Haiti? And if so, why, especially considering Haiti's great need and the sums of money promised for reconstruction by the international community?

Kim Ives: The US, France and Canada cannot tolerate any sovereign and nationalist state in Latin America, least of all Haiti.

Their subversion and coups d'etat of the past show that clearly. In particular, the US won't stand for it because of Haiti's geopolitical position across the strategic Windward Passage from socialist Cuba and its sharing of the island with the Dominican Republic (DR), an important US ally and business partner. Any radical progressive social change in Haiti would have a huge impact on the DR, where many Haitian migrants and Haitian ancestry Dominicans live, many travelling back and forth between the two countries.

Haiti is also, after Cuba, the most populous nation in the Caribbean, and in many ways, Latin America's most African country. Racism has played a major role in Haiti's subjugation, denigration, and constant political crises—stoked by North America and Europe since Haiti's groundbreaking 1804 revolution.

The great sums of money promised to Haiti after the quake are primarily earmarked to go to US contractors like Halliburton, DynCorp, and Kellogg Brown & Root [now KBR]. The "reconstruction" is a golden opportunity to channel billions to the Pentagon's principal contractors and rebuild Haiti as Washington sees fit.

Darren Ell is a teacher, photographer and freelance journalist residing in Montreal. From 2006 to 2008, he documented the legacy of the 2004 coup d'etat.

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The Cost of Free

What does charity do for a local economy?

by Darren Fleet

VANCOUVER—“Thirty years of development aid and the basic nature of poverty hasn’t changed,” said Pablo Recalde, the head of the United Nations World Food Program for Zambia, as we travelled the country’s sandy roads.

I was part of a press convoy hitching a ride in his decked-out UN land rover to a rural medical outpost called Makunka Health Centre. Only 30 kilometres from Livingstone, the third largest city in the country, the journey took over three hours over non-existent tracks.

My Zambian colleagues and I were covering a standard aid photo-op. Godfrey Mpende and Angela Mutale were two notable Livingstone journalists making the salary of a top reporter: US \$150 per month.

Clinics serve as community centres in the bush. Makunka is the size of a small elementary school gymnasium with two wards—one for men and one for women—with a recent paint job. Two nurses worked on staff. At the medical station, toddlers had the fat of their arms measured with tailor’s tape to judge if their gaunt bodies qualified for emergency bags of pounded maize, the staple food in the country.

Sixty-five per cent of the country lives in rural areas like those surrounding Makunka. On this particular day about 30 mothers trickled in from surrounding areas to receive enough maize for two weeks, after which time, if available, they would return again to the clinic. Many of the mothers were farmers themselves and most were in their teens or early twenties. Only 10 years ago life expectancy in Zambia was a paltry 33 years of age and there is a noticeable lack of elders in the country. Grey hair is about as common as a paved road. HIV/AIDS nearly wiped out an entire generation.

Poised for success at independence in 1964, in 2006 Zambia was drowning in debt before the bulk of this crippling foreign debt was erased. Now Zambia is the poorest non-conflict country in the world.

The youthful mothers watched patiently as their children were measured and weighed, their names given a checkmark on a written ledger after which they received their share of *nshima* (pounded maize). Their share was calculated on the same scale that weighed the child. The absurd display of weights and balances is an unfortunate part of development projects ensuring that “aid” reaches the deserving and not swindlers.

As Dambisa Moyo’s 2009 book *Dead Aid: Why Aid is Not Working and How there is a Better Way for Africa* shows us, the international development industry has entrenched a destructive class in Sub-Saharan Africa, making close oversight one of the many strings attached to foreign aid.

Pablo Recalde oversaw the feeding of three million people each day and was in charge of yet another UN development scheme, this one called “Production for Progress.” The idea was to give small-scale farmers a guaranteed market for their crops and prevent the surplus production from rotting in isolated silos.

Encouraged to grow grain for profit, a guaranteed market for goods is an entrepreneur’s dream and can break the nightmare of poverty and aid dependency.

But it has achieved neither. Selling food to aid agencies is not a real economy. Where is the demand for local grain when everyone in the country is fed through aid handouts?

In the rural south of Zambia chronic malnutrition was rampant in 2008 when news broke that small land holders were selling all of their maize at the end of harvest season leaving no food for their own families through the



A young mother and her child wait for food in rural Zambia. Few who donate their dollars realize that “free” can have disastrous and costly consequence.

Darren Fleet

arid months. The story made me chuckle since it was one of many constant and absurd experiences of the NGO world. As the hot season bleached their fields the farmers knew the aid agencies would feed them. They had

become fluent in the economy of aid—the biggest employer in the country. Welfare fraud by any other name, you would be hard pressed to find a person anywhere in the world who would not do the same given the circumstances.

In Zambia I witnessed the greatest economic ingenuity I have ever seen: street kids pooling their pennies to purchase a single newspaper and rent it to readers; illegal gas stations selling watered-down fuel at a discount (gas was US \$3 per litre in 2009); women

If the consequences were not so dire such clothing might deserve a second smirk. But that hockey jersey under the hot sun bears no irony.

Having a shirt is a luxury in many parts of Zambia. Having a job is an even greater luxury.

"While a 'free' shirt solves a short-term need the shadows cast by the shuttered doors of Livingstone's former textile factories point to the real problem: a once vibrant, though small, fabric industry has gone bust."

buying up bread at the grocery store to re-sell it after hours on the same grocery store steps; little girls selling individual cigarettes for seven cents (a two-penny mark up); old men in "phone booths," which consisted of a cell phone, a cardboard sign, and three minutes' worth of talk time; farmers selling all of their maize on the presumption that aid agencies would give it all back.

To understand the nature of poverty in Zambia it is worth revisiting Pablo Recalde's observations: 30 years of development aid had not changed the basic nature of poverty in the country. That aid is the problem in Zambia is the premise of Zambian economist Moyo's bestseller *Dead Aid*.

"...Over \$US 1 trillion of African aid, and not much good to show for it," she writes.

How could good intentions go so wrong? Everyday community groups, governments, NGOs, rock stars, churches, school groups and others throughout the West raise dollar after dollar to send in response to the fetishization of aid in support of inflicted and uneducated and starving Africans as seen on TV. Without thinking about the consequences of charity glut few who donate their dollars ever realize that "free" can have disastrous and costly consequences.

Take clothing as an example. In Livingstone I saw a man wearing a Winnipeg Jets jersey.

Unemployment in the formal sector is well above 50 per cent and those with an income have the incredible burden to provide for endless dependants. While a "free" shirt solves a short-term need the shadows cast by the shuttered doors of Livingstone's former textile factories point to the real problem: a once vibrant, though small, fabric industry has gone bust. It cannot compete with free.

Donated clothing generally comes in massive containers shipped from rich countries. I once helped fill one of these containers. I have since seen several of these "donated" bins unloaded into massive piles in third world market squares, thus squeezing out local textile producers. I have even seen Value Village tags still on the sleeves of clothing in Zam-

bian bazaars. Moyo rightly notes that "free" comes at a cost since it disrupts nascent economic channels and keeps even the smallest of indigenous businesses from developing.

Moyo describes the eroding aspects of charitable mosquito nets which have the ultimate impact of putting local net makers out of business. She states:

Enter vociferous Hollywood movie star who rallies the masses and goads Western governments to collect and send 100,000 mosquito nets to the afflicted region, at a cost of a million dollars. The nets arrive, the nets are distributed, and a 'good' deed is done. With the markets flooded with foreign nets, however, our mosquito net maker is promptly put out of business.

Moyo calls this the micro/macro paradox: the sacrifice of long-term growth for short-term gain. If local investment were supported instead of the guilt-relieving cauldron of "free," the village would be able to produce its own mosquito nets. That mosquito net maker would then earn enough money to feed his family and send his kids to school, rather than rely upon aid agencies for every aspect of his existence. This phenomenon is one of Moyo's primary arguments against development aid. This view is compounded by her assertion that aid rarely, if ever, gets to those it is intended for.

More than 85 per cent of direct foreign aid is misallocated, says Moyo. What is worse, the most chronic offenders of misappropriation are never punished.

In hopes of retaining past loans, donors re-finance loans to the worst offenders.

Although most African states claim to be democracies the reality is that rulers have very little need for the people other than as leverage to access more foreign aid. Leaders are more accountable to donors and companies because their budgets do not come from taxing the people, notably the middle class, which is scant in Zambia.

"Aid effectiveness should be measured against its contribution to long-term sustainable growth, and whether it moves the greatest number of people out of poverty in a sustainable way. When seen through this lens, aid is found to be wanting," writes Moyo.

The nail in the coffin of her addicted-to-aid argument is the example of Chinese investment. Much to the chagrin of European states still basking in their colonial fiduciary ties as former colonial masters, Moyo has titled an entire chapter, "The Chinese are our Friends."

Chinese investment will fill the hole that aid has been poorly filling since the 1950s and offer Africa what it most desperately needs: investment and employment. The reason, she says, is that China offers trade, not aid. Something the West has yet to do on such a scale and without charity.

Darren Fleet is a master's candidate at the University of British Columbia. He has reported from Zambia and Thailand.

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BACK TALK

From family farms to little bags of potting soil

The problem is not only foreign investors who may finance the destruction of farmland (“Farmland Frontier” by Amy Miller, Issue 71: October 2010); it is also the way we think about building cities and towns. Massive amounts of soil are needed every year for urban gardens and building highway supports, so this requires cities to destroy irreplaceable food-producing lands near the city. The denuded land can then easily be used for urban development, as it is now useless for farming. Some soil is replaced at great cost as lawns, gardens, roadbeds, and little bags of potting soil.

We need to place a national moratorium on the destruction of farm and wild lands, and a moratorium on the sale of farmlands from small farm ownership. We need to think about what we are doing with the land that provides our food, with the land owned by people who have dedicated their lives to their farms.

—Janet

Co-opted

I think it is amazing that *The Dominion* covered the co-operative model developed in Sacre-Coeur (“Weathering the Storm” by Chris Scott, Issue 70: September 2010). The co-operative world is full of great examples of collective economic action. But this fact alone should not prevent us from having a critical perspective about these initiatives.

The original article about Boisaco was featured in the Labour section of *The Dominion*. But where are the labour voices? Dozens of articles recently written in the mainstream press about Boisaco have been about a unionization drive. The legal and political question is this: can workers who have a minority share in a co-op—as is the case with Boisaco—form a union? And does the Quebec Labour Code apply to workers in a co-op?

A legal case on this issue bounced from one court to another until it finally reached the Supreme Court in 2007, which transferred it to the Commission des relations du travail. It took so long that the delays (and intimidation from the company) killed the unionization drive in 2009.

The context: on October 14, 2001, a majority of the workers signed a union card with the Syndicat canadien de l’énergie et du papier (SCEP), affiliated with the FTQ. What happened next? Boisaco (which, in itself, is not a co-op) withdrew its contract with Unisaco and handed it to another company named 2430-1657 Quebec Inc. This company has the same management as Boisaco. You get the point. 2430-1657 Quebec inc rehired all the Unisaco workers except 12—who were nicknamed “the 12 apostles.”

After having scared the potential rogue workers, it was back to business as usual. The legal battle was therefore between Unisaco and the FTQ, the major Quebec union, which committed to defending the 12 sacked workers (and its own interest). But who is interviewed in *The Dominion* article? A boss (Marc Gilbert) and an academic without any critical perspective. This is disappointing.

Instead of being an infomercial for Boisaco, the article could have focused on the accidental deaths of four of Boisaco’s workers in the past 20 years or the various fines the company has had to pay for illegal logging. Another interesting angle could have been the illegal contract, signed without public bidding, that Boisaco got with the Innu band council of Pessamit (Betsiamites) in 2007. Boisaco paid the Innu 75 cents per cubic metre while the going rate was \$14. Is that a fair deal?

Thanks for publishing stories about economic alternatives to capitalism. We need more publications like yours, more outlets in which coverage of the grassroots is coupled with journalistic rigour. I am sure this is a work in progress.

—Philippe Morin

Dunkin’ Duncan

When John Duncan accumulates 11 years of proving himself not to be the cretinous, racist, ass-kissing darling of logging companies, and who has Indigenous interests in mind, then he can be free of criticisms (“New Minister a ‘Declared Enemy’ of First Nations” by Martin Lukacs, Issue 71: October 2010).

—Greg

As a First Nations person I stand for the protection and respect of Mother Earth’s life-giving forests, yet for the political agenda of a few our forests have been massacred for propaganda purposes in the name of unwanted advertisements aptly called junk mail. In short we are trashing our planet rather than treasuring her as the very source of our life. Unless John Duncan has had a radical shift in consciousness I do not feel that he is qualified to be the Minister of Indian Affairs as he does not represent the values of the First Nations people.

—Shirley Morden

Have some back talk for us? Drop us an e-note (info@dominion-paper.ca), mail us a letter (Box 741, Montreal, QC H3G 2M7), or start a conversation online (dominionpaper.ca) with a comment on one of our stories. The Dominion reserves the right to edit for length and style.

Master of the Grasses

South American Capybara breeds quick, swims swift, sleeps in spurts

Found in rivers, swamps, ponds and other freshwater bodies throughout South America, the capybara grazes on grasses and aquatic plants. This sheep-sized rodent—it is the largest of the rodents—is most comfortable in the water, and can stay submerged for up to five minutes.

Reminiscent of an aquatic hippo-guinea pig, the capybara can reach up to four feet in length. Few reach that size, however, as they are preyed on from the sky by harpy eagles, from the water by caimans and from the land by jaguars, pumas, ocelots and anacondas. Capybaras have adapted to these threats by breeding rapidly, swimming swiftly with their webbed feet, sleeping for short periods during the day and grazing at night. The capybara can sleep underwater, keeping only its nostrils above the surface.

Its name derives from a name meaning "master of the grasses" in the Indigenous Guarani language, and its Greek name, Hydrochaeris,

means "water hog." The furry, water-dwelling beaver-pig is also hunted for its hide, which has the characteristic of stretching in one direction, and its meat. At one point the Catholic Church classified the sleek aquatic herbivore as a fish, making it an appropriate food while observing Lent. According to legend, 16th-century missionaries hinted that their converts (in modern-day Venezuela) would starve if they were not able to dine on the meat of the hardy rodent.

Capybaras are highly social, living in groups of ten or more that feature a dominant male. They communicate with a combination of purrs, clicks, whistles and grunts. The gregarious web-footed grass-munchers also communicate by scent; the dominant male is identifiable by a prominent scent gland on his nose, which he uses to wipe pheromones on grasses to mark his group's territory. Young capybaras will form their own group within a group, and nurse from any of the group's females.



A baby capybara wants in on the photo.

John Trevor Gibbs

A capybara named Boris became a local legend in Scotland last January after he escaped from a zoo. Locals reported sightings of an animal the size of a sheep with the head of a bear, until word spread about an escaped capybara. He "led the life of Riley for months," reported the Ayrshire Post, until cold autumn weather forced Boris to seek food and

warmth in the local residents' gardens and porches. He was finally captured whilst "warming his backside" at a dryer vent inside a garage, according to retired businessman David Hammond. Hammond quickly closed the garage door, and Boris was returned the zoo.

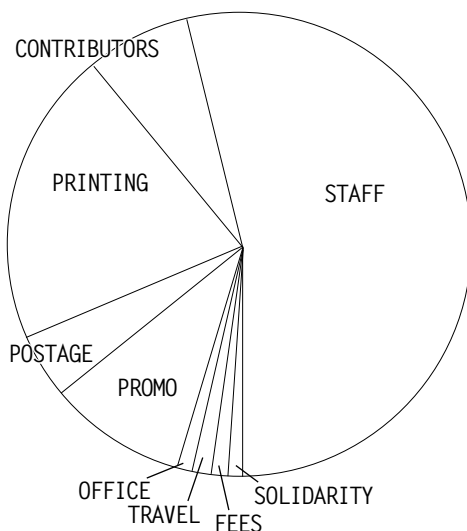
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This month, we will launch a page on the Media Co-op website where you can vote for and comment on priority areas for budgeting the Media Co-op's money.

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A tar sands tailings pond. "It's hard to imagine a refining and mining process of this scale that doesn't have an impact," Cameron said. "That would be some kind of immaculate conception."



Cameron at a meeting in Fort Chipewyan with the Athabasca Chipewyan and Mikisew Cree First Nations. Community members have been plagued by rare and lethal cancers.



The Athabasca River flows into Lake Athabasca, the main source of water and fish for the downstream Indigenous communities. A recent study found elevated levels of mercury, lead and 11 other toxins in the river, contradicting government and industry claims that oil development has left the water unaffected.



James Cameron (left) on a helicopter tour over tar sands development with Indigenous representatives.

Appropriate Culturation

photos by Arthur Manuel

James Cameron, director of 3D blockbuster *Avatar*, toured Alberta in late September on the invitation of First Nations downstream of the Tar Sands, in what AFN National Chief Shawn Atleo called a "moment where art imitates life." Indigenous activists from impacted communities who escorted Cameron weren't, however, looking for a Jake Sully—they've already been effectively mounting an international campaign to shame oil companies and the Canadian and Albertan governments. Cameron's Hollywood celebrity did attract a frenzy of media attention and pressure.

At the trip's end, Cameron issued a call for significant reform, but not a shutdown, of the tar sands. "It will be a curse if not managed properly or it could be a great gift if managed properly... Right now it's going in the wrong direction... I think the federal and provincial government need to play a stronger role." He also pledged a "life-long commitment" to promoting indigenous rights and promised to fund a First Nations' lawsuit. The day after Cameron's visit, Environment Minister Jim Prentice formed the first federal scientific panel to study the tar sand's water impacts.

BIG TRUCKS AND BIG MONEY

In 2007, *The Dominion* published a special issue on the tar sands, exposing the industry's impacts on the environment, the economy and human rights. Back then the *Globe & Mail*, CBC and other corporate media thought the only interesting stories in Fort McMurray, Alberta were heavy haulers and wealthy workaday roughnecks.

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