

*In This Issue:*

Congress Watch .....	1	Vernon Township .....	10
Hightower .....	1	Occupy .....	11
Why I Vote .....	7	Democracy .....	12
Governing 101 .....	8	Yes, We Did! .....	13
Dold .....	9	Feat of Clay .....	14

**For information or to volunteer:**  
 Email us at [newsletter@tenthdems.org](mailto:newsletter@tenthdems.org)  
 Or visit our website at [www.tenthdems.org](http://www.tenthdems.org)  
 Or call us at 847.266.VOTE (8683)  
 Or write to Hon. Lauren Beth Gash, Chair,  
 Tenth Dems, P.O. Box 523, Deerfield, IL 60015

**Editors:** Barbara Altman, Susan Friedman,  
 Allan Sperling

**Editorial Staff:** Jack Altschuler, Joan  
 Attenberg, Eleonora di Liscia, Hon. Lauren  
 Beth Gash, Adrienne Kirshbaum, Ron  
 Levitsky, Leslie Lipschultz, Mike Lofstrom,  
 Kimberly Rodriguez, Steve Sheffey

**Design:** Sean Kealey

**Photo credits:** Hightower Event - Ravi  
 Ganapathy, Occupy Wall Street - Henry Torres

**Distribution:** Ravi Ganapathy, Glenn Stier

*The opinions expressed are those of the  
 writers, and not necessarily endorsed by  
 Tenth Dems*

## Dold Stealthily Votes to Restrain a Woman's Right to Choose

by Barbara Altman

Lately, Republican leaders in Congress have been talking about jobs and the economy. But their legislative agenda focuses on neither. Rather, Republicans have been escalating the culture wars, most recently passing legislation to limit a woman's ability to make decisions about her healthcare and to obtain needed emergency services.

Freshman Republican Congressman Robert Dold is no exception. On October 13, the Republican House passed, on an almost exclusively party-line vote, a bill to radically curtail women's access to safe and legal abortions. Although one of the two lone Republicans who joined 172 Democrats in voting against this assault on women's rights is a member of Illinois' Congressional delegation, that Illinois



Republican does not represent the 10th District. Robert Dold cast his vote for his Party, not for his Illinois 10th District constituents.

On October 13, Dold joined 250 other Republicans in supporting H.R. 358, which NARAL Pro-Choice America, among others, has aptly dubbed the "Let Women Die" bill.

*continued on page 7*



# Tenth News

[www.tenthdems.org](http://www.tenthdems.org)

NOVEMBER 2011 Illinois Tenth Congressional District Democrats Newsletter Volume 8, Edition 11

## Hightower Charms at TDU Event

by Kimberly Rodriguez

Warm and folksy, and wearing a cream-colored cowboy hat, America's number one populist, Jim Hightower, took the podium at Pinstripes in Northbrook and wowed the crowd with humor, acerbic wit, and commonsense commentary about politics and current American events. The capacity audience of nearly 300 was eager to hear Hightower's views on America and politics today.

Democrats. Progressives. Agitators. Americans. Hightower's theme invoked the power of the American people to create change through politics and shape democracy and freedom in America.

Hightower began, "It's a fabulous turnout on a gorgeous day. Thank you so much. What a credit to your spirit to do something about what's going on in this country. Just makes me happier than a flea at a dog show to be standing here looking out at you Chicago-area champions of common sense and common good, [you] Republican butt kickers, you corporate greed whackers—you agitators! America's proud progressive values of social justice, economic fairness, equal opportunity for all people—that is really what we stand for!"

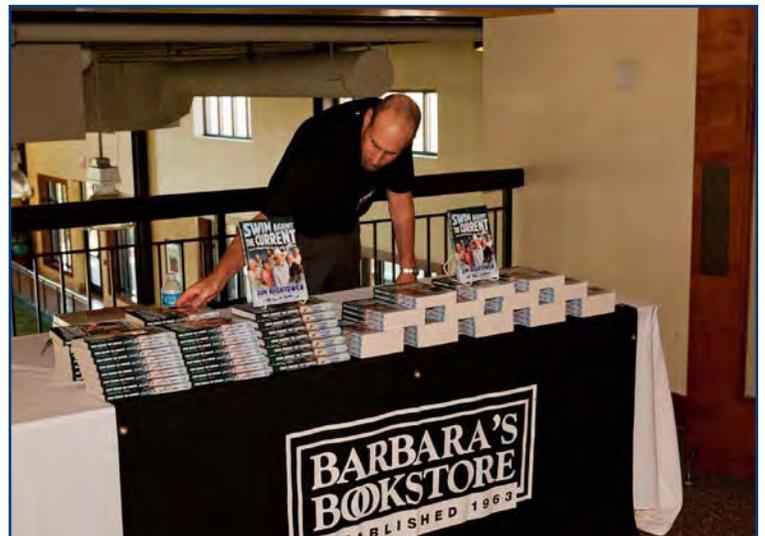
Building on the theme, Hightower praised the positive value of Democrats working as agitators. "Agitators," he said. "We would be singing 'God Save the Queen' if it weren't for agitators! Agitators



are the spindle of the washing machine that gets the dirt out! We need your agitation now more than ever before!" Declaring

*continued on page 2*

# Tenth Dems Volunteers Open Hightower TDU Event to Early Arrivals; Hightower's *Swim Against the Current: Even a Dead Fish Can Go With the Flow* Available for Sale



## Hightower *continued from page 1*

that Wall Street and Washington, D.C., need change, Hightower recounted the actions of “big shots, bastards, and bull-s---ers” whom he charged with “not only attempting to impose plutocracy over democracy [in our society] by using money and influence, but also taking jobs, healthcare, education, public safety, clean air and water; manipulating laws to limit rights as citizens and increasing the personhood of corporations.” Criticizing *Citizens United*, “the Supreme Court ruling that money equals speech,” Hightower wryly pointed out that, in Texas, “a corporation is not a person...until [the state] executes one.”

Hightower next applied his powerful rhetoric to the actions of the burgeoning movement, Occupy Now!, which was encamped in Chicago at LaSalle and Jackson Streets. “Young people are demonstrating in the streets because the current political structure is failing them. It’s not enough to become progressive. We’ve been progressive for years. The need now is to be ‘A-ggressive’ against the powers-that-be who are ‘Re-gressive.’ Those young people are uniting us and taking it for us. We can’t be button-wearers... this is

an extension of that [American] revolution. Take a look at the powers-that-be and their ‘tinkle-down’ economics. The banksters that played the casino that crashed our economy are getting bonuses while the ‘crashees’ are getting eviction notices and pink slips.”

A masterful storyteller, Hightower also spoke about the viperous attacks on unions by corporate media and Republicans, the distorted stories told by corporate-owned media, and the truth about the recent attacks on unions. He illustrated his point by telling the story of U.S. Air Flight 1549, The Miracle on the Hudson, and the heroic actions of Captain Chesley “Sully” Sullenberger.

Capt. Sullenberger was safety chairman of the Airline Pilots Association. When he safely ditched his stricken plane into the Hudson River, he used his training—demanded by the union and paid for by the airlines—to save the lives of 155 people.

As Hightower pointed out, the media focused on Sullenberger as the sole hero. But he had a copilot who was also a union pilot; the flight attendants were an important link of the onboard safety chain, and they were union workers; the crews from ferry boats and city

*continued on page 3*





## Hightower *continued from page 3*

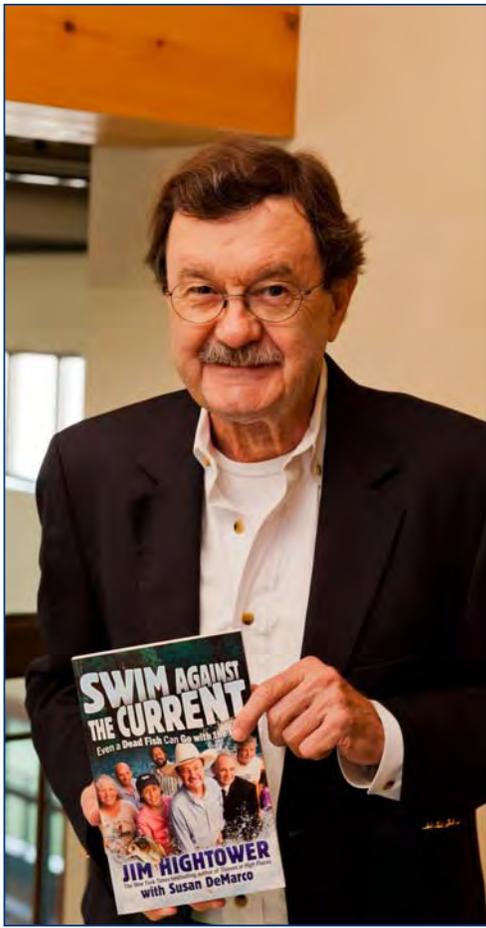
need to bring them into the fold.... We need to have the big talk, not the small talk in coffee klatches. Reach out to the union halls, workplace, grocery store, and at the gas pump. We got to keep on keepin' on. Tell the story. It's not all high-tech. We can make people's lives better. We can make things bigger. "

To underscore the power of rhetoric, Hightower invoked the rhetoric of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.: "He did not go to the Lincoln Memorial and say 'I have a position paper.' He said, 'I have a dream,' and he painted that dream. We have to make ourselves be heard. Preserve. Trust those values of fairness, opportunity, and justice. Americans have that in their hearts, their guts, and their brains. Carry it forward."

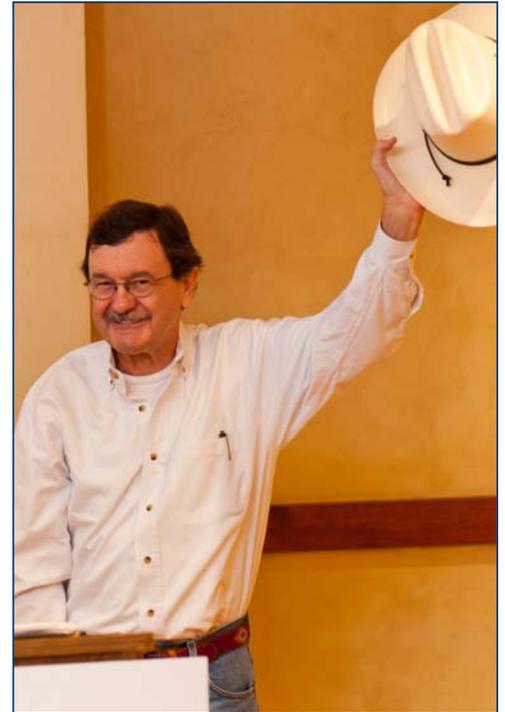
Hightower was generous with praise and gratitude for the leadership of Tenth Dems's Sharon Sanders and Hon. Lauren Beth Gash in bringing him to Northbrook. The free event was sponsored by the Tenth Congressional District Democrats and Tenth Dems University, in conjunction with MoveOn Chicago Councils and WCPT Radio. **TD**



*More photos on the next pages*



More photos on the next pages



More photos on the next page



Jim Hightower with Tenth Dems Chair, Hon. Lauren Beth Gash



Jim Hightower with event photographer, Ravi Ganapathy



Jim Hightower with event organizer and Tenth Dems officer, Sharon Sanders

## Congress Watch *continued from page 1*

Like most of the Republican House’s legislative initiatives this year, H.R. 358 purports to solve a problem that doesn’t exist. As Congresswoman Yvette Clarke (D-NY) said, “Under the Hyde Amendment, federal dollars are not spent on elective abortions. This bill restricts, for the first time, how people with private insurance could choose to spend their private dollars in purchasing health insurance. This restriction limits the freedom of Americans to make their own decisions.”

Not only unnecessary, H.R. 358 also threatens women’s health. One of the most radical provisions of this anti-choice legislation Bob Dold supported would amend the Emergency Medical Treatment and Active Labor Act, known as EMTALA, to allow a hospital emergency department to turn away a woman needing emergency, lifesaving abortion care, even if a physician deems it necessary.

Opposing H.R. 358, Jackie Speier (D-CA) spoke eloquently on the House floor about her own life-saving emergency abortion many years ago, when her late-term pregnancy started to miscarry. Speier said that had the hospital refused her the care she needed, she might have died.

Undoubtedly, Dold would rather voters in the 10th District not know that he supported this latest Republican assault on women’s rights. When we explored his official website on October 15, we found no mention of this bill, even though three prominent press releases touted Dold’s votes on the day before, and the day after, he helped his party pass H.R. 358. In fact, a constituent visiting Dold’s website will find nary a clue that this radical anti-choice bill even came up for a vote.

The 10th District needs a principled representative, not only one who puts country and constituency over Party, but also one who owns up to – or, better yet, stands up for – every vote cast. In a little more than a year, we can elect such a representative. It won’t be Bob Dold. **TD**



## Why I Vote for Democrats *by Adrienne Kirshbaum*

I think that being a Democrat is in my DNA. My father was a Democrat. He wasn’t a wild-eyed partisan like me. He was a highly intelligent man, sensible and ethical. He voted for Democrats because he believed it was the right thing to do. It never occurred to me to support the other party. I knew that Democrats fought for social justice and watched out for the average American. I knew that when I grew up I was going to be a Democrat, too.



The first president I voted for was John F. Kennedy. It was a close election. I worked in a large office building on Michigan Avenue in Chicago, and I remember going down to the cigar stand in the lobby several times a day to check the newspaper headlines and see if anything had changed. I was so afraid that they would recount the votes and find that he had lost. On the tragic day that Kennedy was assassinated, Vice President Lyndon Johnson was sworn into office. At first, he was a very effective leader, passing the Civil Rights Bill and the Voting Rights Act and starting the War on Poverty. His domestic accomplishments were legion, but the Vietnam War

*continued on page 17*

# Governing 101: Tax Cuts for the Rich

by Eleonora di Liscia

The Bush tax cuts for the wealthy are set to expire. You have campaigned against them and want to see them go. But the Republicans are holding hostage a deadline to extend unemployment benefits for 7 million workers unless they get their way. Do you:

- **Give in to the Republicans.** You can't let the unemployed suffer, plus the expiring tax cuts are for the middle class, not just the wealthy. But then you will be accused by your own party of caving in to extortion. And the Republicans want to cut some of your prize programs as well.
- **Call their bluff.** Let it all expire. Then, the Republicans can explain why the unemployed no longer have benefits and why middle class taxes just went up. Your supporters will praise you for sticking to your guns. But then you will hurt the poor, middle class, and unemployed in ways they haven't yet begun to realize, plus estimates show that cutting the 99ers' benefits could cost the economy 600,000 jobs.
- **Carry the fight into next year.** The 99ers might only lose their benefits temporarily while you work out a deal. But, oh yeah, the Tea Party is coming along with a Republican majority in the House led by John Boehner. Remember the guy who said the Republicans' top priority is making you a one-term president? That'll be easy to deal with. Plus, the Tea Party will likely fight key anti-poverty programs such as the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). And months of continued wrangling and uncertainty will damage the economy.
- **Use your personal charisma to sway the Republicans into a deal that's good for the whole country.** Brrrrriinnnnnggg. Whew—is that the alarm clock? You were having such a nice dream.
- **Break the Bush tax cut package into separate votes.** That way, you can at least get the middle class tax breaks extended. But Senate Democrats tried this twice, and Republicans blocked them both times.
- **Make a bargain.** Let the Republicans win on the tax cuts in exchange for keeping programs that help the poor and middle class. But your supporters will continue to say that you are a lousy negotiator and that you are rewarding Republican obstruction. Plus they will resent that you asked them, instead of Republicans, to compromise.

**WHAT OBAMA DID:** If you thought you had elected Don Quixote, think again. This president does not tilt at windmills. Trading symbolic gestures in exchange for real protections for the poor and middle class, Obama gave up what he knew he could not win and made a deal. Although the country supported ending the Bush tax cuts, Republicans made this their key sticking point, refusing to budge an inch; and they had the votes to block any changes. Obama allowed them to keep the cuts for now, vowing to come back and fight another day. But in exchange, Obama retained a host of items important to the poor and middle class, many of which were strongly opposed by Republicans. These are:

- ✓ Thirteen months extension of unemployment benefits for the 99ers, although some said this wasn't enough since the wealthy got two years. However, since the Republicans wanted to make the tax cuts permanent, Obama still gained some ground.



- ✓ The American Opportunity Tax Credit, an Obama program which gives families a \$2,500 credit for tuition. According to Jonathan Alter, millions of students would not be able to attend college without it.
- ✓ The Child Tax Credit, which gives low-income families up to a \$1,000 tax credit per child.
- ✓ The Earned Income Tax Credit, which, according to Alter, is one of the most effective poverty relief programs since Medicare. A family with two children earning less than \$40,000 can get up to \$5,000 back. Obama eliminated the marriage penalty in filing for the EITC and expanded the refund to include three children, where before it had been capped at two. A Tea Party-controlled House would have attacked this program and undone these advances.
- ✓ A one-year, two percent reduction in Social Security tax for workers earning up to \$106,800.
- ✓ Tax breaks and grants for wind and solar energy providers.
- ✓ An array of tax breaks for small business.
- ✓ Tax cuts for the middle class. Without the deal, working families would have seen their taxes increase on average by at least \$3,000.

In all, according to the administration, President Obama gained \$100 billion more for the middle class than Republicans did for the wealthy. While extending the tax cuts for the wealthy is a bitter pill, the alternative would have been disastrous. Obama could have gained a hollow political victory standing on the backs of the unemployed, poor, and middle class. Instead, he chose not to play politics with their lives, even at a political cost to himself. **TD**

# Dold: Wrong on Too Many Issues

by Steve Sheffey

Robert Dold (R-Kenilworth) has been saying for weeks that he wants a bipartisan jobs bill, yet he refuses to sign on to President Obama's jobs bill.

Dold can't even bring himself to support a higher marginal tax rate for millionaires and billionaires. It's clear whose side Dold is on, and it's not ours. We need more revenue. Those who are most fortunate should pay their fair share. As President Obama said, "This is not class warfare. It's math." But Dold doesn't get it.

Dold is a partisan Republican. Dold votes with the Republican Party 82 percent of the time. Want to make some quick money? Pick any vote at random and bet that Dold voted the way John Boehner voted. You'll win more than four out of five times.

Dold's percentage would be even higher if he did not occasionally vote against his party on meaningless votes. For example, Dold (and Judy Biggert, another Republican who's not above playing these games) first voted against defunding Planned Parenthood, but as Bill Beckman, Executive Director of the Illinois Right to Life Committee explained, "The irony is that when they had the final bill passage, they flipped. Both voted for [the bill that defunded Planned Parenthood]. We're playing games here in reality. Which is better: that they voted against the amendment and for the final bill or vice versa? I'll tolerate those Republicans if they vote the final bill the right way, even if they want to throw a bone to Planned Parenthood that doesn't count."

But the meaningless votes do artificially lower the Dold's voting-with-his-party percentage. The rate exceeds 82 percent if we only count bills that matter.

Dold is one of 40 co-sponsors, all Republicans, of H.R. 497, the Ronald Reagan Commemorative Coin Act of 2011, which would require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of Ronald Reagan, whose misguided policies and rhetoric set in motion the culture of greed and anti-intellectualism that still plagues our nation. Only a die-hard Republican would cosponsor such a waste of time when our nation has so many more pressing problems.

Dold cares more about restricting women's healthcare rights than about creating jobs. When Dold voted for H.R. 3 (the Republican anti-choice bill) on May 4, EMILY's List President Stephanie Schriock said that "Dold showed his true colors by standing with his Republican leaders and against the women of Illinois. Dold may



have run on job creation, but he has done nothing to create jobs since getting to Washington. Instead, he's done plenty to take away women's freedoms and their opportunities to keep themselves and their families healthy."

H.R. 3 bans tax subsidies for private health insurance plans that include abortion as a covered service, prevents citizens from deducting abortion as a medical expense unless it was the result of rape, incest, or to save the life of the mother, and invites the potential for the Internal Revenue Service to investigate how women who had abortions became pregnant and how they paid for their abortions.

On July 27, Dold went along with Speaker John Boehner and voted for Boehner's debt-ceiling plan. Here's how *The New York Times* described the bill Dold voted for: "[The Boehner plan] is irredeemably awful. It calls for cutting \$1.2 trillion in discretionary spending over 10 years and would only raise the debt limit until early next year. Then it

calls for a second round of spending cuts, \$1.8 trillion, which must be enacted before the debt limit is raised again.

"Because the first round of cuts would eviscerate discretionary programs—and because the plan does not count the anticipated \$1 trillion in war savings—the second round of cuts would need to come from Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security and other safety-net programs. To get cuts that deep in 10 years would require cutting the benefits of current retirees and beneficiaries or gutting healthcare reform, or savaging the safety net for low-income Americans, or some combination of the three."

Not to mention the balanced-budget provisions that Boehner added, which make the bill even worse public policy. Dold claimed he would have voted for the Boehner bill even without the balanced-budget provisions; Dold doesn't even realize he's saying that he would have voted for a terrible bill, and making it worse by adding a balanced-budget amendment did not give him pause. But it was a Republican bill, and Boehner wanted it.

Schriock was right. By voting for Boehner's bill and its irresponsible cuts, Dold showed how little he really cares about job creation. He can utter all the platitudes he wants about job creation and a "big bold bipartisan plan" (note the clever alliteration). He needs to own his votes. Dold has proven again and again that we can count on him to vote with Boehner, not with us.

*continued on page 17*

# Labor Places Vernon Township at the Political Epicenter

by Mike Lofstrom

Redistricting is complete and both parties are sizing up the new political landscape. One thing is for sure—Vernon Township Democrats are at the focus of Lake County and 10th District politics—not just geographically—but in articulating Democratic middle class priorities. Vernon Township encompasses the traditions of the Democratic Party from the historic Adlai Stevenson home in Mettawa to the sparkling Region 4 headquarters of the UAW in Lincolnshire. The township is trending Democratic Blue—while Al Gore and John Kerry each received more than 55 percent of the vote in past presidential elections, Barack Obama garnered 63 percent in 2008. While Lauren Beth Gash received 49 percent of the vote in 2000, Dan Seals improved to 51.6 percent in 2010. In the township election of 2009, the first-ever Vernon Democratic candidate slate received an average of 44.4 percent against their longtime entrenched opposition, winning their first trustee position and finishing close in the Township Clerk and Highway Commissioner races.

Vernon Township is solidly middle-class AND home to our friends in labor—the regional headquarters of UAW located in Lincolnshire. The UAW also recognizes the importance of this area in electoral politics. When Steve Rosenzweig, Chair of the Vernon Township Democrats, and Mike Lofstrom, Vice Chair, met with Region 4 Director, Dennis Williams, and the Illinois Legislative Director, Mark Haasis, in 2006, Dennis explained the process that UAW went through to determine the ideal location for their new headquarters. Lincolnshire was selected over all other potential locations in Illinois based on a number of factors, but the primary one was the growth trend and potential increase in registered Democratic voters in Vernon Township. After an extensive political and socio-economic analysis, the municipalities of Lincolnshire, Buffalo Grove, Vernon Hills, and Riverwoods were considered to be the fastest growing Democratic voter base in all counties of Northern Illinois—including Cook. The UAW political analysis showed that Lincolnshire and Buffalo Grove were at the geographic and population center of a Democratic voter trend taking place in Lake County. Dennis emphasized UAW's intent to support Democratic candidates for office at all levels. He also pledged a considerable amount of support, both financial and in-kind, for the Vernon Township Democratic Organization. Democratic candidates earned the



support of the UAW, and labor followed through. Vernon Dems were granted office space at UAW, and Democratic candidates for office were allowed to utilize the UAW Region 4 building and resources extensively. Over the past several years, the UAW Region 4 office has served as a strong supporter of political and community events for Vernon Township and Tenth Congressional District Democrats. And why not—labor and the Democratic Party share a common goal—to expand the economic and social fabric of our middle class.

The official name of the UAW is “United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America,” and is referred to as UAW. Region 4 includes the nine north-central states of Illinois, Iowa, Nebraska, Wisconsin, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming and Montana. The vast majority of membership is concentrated in the four states of Illinois, Wisconsin, Iowa, and Minnesota, where UAW has over 55,000 active and 78,000 retired members. Region 4 is guided by an elected Director, Ron McInroy, Assistant Director, Brad Dutcher, and Community Action Program Coordinator, Tony Garcia.

Vernon Dems invite concerned residents to join our fight—providing a higher living standard for everyone and preserving our endangered social safety net. Don't just yell at the TV. Get involved. How can you help? Join us at our regular meetings, volunteer to help elect Democratic candidates for local office, and become a member of Vernon Dems—your contribution will help ensure we can carry the fight for middle-class values to the part of Lake County that the United Auto Workers identified as the political epicenter of northern Illinois. **TD**

**To contact Vernon Dems,**

**Website: [www.vernondems.org](http://www.vernondems.org),**

**Email: [vernondems@aol.com](mailto:vernondems@aol.com),**

**Call: 847-452-7781**



# Why Would Anyone Occupy?

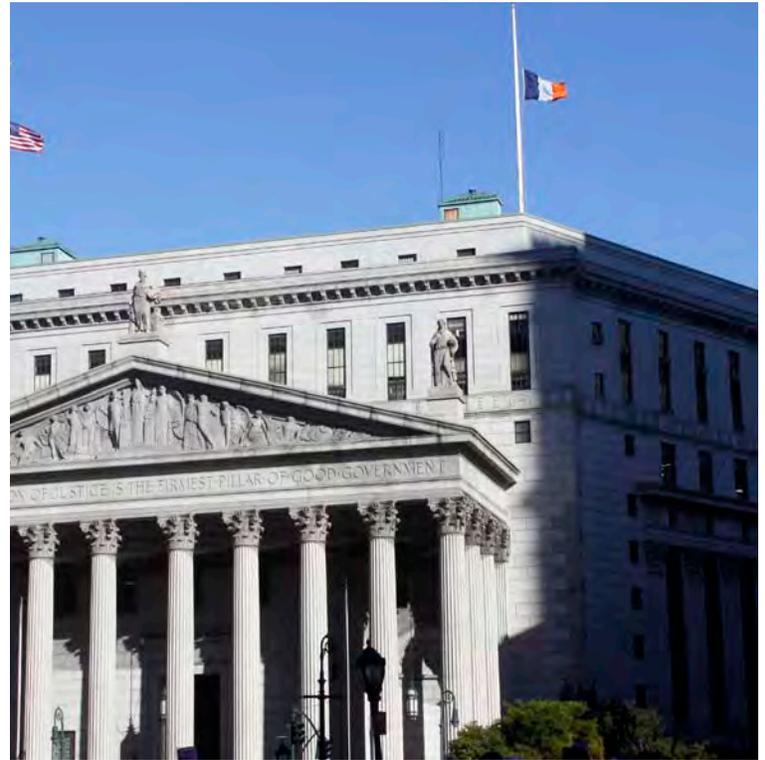
by Jack Altschuler

The Occupy Wall Street demonstrations began modestly and spread quickly. They spread to other lower Manhattan streets, even in the face of police brutality. They spread to D.C., to Chicago and Detroit, to Atlanta and San Antonio, to Portland and Santa Fe, San Diego and Denver, and to cities around the world. There must be something quite powerful going on to motivate millions of people, in over a thousand cities, living in a potpourri of cultures, to take to the streets.

We marched in Chicago on October 6, and in San Antonio, Texas, on October 15, and were struck by the interchangeability of the signs and grievances, the frustration and sense of betrayal. Some marchers were less than clear about remedies they wanted for their grievances while others had reasoned and thoughtful comments. Either way, there was a constant sense that transcended everything. To get an idea of what that sounds like, you have to listen to the people in the streets.

Richard has been a construction worker for decades and had put together a pretty good life until the fall of 2008. He has only worked six months in the last three years because most construction projects have been put on perpetual hold, so he has had neither work nor income. His house is in poor repair because he cannot afford to fix it and is at risk of immediate foreclosure. Richard wants to see the president's jobs bill passed so that infrastructure projects get underway, and he can once again take care of his family and send his daughter to college.

Jonathan is 28 and is a very talented and clever graphic designer who has only been able to find temporary contract work for the past three years. In consequence, he has a less than marginal income, no healthcare insurance, and a mountain of student debt he is unable to pay back. Jonathan wants a full time job with benefits.



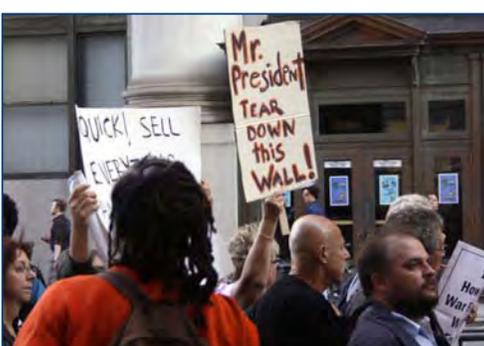
Vicki is a psych nurse in San Antonio who spends 70 percent of her time doing record keeping, instead of working with her patients. She works long shifts because hospitals are always cutting costs, so they don't hire the number of nurses that are needed to properly serve their patients. She reports that within five years of starting a career in nursing a very large percentage of nurses leave the profession because of the overwhelming paperwork load and long duty shifts. Indeed, they enter the profession to serve patients and find that they have little time for that. Instead, they find that they have become double-shift data entry clerks. Vicki wants proper funding for nursing care, yet another piece of the broken healthcare puzzle.

Margo has been a Chicago high school teacher for four years. Two weeks ago, five teachers in her school were laid off and their students dispersed to other classrooms, enlarging the teacher-student ratio yet further. She reports, too, that the self-defeating No Child Left Behind Act requires that teachers instruct students in techniques to pass standardized tests. She is very frustrated over that because teaching to a test leaves insufficient time to teach her students what they actually need to know.

Military recruiters are not only allowed to visit Chicago public high schools, but they also have permanent offices in the schools. As the students see that they aren't getting what they need from their school to succeed in the civilian economy and are off to a dead-end future, the only possibility they see is to join the military. Margo described her students as the next fodder for our perpetual wars. She is passionate about this impossible situation because she has seen her students enlist, only to come home injured physically, spiritually, and mentally, or even in a casket. Margo wants both a redirection of education and proper funding, so she can help to give her kids a chance. And she wants to be able to do her job without wondering if she will be the next to be laid off.

*continued on page 15*

# Democracy in Action



More photos on page 17

# Yes, We Did!

by Eleonora di Liscia

## *The Obama Record on the Environment*

If you want good news about President Obama's environmental record, look at what the right-wing pundits are saying.

When asked by Yale Environment 360 about the president's performance, Kenneth Green from the conservative think tank American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research replied:

"Rather than admitting our economic conditions call for caution and preventing aggressive environmental and energy initiatives from making things worse, EPA and the Department of Energy have focused on an ideological agenda laid out in President Obama's candidacy.... The Obama administration has gone too far in putting the green values of environmental protection ahead of economic values that would put more green in people's pockets."

I mean, wow! Does it get any better than that?

Or how about the administration's look at fracking? *Platts Energy Week* reported that Obama is making energy industry groups "increasingly nervous that this scrutiny could lead to the federal government taking a greater role in the regulation of the process." In that article, Tom Pyle, president of the American Energy Alliance, cautioned, "There's a general hostility by this administration to fossil fuel."

It's true that some recent Obama decisions had even this die-hard defender saying, "Whazzup with that?" But a closer look at the Obama record shows that progressives are once again looking at the glass half empty, when in fact there are many bright spots, even though good intentions have at times been stymied by bad politics.

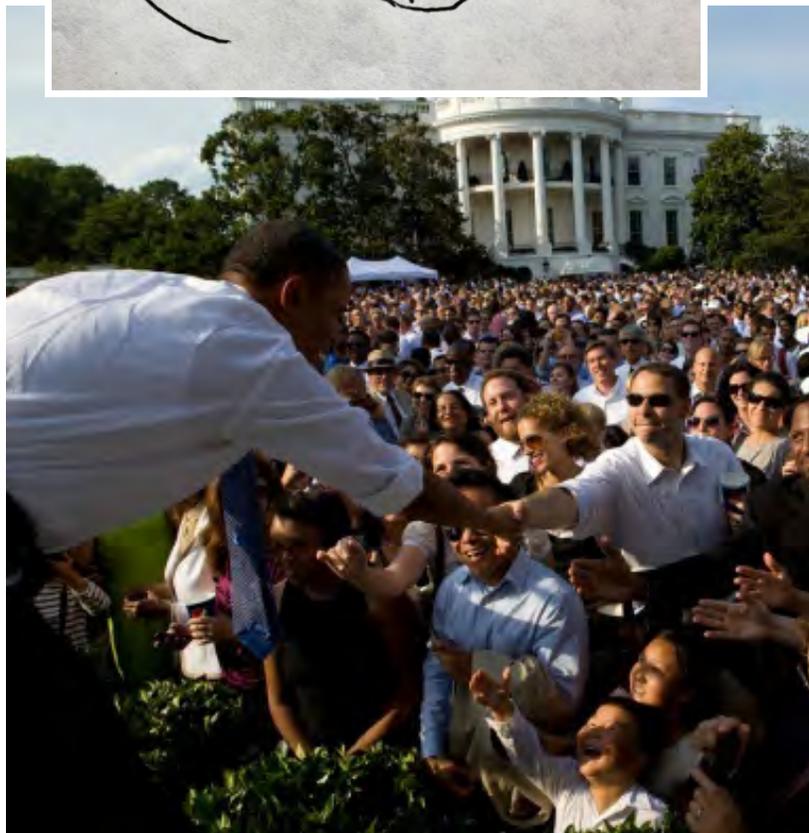
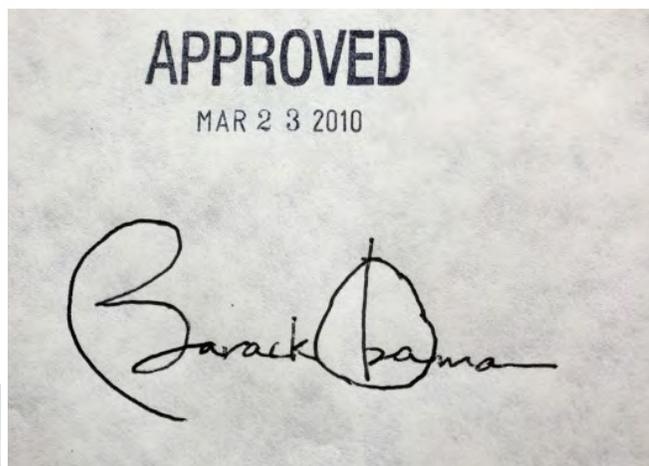
So here are some highlights:

**Fuel Efficiency:** In July, Obama and auto manufacturers reached a deal to raise fuel efficiency standards to an average of 54.5 miles per gallon by 2025, which would cut greenhouse gas production in half and save 1.3 million barrels of oil a day.

**National Monuments:** So far, Obama has proposed 14 new monuments. (Contrast this with Dubya's 3 and Papa Bush's 0.) In response, House Republicans have introduced a bill to block the president's ability to make such designations without congressional approval.

**Fracking:** Both the EPA and the Department of Energy (DOE) are studying the issue. The DOE advisory panel released a series of recommendations in August 2011. The report cautioned: "Public concern and debate about the production of shale gas has grown as shale gas output has expanded. The subcommittee identifies four major areas of concern: (1) Possible pollution of drinking water from methane and chemicals used in fracturing fluids; (2) Air pollution; (3) Community disruption during shale gas production; and (4) Cumulative adverse impacts that intensive shale production can have on communities and ecosystems. There are serious environmental impacts underlying these concerns and these adverse environmental impacts need to be prevented, reduced and, where possible, eliminated as soon as possible."

**Environmental Enforcement:** Unlike Bush, Obama has vigorously pursued enforcement. The Environment and Natural Resources



Division of the Attorney General's Office has been active with a host of civil and criminal matters including prosecuting Deep Water Horizon culprits, protecting water quality in the Everglades and defending the EPA's greenhouse gas regulations. The EPA has prioritized enforcement on air pollution from large sources such as coal-fired utilities. The ENRD has also added a "justice" component to focus on relieving poor or minority communities that are disproportionately burdened from being close to pollution sources.

**Mountaintop Mining:** In April 2010, the administration imposed strict new guidelines on permits for new mountaintop coal mining. The guidelines were based on scientific evidence (another departure from the Bush administration) that rainwater poisoned streams after filtering through the valley fill left over from the mining. According to *The Washington Post*, "The new mining guidelines bar operations that would exceed pollution limits of salt and specified toxins. Experts said few of the region's existing valley fills could have met the new standards." As of September 2011, the administration was drafting new rules to replace Bush-era guidelines in protecting streams from mountaintop removal. The industry fears the new rules could affect underground coal mining as well as surface mining.

*continued on page 16*

# Feat of Clay

by Ron Levitsky

In 1997, President Bill Clinton chose former Republican Senator William Cohen to be his new Secretary of Defense. It was an example of bipartisanship at its best, men from both parties working together for the good of the country. Cohen himself bewailed the change in interpersonal relationships within Congress once Newt Gingrich and many of his fellow conservatives took power.

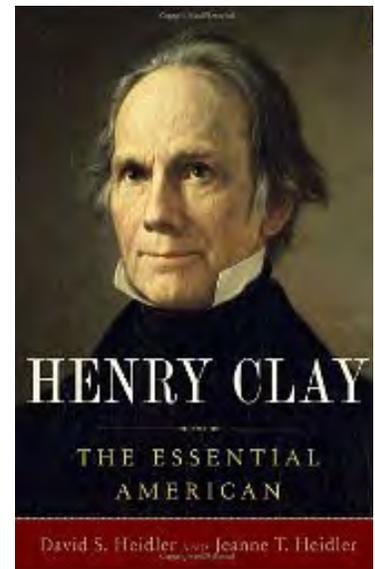
We see the same thing today with the Tea Party influencing the Republican Party not only to tack even more to the right, but also to take no quarter with those opposed to its ideology. In a September 23 article entitled, "GOP Regroups for Funding Fight," the *Chicago Tribune* reporter writes, "Boehner and other top Republicans have vowed to lower the temperature on Capitol Hill after fierce budget battles with Democrats pushed the government to the brink of a shutdown in April and the edge of default in August." Yet, that hasn't happened. One trader for a large asset management firm was quoted as saying, "There is such a lack of belief that we can expect any kind of help to come out of our political leaders."

These right-wing ideologues refuse to budge, as the public's approval rating of Congress sinks abysmally low. In another article, the *Chicago Tribune* quoted Tea Party favorite Representative Joe Walsh as saying, "But when Washington is dysfunctional, that means they're not able to do as much. I think that's a good thing."

As a former history teacher, I enjoy trying to put current events into historical perspective. Take this quote, "The country was in no mood for squabbling and symbolism while the government faced default and bankruptcy." It was written, not about today, but rather about the struggle over fiscal policy in 1840. It's from a recent biography of Henry Clay by David and Jeanne Heidler. Their work, along with Robert Remini's biography, not only offers a fascinating portrait of arguably the greatest member of Congress in our nation's history. It also affords a case study of what makes someone truly a leader and statesman.

Henry Clay lived during an era in which the spread of democracy to all free white men changed politics from a gentleman's club to one of political bosses engaging in backroom deals and pandering to crowds by exchanging substance for slogans. (How's "Tippecanoe and Tyler Too" for a presidential platform?) And there was plenty of violence. While we are understandably horrified by the attack on Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords, political shootings were common before the Civil War. For example, during the 1846 debate over whether Kentucky should rewrite its state constitution to permit emancipation of its slaves, "Judge James Campbell shot Benedict Austin dead after a debate in Paducah." (Heidlers, *Henry Clay: The Essential American*) Of course, this acrimony spiraled the nation closer to eventual Civil War and the loss of over 600,000 lives.

The splintering of the nation was preceded by a splintering of a national vision – that each individual was part of more than his/her family, town or even state. Today, the Tea Party exemplifies a similar sense of insularity. With a higher percentage of white, male, well-to-do, middle-class, and conservative Christians than the general population, Tea Party supporters criticize entitlement programs for the poor, yet are less critical of Social Security and Medicare, on which they rely. As Jim Hightower reports, over the years Governor Rick Perry personally accepted \$80,000 in federal crop subsidies, and



Texas took the third highest amount of stimulus funds of any state. Many Tea Party activists want to reduce the role of government in our lives, except in such areas as abortion and gay rights. They want to cut taxes for the wealthy and healthcare for the poor. A shocking display of callousness occurred during one of the Republican presidential debates. When Congressman Ron Paul was asked, as a hypothetical question, if a seriously ill man who had chosen not to purchase health insurance should be allowed to die, many in the audience laughed and cheered that he should. Paul was visibly disturbed by their reaction.

It doesn't have to be this way. Henry Clay, our greatest Speaker of the House and one of our greatest senators, had the political and moral courage to fight for what was best for the nation, even if it conflicted with his own enormous political ambition. There are three lessons that our political leaders—Republicans especially—can learn from Clay.

See the big picture – what's best for the nation – even if that means changing your position. Beginning as a Jeffersonian who believed in a limited national government, Clay became the leading proponent of what was called the American System. It included a Bank of the United States to keep speculation in check, strong tariffs to help promote the growth of American industry, and federally sponsored internal improvements to tie the country more closely together and stimulate business. According to Remini, "in Clay's mind such improvements benefited not one class or one section of the country, but all of them." (Remini, *Henry Clay: Statesman for the Union*) These positions were unpopular in his home state of Kentucky, which was agrarian, with an economy based, in part, on slave labor.

Although, as a young congressman, Clay was a "War Hawk" who supported the War of 1812, he opposed the invasion of Florida by Andrew Jackson and, later, the Mexican War. Both were popular expressions of the jingoist Manifest Destiny – that American expansionism was divinely ordained. He also abhorred Andrew Jackson's forcible removal of the Cherokee from Georgia, the infamous Trail of Tears. Clay saw these actions as being unfair, unnecessary, and unfitting for a republic. His stand on the Mexican War contributed in 1844 to his defeat for the presidency.

Most remarkable was Clay's position on slavery. Even though a slave owner, like Jefferson he struggled with the contradiction of

*continued on page 16*

## Occupy *continued from page 11*

In the Chicago demonstration, there was a large group of people from Lawndale and surrounding communities, protesting foreclosures. Their long-suffering neighborhoods have declined still further from four years of an expanding epidemic of boarded up windows. They want to see loan restructuring made available.

While each marcher had a pet issue, everyone was furious at the banks and investment houses. They are angry at the deregulation that allowed the banks to do what they did to crash the American economy. They are angry that there are no regulations to stop them from doing it again. They are angry that the bankers who committed fraud have not been charged with crimes. They are angry that the banks who made this mess got bailed out with our money and that still there has been nothing for ordinary Americans. Indeed, the chant, repeated in every city in America was, "Banks got bailed out; we got sold out."

There has been a continuing stream of criticism that these ongoing demonstrations aren't focused, that there is no clarity about what the marchers want. Yet, there is a common thread that runs through the vast variety of signs and chants and it is unmistakable, if only people will listen.

This is an impassioned demand for economic justice. It is a longstanding cornerstone of the Democratic Party, yet somehow there seems to have been a fuzzy focus for far too long, a lack of clarity and direction that has resulted in great harm to millions of people. There is outrage over the blatant and pervasive influence of corporate money on our political system. That influence guarantees an ever-expanding economic, power and rights inequality between those who have so much and all the rest of the American people.

This is a demand for legal justice that is fairly and equitably applied. They want wrongdoers punished, and that applies to the Wall Street gamblers and those who broke the law and got America into our long-term wars.

Finally, this is a cry for equality of opportunity, a level playing field. The 99 percent see an unfairly tilted field that dramatically favors the one percent. Note that the marchers' demands are not for a certainty of their needs being met. It is a demand for fair opportunity.



Ultimately, all of that comes down to fairness. What has been going on for so long is demonstrably unfair, and everyone knows it. Americans grew up being promised the American Dream. They played by the rules and now they see that those in control have stolen that dream from them, leaving them with huge debt, little opportunity, and often dire life circumstances. There is a palpable feeling of betrayal.

Radical change requires confrontation, disruption, and disorder. Since radical change is what the marchers want, it follows that the demonstrations are, and will continue to be, confrontational, disruptive, and disorderly.

For example, recall the disruptive demonstrations of the 1960s that were over civil rights, voting rights, and the war in Viet Nam. Establishment people scoffed then at the protesters, attempting to marginalize them. They called the marchers bums, cowards, lunatics, and nuts. They branded them as divisive and unpatriotic and jailed them. Their name-calling was predictable as those who are well off rarely welcome change that might threaten their circumstances.

Yet, time has proven the marchers of the '60s to have been right. We passed the Voting Rights Act and the Civil Rights Act for solid reasons and improved the lives of millions of Americans as a result. And, because of the lack of support and outright resistance of the American people, the American involvement in the war in Viet Nam was ended. It is now nearly universally accepted that the protesters were right and that the war was wrong for America. All that confrontation, disruption, and disorder led to a new and much better order.

It is somehow both sad and satisfying that the critics of the Occupy marches use exactly the same language and criticisms as those of the '60s. Recognize that the words they use are the opening language of those who feel their power and position threatened. That the one-percenters use that language against the 99 percent suggests that the marchers are on the right path for making the radical change they seek.

Demonstrators in Egypt, Yemen, and Libya said they wanted economic justice and their dignity. Understand that they felt that their dignity had been stripped by the repressive regimes under which they lived, and so it is for the marchers in American cities now, as the demonstrators feel marginalized and held down, made less than who and what they can be by the wealthy elite who control the reins of power in America. The demonstrators want that changed. It's all about fairness. **TD**

**Oceans:** In July 2010, Obama signed an executive order establishing the first national ocean stewardship policy, which creates a coordinated system for managing the oceans, coasts and Great Lakes. The National Ocean Council was created to implement an ecosystem-based policy. Bill Eichbaum from World Wildlife Fund praised the President “for his leadership in convening the task force and heeding its recommendations.”

**Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF):** This fund was designed in 1965 to receive a portion of energy royalties and reinvest them into onshore conservation. LWCF is supposed to get \$900 million a year, but has been consistently shortchanged by Congress. Under Obama, however, LWCF’s funding increased substantially in 2009 and 2010. Funding was cut once again in the 2011 budget debate. For 2012, Obama has pushed for fully funding the \$900 million, but will likely be stymied by the hostile Tea Party-controlled Congress. To help LWCF pressure Congress, see <http://www.lwcfcoalition.org/take-action.html>.

**And More Land Conservation:** Shortly after taking office, Obama signed an omnibus wildlife bill put forward by Senate Democrats. The bill had died in 2008 under threat of a Republican filibuster. The 2009 omnibus combined 159 prior bills. Its components included designating two million acres of wilderness, establishing a National Landscape Conservation System, designating three new National Conservation areas, authorizing the Forest Service to solicit nominations of forests in need of restoration, and adding thousands of miles to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, as well as six new National Trails, three National Parks and ten National Heritage areas.

**Restoring Our Waters’ Ecosystems:** The Obama administration has pushed to restore the Gulf of Mexico, California’s Bay Delta, the Chesapeake Bay, and the Great Lakes. Obama has invested \$775 million in the 2010 and 2011 budgets for an action plan on key threats to the Great Lakes.

**Endangered Species Act:** The Bush administration tried repeatedly to gut the Act. As of 2007, Bush had listed only 57 species, and only because of litigation. By contrast, Obama has been working through 700 pending cases. So far, more than 500 species have been preliminarily recommended for protection. Republicans unsuccessfully tried to strip Endangered Species Act funding earlier this year.

**Superfund:** Established in 1980, this toxic-site cleanup program was to be funded through a tax on chemical and oil industries. Under Newt Gingrich’s leadership, however, Congress let the tax expire, and, so far, Obama’s efforts to prod Congress into reviving the tax have failed. Instead, Obama secured \$600 million in stimulus money for Superfund cleanup.

**Alternative Energy:** The stimulus included a host of new and/or improved tax credits for energy efficiency, including credits for buying an electric car or for installing a solar hot water heater in your home. The stimulus also made funds available for new clean renewable energy bonds.

**Pollution:** The EPA has worked to advance new rules on sulfur oxide

and nitrogen oxide in power plants. Obama signed into law a bill sponsored in part by recent Tenth Dems keynote speaker Sen. Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), which set national standards on formaldehyde off-gassing that matched the greater protections enacted in California. The EPA has proposed the first national standards for mercury, arsenic, and other air pollutants. The administration also took a lead role in crafting an international treaty that limited mercury emissions.

**Sustainability:** An October 5, 2009 Executive Order requires federal agencies to design, construct, and operate sustainable buildings. Guidelines state that agencies should prioritize sites that are centrally located and are within walking, biking, or public transit distance. Further, agencies should favor previously-developed space, avoid building on green space, preserve existing ecosystems, and promote climate change adaptations. **TD**

## **Clay** *continued from page 14*

a republic countenancing one person owning another. For most of his career, he advocated gradual emancipation and colonization in Africa of former slaves. Clay cared for the future of African-Americans more deeply than many abolitionists who saw slavery primarily as preventing the spread of free white labor. He believed that gradual emancipation would give African-Americans the opportunity to earn money and learn a trade to better care for themselves. When one of his slaves ran away, he said, “. . . in a reversal of our conditions I would have done the same thing. . . .”

The national government can be a good thing. According to the Heidlers, Clay was constantly, “extolling the virtue of planned progress, the idea that the government was not only empowered but obligated to perform economic functions that individuals could not or that private corporations would not.” Remini added that Clay redefined American liberty. “No longer did it mean freedom from governmental power. . . ; Clay now proposed that it meant freedom of opportunity, the ability of all Americans to achieve a life of ‘safety, convenience and prosperity,’ buttressed by the power of the central government.”

Moderation and compromise are an integral part of the political process of a democracy. Michelle Bachmann recently said, “We can’t settle for a candidate who’s compromised. We can’t settle for a candidate who’s a moderate.” In contrast, Clay worked tirelessly to keep the Union together by forging compromises in 1820, 1833, and 1850. The Heidlers wrote, “He sincerely believed that restraint and cooperation would best secure the country and promote its welfare, and he came to abhor extremism.” Moderation needn’t be tepid, as Clay showed in his many political battles. In fact, another historian, Daniel Howe, described Clay as “an ideologue of the Center.” Clay realized that reasonable people can disagree reasonably yet work together for the nation’s good.

It’s no wonder that Henry Clay was Abraham Lincoln’s political hero. Anyone who’s good enough for Honest Abe should be an inspiration for the rest of us – all of us.

Of course, if you disagree, I’m certainly willing to discuss it. **TD**

## Dold *continued from page 9*

Dold opposes responsible environmental regulation. In our district, we care about the environment, but Dold voted at least 17 times to gut environmental programs that about 75 percent of 10th District residents support.

Dold continues to whine about the new remap that was drawn by Democrats, so the 10th District is more Democratic. What a surprise.

What goes around comes around. Dold barely won last time with a Republican tsunami at his back. If it weren't for the previous remap, brokered by Speaker Hastert and Congressman Lipinski to make Kirk's seat safer following his narrow victory over Lauren Beth Gash in 2000, Dold almost certainly would have lost last time.

Noting that Republicans had worked new maps to their favor in other states in previous years, Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee Chair Steve Israel compared Republican complaints

about the Illinois map to "the arsonist pulling the fire alarm."

If Dold were really concerned about voter disenfranchisement, he'd speak out against Republican efforts to require voters to present photo IDs at polling places. As Cook County Clerk David Orr explains, "this unprecedented push relies on two falsehoods: that voter fraud is rampant and that every honest voter has a driver's license...Our goal is not to prevent democracy, but to protect it. We must not allow their misguided efforts to prevail. Otherwise, for the first time in generations, voting rights in America will diminish." But don't expect Dold to speak out. That would require real independence. Similarly, Dold has somehow managed to remain silent on the disgraceful behavior exhibited at the Republican presidential debates.

If you're mad at Dold, don't call his office to complain. Unless your name is John Boehner, he won't listen. Instead, volunteer to help one of the great Democratic candidates running to replace him. They'll listen, and if we all pull together, we'll defeat Dold in 2012 and help restore sanity to Washington. **TD**

## Democracy in Action Photo Essay *continued from page 12*



## Why I Vote *continued from page 7*

obscured much of the good he had done and brought down his presidency.

The end of the Johnson administration marked the beginning of some very bad years for liberals. Even the word 'liberal' was demonized by the Republicans, until Democrats were hesitant to use it. The Right referred to us as the party of special interests and said that we only cared about women and minorities. White men fled. Ironically, when Ronald Reagan ran for president many labor unions supported him, and the Reagan Democrat was born. I say ironically, because one of President Reagan's goals in office was to destroy the unions.

It seems that these years had a sobering effect on the Democratic Party. Those bold warriors who upheld our rights and fought for justice were subdued. Soon they decided that there was no reason why they couldn't be friends of big business, too. Why shouldn't Democrats get in line when the corporate dollars were being passed out? They were entitled to part of the pie. And although Democrats are still a much better alternative than Republicans, it is sad to note that on some issues, the difference between them is not so great.

When I go to vote in the Democratic primary election next March, I plan to vote for someone I can trust to go to battle for the disadvantaged and ignored, a candidate who reminds me of the heroes of my youth. Those were Democrats who stood on principle and didn't back down from their beliefs, who today would try to change the course of this country and restore the American dream for all our people.

I have heard some say that we have to nominate candidates who are "electable." Of course we want our candidates electable. But that doesn't mean that we want our candidates to downplay their Democratic convictions in order to attract the votes of those fickle independents.

Remember when Governor Howard Dean said that he was from the "Democratic wing of the Democratic Party"? My vote will go exclusively to candidates from that wing, candidates who are articulate enough and passionate enough to convince voters not only that they are electable, but also that they will faithfully represent the values of their constituency.

It's time for each of us to find the true Democrat within us. Like my father, I vote for the candidate who best reflects my Democratic values, simply because it is the right thing to do. **TD**