

2011: Inspiring Outbreaks—



Photo: AP

Chile

Beginning in May, students in Santiago, the capital city, began what mushroomed into massive confrontations with Chilean authorities in cities throughout the country. The student uprising began as a demand to transform the privatized and grotesquely unequal Chilean education system, but became a call for people throughout Chile to rise against the repressive U.S.-backed government. The UK *Guardian* reported in October that “Chilean students—in many cases led by 14- and 15-year-olds—have seized the streets of Santiago and major cities, provoking and challenging the status quo... since May they have organized 37 marches, which have gathered upwards of 200,000 students at a time.” Youth and others have battled the onslaughts of huge numbers of police who attack them with water cannons, clubs, and tear gas. In October, the Chilean government gave nearly 57,000 18-year-old youth—women and men—one month to report for military duty, in a move that was widely understood to be a blatant attempt to suppress and punish the rebels.

Greece

In May, Greece leaped into turbulent political upheaval that continues today. “Austerity measures”—harsh cutbacks imposed by imperialist financial institutions and implemented by the ruling class of Greece—have meant devastation for the people of Greece: wages slashed, pensions cut or eliminated, public services like transportation, schools, and libraries drastically reduced or done away with, entire sectors of employment eliminated. Enormous protests and occupations have rocked Athens, Salonika, and other Greek cities. Students and other youth have defended themselves against police who are armed with tear gas, stun grenades, and other weapons. Several general strikes that shut down much of the country were joined by working people, professionals, and people from the middle class. Continuing uncertainty over where the harsh measures imposed on the people will lead, and the ongoing resistance of masses, are sending tremors throughout Europe and beyond.



Photo: AP

No more generations of our youth, here and all around the world, whose life is over, whose fate has been sealed, who have been condemned to an early death or a life of misery and brutality, whom the system has destined for oppression and oblivion even before they are born. I say no more of that.

Bob Avakian, *BAsics* 1:13

Crucial Challenges

REVOLUTION



England

In August, youth in cities across England rose up in rebellion against racist police and other injustices after Mark Duggan, a 29-year-old black man, was killed with a shot to his chest as he was pinned to the ground by several cops in the Tottenham district of London. Another factor fueling the rage that broke through in the streets of England is the current government's vicious "austerity" program. It took the British rulers a massive deployment of police and the arrest of more than 3,000 people to put down the upheaval.

Revolution wrote, "What took place in the streets of Britain was a revolt against the hated established order. And the oppressive state that enforces that order is increasingly losing legitimacy in the eyes of millions, among those at the very bottom and more broadly throughout society. And through all the complexity and contradictoriness, one key thing the four days of youth revolt revealed was the *potential* of the masses of people to not just shake up the existing order, but to radically remake society, IF they have leadership that bases itself on the largest interests of humanity and that has a real strategy for revolution."



2011: Inspiring Outbreaks—Crucial Challenges



Photo: AP



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Spain

In May, Spain was about to enter a period of “business as usual” elections. But the normality of day-to-day life was shattered by protests that began in Madrid and then spread, rattling all of society and sending shock waves as well as inspiration throughout the world. *Los Indignados*—the outraged ones—raised slogans such as “Homeless—Jobless—Futureless—Fearless,” “Our dreams can’t fit in your ballot boxes,” and “System Error—Message from the Spanish Revolution.” Thousands of youth camped out in central Madrid’s Puerta del Sol square and held firm against police attacks. Calls for continuing and extending the protests were spread on social media, and the occupations spread to dozens of other cities across Spain, joined by hundreds of thousands. The Pope was greeted with massive protests when he visited Spain in August. On October 15, a global day of protest called by the Occupy movement, 500,000 marched in Madrid. Today, Spanish society continues to be in deep crisis.

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