



Members of Occupy Detroit protest in front of the McNamara Federal building in Downtown Detroit.

PHOTO/DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM

INSIDE:

Defense of the earth: The people vs corporate plunder	2
Public school fight continues	4
Green Party campaigns	5
Dictatorship in the Rust Belt	5, 6, 12
Why the high price of gas?	8
Cabrini Green evictions	10

FEDERAL DEFICIT: THE CORPORATIONS CAUSED IT, LET THEM PAY

[Read story on page 3](#)



A young protestor along the route of the massive demonstration in Washington D.C. against Tar Sands XL pipeline lets his feelings be known. PHOTO/DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM

IN DEFENSE OF THE EARTH: THE PEOPLE VS CORPORATE PLUNDER

EDITORIAL

The blows of Hurricane Sandy on the East Coast, and a summer of floods, severe droughts and monster forest fires, left the people of this country reeling. Now huge blizzards add insult to injury. And still the politicians continue to deny that climate change exists. Or they remain silent on it, or give weak lip service to combating it. Even worse, they push through plans for destructive and polluting 'fracking' [fracturing the earth] to wrest gas from tar sands, a form of mining which rips up the earth, poisons the groundwater, kills cattle, and sickens people. This practice shatters communities and

pumps into the atmosphere huge amounts of the greenhouse gasses responsible for climate change.

In recent mass demonstrations this February, people rallied against these practices, and against the construction of the XL Pipeline that will transport oil down across the entire US from the Canadian border to the Gulf of Mexico. The BP oil spill still poisons the waters and sea life in the Gulf and continues to foul the coast. People are alarmed and outraged that instead of taking aggressive action to protect the earth, the government colludes with corporate polluters to further lay waste to the environment and change the climate forever.

People have also organized to stop the ecocidal practices of mega-corporations such as

Monsanto, which spreads genetically modified crops across the heartland and around the globe. This Frankenfood—genetically engineered to be dependent on larger and larger doses of dangerous pesticides that kill off birds, butterflies and the bee colonies needed for pollination—has been proven to cause cancer, and is banned in many countries.

Why aren't the "powers that be" rallying to solve the looming and soon irreversible climate crisis that's imperiling the planet and all life on it, including human civilization? Why do they side with corporations that pollute, destroy the environment, poison our food and rape the earth? Monsanto and the big oil and energy corporations have merged with and control the government.

This is the formula for fascism, with its exploitation, violence, resource wars and plundering of the planet. Under capitalism, corporations must make profits. That is their only function. If they don't make profits they don't survive. Corporations will struggle to the death—and the death of the planet—to make these short-term profits. That's how the system of private property works.

People are demanding that government represent their interests, not those of the corporations. The fight to protect the planet is the fight for a system that is organized around our common interests—that is non-exploitive, cooperative and truly democratic. Only this way can we guarantee the wellbeing of humanity and the beautiful planet that sustains us.

WHY THE MOVEMENT NEEDS A PRESS

From the Editors

We are sometimes asked "Why does the movement to build a new America need a press?" The answer has to do with this moment in history. People are struggling just to get the basic necessities of life. Historical forces beyond anyone's control have set the stage for a new society to be built, but from this point on, how things turn out depends on what people think. This means that those of us who are seeking fundamental change are engaged in a battle of ideas, a struggle to win the hearts and minds of the people. If we don't raise the consciousness of the people and unite them around a vision of a better world and a strategy to achieve it, then we'll fail in our effort to build a just and free society. To win the battle of ideas, we need a press.

Visit us on the web at www.PeoplesTribune.org

An economic system that doesn't feed, clothe and house its people must be and will be overturned and replaced with a system that meets the needs of the people. To that end, this paper is a tribune of those struggling to create such a new economic system. It is a vehicle to bring the movement together, to create a vision of a better world and a strategy to achieve it.

Labor-replacing electronic technology is permanently eliminating jobs and destroying the foundation of the capitalist system. The people's needs can only be met by building a cooperative society where the socially necessary means of production are owned by society, not by the corporations.

We welcome articles and artwork from those who are engaged in the struggle to build a new society that is of, by and for the people. We rely on readers and contributors to fund and distribute this paper.

The People's Tribune, formerly published by the League of Revolutionaries for a New America, is now an independent newspaper with an editorial board based in Chicago.

PEOPLE'S TRIBUNE EDITORIAL POLICY: Articles that are unsigned, such as the cover story and editorials, reflect the views of the editorial board. Bylined articles reflect the views of the authors, and may or may not reflect the views of the editorial board.

Deadlines for articles and art: The deadline for articles, photographs and other art is the first of each month for the issue that comes out at the beginning of the following month. For example, the deadline for the June issue is May 1. Articles should be as short as possible, and no longer than 500 words. We reserve the right to edit articles to conform to space limitations.

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Federal deficit: The corporations caused it, let them pay

COVER STORY

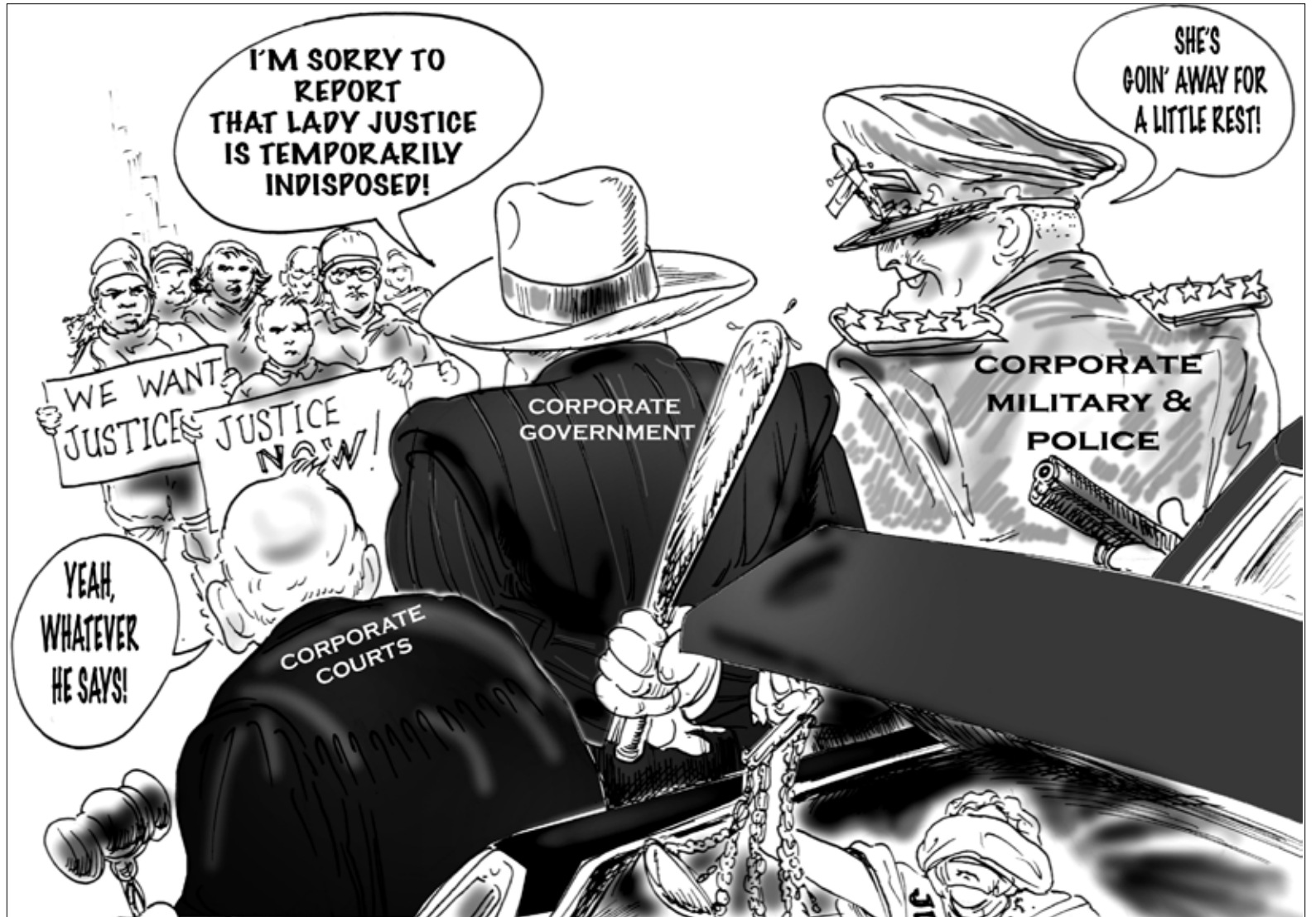
The corporate mouthpieces are telling us that “entitlement” programs like Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid must be cut to reduce the federal budget deficit. They tell us the deficit is the people’s fault and we have to be impoverished to pay it off. They tell us that “austerity” will create jobs. These are all lies.

The \$85 billion in “sequester” federal budget cuts that went through March 1 (the first of 10 years of cuts) are going to hurt and kill people, especially the unemployed and the poor, and cost jobs. And even worse cuts lie ahead. As we go to press, the Democrats are trying to strike a “grand bargain” with the Republicans to cut entitlements in exchange for minor tax increases on the wealthy.

The truth is the deficit developed over the last 40 years primarily as a result of tax cuts, loopholes and bailouts for the rich and the corporations, and a vast hike in military spending. U.S. military spending rose 80 percent from 2000 to 2011. The military consumes almost \$1 trillion a year out of a \$3.6 trillion budget. And though sequestration would cut \$1 trillion in military spending over the next 10 years, the military budget would still rise by 20 percent over that period.

Almost half the 2001 Bush tax cuts went to the richest 5 percent. According to Mother Jones, “Between 2001 and 2010, the Bush tax cuts added \$2.6 trillion to the public debt, 50 percent of the total debt accrued during that time. Over the past 10 years, the country has spent more than \$400 billion just servicing the debt created by the cuts.”

To sum up: The corporate ruling class launched the permanent “war on terror,” went on a military spending binge, and borrowed trillions to pay for it. Add



CARTOON/ANDY WILLIS

in the cost of bailouts and subsidies to big business, tax cuts for the rich, and the reduction in tax revenues caused by the recession, and you have a giant deficit.

The bulk of the public debt that was sold to finance the deficit is held by large banks, insurance companies, large corporations, wealthy individuals and central banks around the world. We are being told that the wealthy bondholders must be paid, and the people must go hungry to cover the bill.

Here’s the facts: The people didn’t cause the deficit and there’s no reason we should pay it off. And the deficit didn’t cause the economic crisis, so austerity won’t solve the crisis. It will

make it worse. At the root of the crisis is labor-replacing technology that is eliminating jobs and destroying the markets for goods and services in the process. The elimination of jobs means the death of capitalism, and the crisis is about to get worse. We need a new economic system (a cooperative society), not austerity.

In the meantime, let’s take money from the military, the rich and the corporations to serve people’s needs and put people to work. And let’s get busy building a political party that represents the people, not the corporations.

Such a party will be a step forward in the fight for a new society that is run by and for the people, where no one is in poverty and

everyone has a chance to contribute and reach their fullest potential. Time to take the offensive. The future is up to us.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

The People’s Tribune welcomes your comments, especially on our covers and editorials. Your feedback helps us stay on course as a paper that points the way forward to a new cooperative society. Email info@peopletribune.org or call 800-691-6888 toll free.

— The Editors

Contribute to the People’s Tribune: 100% volunteer run 100% donation funded

The People’s Tribune brings clarity to the growing movement. It unites the movement around a vision of a better world and a strategy to achieve it. It has no paid staff and gets no corporate grants. The paper is financed solely by our readers. We need your support to continue telling the truth.

One-time donations are welcome. If you can spare \$20 a month or more, you’ll be a hero. Please make donations payable to People’s Tribune and send to P.O. Box 3524, Chicago, IL 60654. You can also donate via Paypal at www.peopletribune.org.

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Chicago school closings: The fight continues



Chicago Public Schools hearing for the community and school closings commission. Three schools in the Pilsen-Little Village Network are on the potential closure list: Pilsen Academy, Jungman and Paderewski. PHOTO/SARAH JANE RHEE

By Lew Rosenbaum

CHICAGO, IL — On March 4 the latest round in the war on Chicago public education ended, with the last of the hearings on school closings.

Erica Clark (Parents 4 Teachers) pointed out at a Feb. 13, 2013 press conference: Chicago Public Schools (CPS) wants "... to make parents feel they are being engaged while they are being thrown under the bus... they [CPS] don't

want to tell the truth... that some time down the line they will hand [closed schools] over to charter schools." CPS threatens to close 129 public schools setting one school against another in the hope of remaining open. Windy

Pearson (Herzl School Local School Council) said in the same press conference, the UN Declaration of Human Rights guarantees that education should be free, "not based on venture capitalism whose pockets are being filled by dollars that belong to us."

Thousands of parents and teachers and students across the city responded with one voice: "Don't close my school"! When given the opportunity, the communities also said "Don't close any school."

In a hearings scenario reminiscent of "The Hunger Games," CPS told the schools that were ripe for closing in each area to have representatives plead their case. The assumption was that some schools were going to be closed. Please not me and mine. A fight to the death around the entire city in every area, nowhere with more concern than in the city's south and west sides, where most of the 129 schools still on the list are scattered, and where the vast majority of students are Black and Latino/a. Still, "Zero Schools Closed" emerged as a demand.

CPS must announce how many schools will close, possibly the largest mass school closings in the country thus far, by March 31. Regardless of their decision,

a sleeping giant has awakened. Teachers, parents and students are coming together as the Grassroots Education Movement, which convened a city-wide People's Board on March 8.

No doubt CPS will claim that any reduced number of schools it will close results from the voices they heard at the hearings. However, participants in these hearings are learning that CPS has its own script and does not respond to reason. They use the excuse of necessary budget cuts as a cover for turning public education over to private corporations, while guaranteeing the best selective enrollment education for "elite" students. This conforms to a society built on fewer high tech jobs and a mass of McJobs and Walmart greeters—and a large number of people who will never have a job at all.

March 27 will see a mobilization of Chicagoans—teachers, parents and students alike—to confront the CPS Board of Education's plan to close schools next year. What steps Chicago workers are prepared to take to maintain our schools open is not yet clear. But anger is smoldering over frustrated demands for world class schools, and CPS knows it is taking a chance no matter what it does.

National campaign asks if college will be free or for-profit

By Steve Teixeira

LOS ANGELES, CA — Budget cuts have slashed college workforces and denied hundreds of thousands of students the seats

they worked for. Yet some faculty and staff leaders claim that budgets are controlled by legislatures, not by union contracts, so their unions can't do anything. Now there's a better response:

on Lincoln's Birthday (February 12) the *Campaign for the Future of Higher Education* kicked off a series of events in 21 states, to provoke debate about how to defend Americans' right to higher education.

Their first step was to present three reports on what could be done. The first, *Making All Public Higher Education Free* identifies tax breaks which could be ended to pay the whole tuition bill for the nation's students. It was prepared by Bob Samuels, president of the lecturers union at the University of California. The second report, about *Restoring Quality and Access to Public Higher Education*, uses California as an example of how a fairer budget could restore funding to the levels of 2000. It was written by Stanton Glantz, professor of medicine at UCSF.

Finally, the report of Rudy Fichtenbaum, Ohio-based national president of the American Association of University Professors, is about a *Financial Transaction Tax* which would make Wall Street pay a fairer share of

the costs of higher education for the public. The three reports can be found at www.futureofhighered.org.

By taking these ideas out to the nation's students, faculty and staff would help thousands see a better alternative than just slashing budgets and handing education over to corporations like the University of Phoenix. It would change the debate from "there's no money" to "where did Americans' money go?" That's a crucial step for the movement, to learn how their enemy is not just this or that college president or politician, but the class of speculators and billionaires whose interests they serve. And it would lead to a real public dialogue about what kind of society is possible, if only the public can break the power of that class.

Lincoln's birthday was chosen as a launch date because he signed the Morrill Act of 1862, giving federal land for the creation of public colleges and universities. "What we are missing today is the commitment and the courage that Lincoln and Morrill

had," said Lillian Taiz, president of the faculty union for the California State University system. But we're also missing the kind of mass movement that understood back then that the American people's well-being required ending the power of the slave-owning class, and so they pushed Lincoln along step-by-step until he agreed to it. CFHE—the *Campaign for the Future of Higher Education* provides one step that education activists can take to push their leaders along today.

Steve Teixeira serves on the Steering Committee of the CFHE, representing Academic Professionals of California.



Delegates from the California Faculty Association join Occupy Los Angeles. PHOTO/DON BARRETT

PROUD TO BE IN THE GREEN PARTY

INTERVIEW:
JOHN GONZALEZ JR.

For the People's Tribune, Sandy Perry interviewed John Gonzalez Jr., who was recently elected Treasurer of the Philadelphia Green Party. Along with Glenn Davis and Tara Colon, he recently won election to the Green Party City Committee.

Peoples Tribune: What was the significance of these Green Party City Committee elections?

John Gonzalez Jr.: These elections were important because they demonstrated the changing face of the Green Party in Philadelphia. For the first time, the Green Party is diversifying. This means not only getting into the Latino and African American community, but also addressing the serious, day-to-day economic and social issues confronting people of Philadelphia from all backgrounds and walks of life.

My agenda is transparency. I intend to push for every City Committee member to register

50 new Green Party voters every month. Our communities have not heard about the Green Party. The two major parties are so bad that many people have just given up hope. If we can get out the word about the Green Party, we can let people know there is a better alternative and restore their hope.

PT: What are the main day-to-day issues that are most important right now?

JG: One of them is immigration reform, especially in the Latino community. The immigration proposals from Democrats and Republicans are just not good enough. I have a cousin who is the grown daughter of an American Vietnam veteran. She has lived here almost all her life, but because she was born in Mexico and no one properly fixed her papers, she still has no documents and has a hard time getting work.

I recently spoke to a group of young people at a program called Youthadelphia. Immigration reform is one of their most



John Gonzalez Jr. (center) with Cheri Honkala, Rhonda Lacaster, and Glenn Davis.

PHOTO/ARTISTS AGAINST FORECLOSURE

important issues. They and their families work hard and contribute to society, but deportations are breaking up their families and destroying lives. Everyone should be treated equally and have a fair chance. This will just get worse unless we in the Green Party step up and help lead a campaign to do something about it.

Another critical issue is public education and school closures in Philadelphia, from elementary through high school. The young people never get a chance

to speak up or have input in the decision, but they are the ones who suffer from it. They have to travel across town to another school, sometimes through hostile gang territories. Some kids drop out and end up staying home with no parents in the house and no food in the refrigerator. They feel ignored and bullied, they are in emotional distress, and they can't find help. I question whether the politicians making these decisions have any children who even attend the schools they are

doing this to.

I feel proud to be in the Green Party. The situation is bad—many in our community are very poor, homeless, or the victims of violence. But I tell people they can have a voice in the Green Party. Green Party values put people first. We stand for the environment and the good of the community. I look forward to helping to grow the Green Party and build a better world.

ILLINOIS: VOTE GREEN IN THE 2ND DISTRICT!

**By Lew Rosenbaum
and Alan Harris**

CHICAGO, IL — *The Illinois Green Party nominated LeAlan Jones in December 2012 to run for the U.S. House of Representatives from Illinois' 2nd Congressional District shortly after that seat was vacated by Jesse Jackson, Jr. Jones is campaigning in a special election on April 9.*

The 1st, 2nd and 7th Congressional Districts, covering the areas of highest concentration of Chicago's Black population, are where poverty and destruction of services are concentrated. Nearly all the Chicago public schools targeted for closure this year are in these districts. Most of the six Chicago mental health clinics closed in 2012 were there.

But only a generation ago the 2nd District was a major manufacturing center, including US Steel and Wisconsin Steel. Now the district is center to some of the poorest communities in the nation. This "rust belt" district is home to a growing core of dispossessed workers.

In the last decade, 180,000 African Americans have moved out of the city, in part because of the destruction of public housing. Many have moved to the southern part of this district into suburbs like Harvey, Markham and

Ford Heights and into Kankakee County.

"The district's median household income is about \$46,600, according to the census. But the district's city and south suburban sections are suffering economically. From January through September 2010, the home foreclosure rate was 60.1 per 1,000 homes in that part of the 2nd District... the highest rate among what was then the state's 19 congressional districts." (Chicago Tribune).

Considerable money poured in from outside the district to influence the February 26 Democratic primary. New York mayor Michael Bloomberg's Super PAC contributed \$2 million to focus on "gun control." Robin Kelly, currently an appointed Cook County official, won that primary and will face Jones and Republican Paul McKinley in the April 9 general election.

Kelly's campaign has been silent: Democrats believe that they have a lock on the election. The Second District has elected only Democrats since 1950. On the contrary, Jones has been vocal about his concerns for revitalizing the district according to the Green Party's "green new deal." He favors universal health care, "Medicare for all."

Most important, Jones' campaign is sparking an interest in



LeAlan Jones, candidate for U.S. House of Representatives delivers an impassioned speech in Chicago.

PHOTO/JEREMY KAPPEN

independent politics. His candidacy aims a blow at the Democrats' one-party rule, by striking at one of the cornerstones of their control of Chicago and Illinois. "There is an intractability within the Democratic Party, to do the things that they put on the surface to do." Jones told Fox interviewer Mike

Flannery. "We've spent billions of dollars over the last decade with the plan for transformation of public housing and Renaissance 2010, and we're [now] in a more chaotic situation..."

Jones says in his campaign literature: "The policies of Chicago and Cook County Democratic

elected officials have and will continue to fail your family's opportunities and your children's future..."

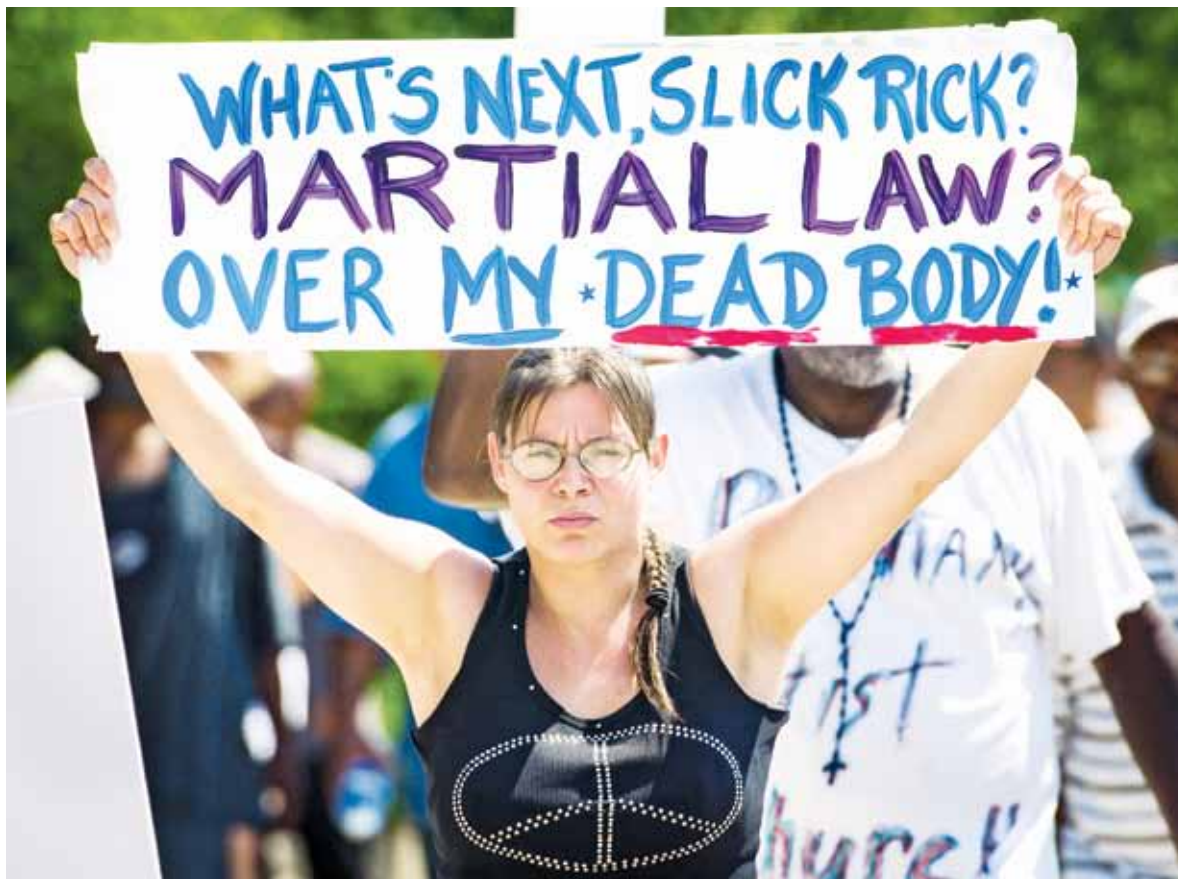
Chicago has languished under a one-party dictatorship for more than eight decades. Voting Green for LeAlan Jones in this election threatens that stranglehold.

MICHIGAN: FIGHT FOR DEMOCRACY

By John Wright

MICHIGAN — Having voted down Proposal 1 in the Nov. 6 election, the people of Michigan said “NO” to the Emergency Manager (EM) Law—Public Act 4. But the government of Michigan represents the rich for-profit corporations, and the varied global interests of the bond market.

In complete disregard for the citizens of Michigan, the Republican-controlled government of Michigan, in a lame-duck session, passed a new EM law, P.A. 436, which dismantles democracy, restricts the power of the vote and the rights of the people, while allowing the sale of public property to favor the rich corporations and the bond market. The EM Law cannot be overturned by a vote due to an appropriations clause. After the Michigan Supreme Court refused to review an earlier Appeals Court decision upholding “Emergency Managers” (EFM)’s under P.A.72, Governor Snyder is installing an EFM in Detroit under that statute. The State of Michigan, on behalf of corporations and bondholders, has closed off all avenues for getting rid of this law, short of voting out or recalling the legislature. Government and Big Business have merged



Rebecca Fritz marches in Detroit with a coalition of groups in solidarity against an Emergency Manager takeover of the city and other issues. PHOTO/JAMES FASSINGER, STILLSCENES.COM

into a fascist agency against the people.

The EM Laws are being used by wealthy corporations to void their responsibility for the benefits the workers have already paid for. This includes public employee

contract cancellations as well as adjustments in state obligations to state and federal relief programs such as Medicaid, Medicare and Social Security.

While Governor Snyder sits on over \$1 billion of public money in

his rainy day fund, the for-profit corporations are sitting on trillions of dollars in social wealth, having been bailed out with public funds. While Detroit and other municipalities and states across the nation need relief, large investors

are waiting for their next opportunity, and worried about when the next crisis is going to hit under this fickle and ridiculous economic system.

Fifty percent of the citizens of Detroit live below the poverty line. In this post-industrial period, Detroit is in no position to pay its bond note. Bonds today are issued for the purpose of retiring older bonds. Since bondholders can't get any money out of the citizens of Detroit, they plan to sell off public property to meet their note, with their eye especially on the Water Board, followed perhaps by Belle Isle.

For over 30 years, the municipal bond market has been very profitable. But the bond market isn't risk-free anymore. The bond market is currently on life support as current Fed Chairman Ben Bernanke is purchasing \$85 billion a month in bonds, in a futile attempt to prop up the bond market and prevent the collapse of capitalism.

Today we have reached a critical stage in this development. Michigan and Detroit are on the crucial front lines in this fight. We can only move forward when the people truly have freedom and democracy, as well as a government of the people, by the people, and for the people.

LACK OF HEALTHCARE SPREADS:

United Auto Worker VEBAs are a symptom of the disease

By Al Gladycck

CLINTON TOWNSHIP, MI — The disease is the spreading lack of healthcare for tens of millions of people in this country. The Voluntary Employee Beneficiary Association (VEBA) is a symptom of this disease.

On November 18, 2012 Crain's Detroit Business reported that the United Auto Workers (UAW) VEBAs were \$33 billion underfunded at the end of 2011. That means that the funds that were supposed to last until the year 2090 (that is until every one of the 852,000 UAW VEBA beneficiaries is dead) will now only last until the year 2022. In the year 2023, 734,000 Ford, GM and Chrysler UAW retirees and spouses will be left out in the cold as this trend continues.

Since January 1, 2013, changes to the VEBA coverage includes increased co-pays, deductibles

and for those beneficiaries eligible for Medicare automatic enrollment in Medicare Part D in an attempt to cut the cost of healthcare insurance that the VEBA provides.

This downward trend is based on the VEBAs being tied to the health of the auto companies and their stocks because that is the way both the companies and government structured the funding.

The UAW VEBA mess is getting worse instead of better, and no one should be surprised. After all the union movement, including the UAW, has had nothing but horrible experiences with VEBAs.

In 2006, the UAW whole-heartedly supported Medicare For All (HR 676), but by 2010 the Affordable Care Act (ACA) was signed by President Obama and the convention that year all but deserted HR 676 in favor of ACA. Well the VEBA is the private version of ACA, trapped by increasing costs

of medical insurance companies controlling access to healthcare and actual healthcare.

So let's refresh ourselves, Medicare For All (HR 676) is:

Everybody In, Nobody Out—Gives every resident of the United States and the U.S. Territories access to all medically necessary health care services, including vision and dental, with no copays or deductibles regardless of employment, income or health status.

Non-Profit Health Care—Converts all healthcare providers to a not-for-profit service where illness is no longer a source of wealth for a few.

Single Payer—Pays for that expanded coverage by maintaining the present level of federal and state funding for Health Care as well as turning the premiums now paid to private medical insurance companies into Medicare For All premiums.



Thousands of Michiganders protest Right to Work at the state Capitol in Lansing, MI. PHOTO/DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM

The crisis in the once heavily industrialized Rust Belt is a harbinger of the future for all of America if we don't act. The growing poverty and the attack on democracy by the corporate government, as well as the response of the public, holds lessons for everyone. Send your story to People's Tribune, PO Box 3524, Chicago, IL 60654, or email info@peopletribune.org.

NEW DRACONIAN SCHOOL POLICY FOR WELFARE RECIPIENTS

By Marian Kramer

MICHIGAN — On October 1, 2012, Michigan's Governor Snyder, through Maura D. Corrigan, his Director of the Department of Human Services (DHS), has implemented a new school attendance policy for families receiving the Family Independent Program (FIP). The policy requires full-time school attendance for children receiving FIP or the family's welfare case will be cancelled. This policy also applies to parents of minors who have children with a welfare case and who are finishing high school.

Who will be affected and how:

(1) FIP groups with dependent children between the ages of 6 and 15 that have not been attending school full time will be affected. The family's welfare case will be cancelled.

(2) If a parent's minor child is not attending school full time, the parent and child(ren) will all be

cancelled.

(3) If children age 6 through 17 are not attending school full time, only the child will be cancelled from the FIP group. If there is only one dependent child in the case, then the case is closed.

(4) A child of the age of 18 can only receive FIP on a parent's case if they are expected to graduate from high school before the age of 19. If the 18 year old has not finished high school and is not attending school full time, she or he is not eligible for FIP.

(5) If a child has already graduated from high school (even if only age 16 or 17), then this policy does not apply to them.

The child must attend school full time for 21 consecutive school days before FIP can be turned back on. All school subjects, such as reading, math, spelling, etc., must be included. If a child of age 16 to 17 is not enrolled or attending school at all, Protective Services will be called and the parent could be charged

with abuse or neglect.

The State of Michigan Department of Human Services are not trying to investigate to find out if the family needs some help to get the child to school, before the FIP case is closed. All Gov. Snyder is interested in is getting rid of more workers and their children as they are no longer needed to work in the factories. Lots of families don't have bus services in their neighborhoods, and a lot of schools that were once located closer to the different communities are now closed. The families don't get transportation funds in their small welfare grants, etc. The funds the family receives is not enough. It can only feed the family for about two weeks, if not less.

We need a society that cares about the whole working class. The future is in our hands. We don't have to live this way. To join with others who are fighting policies such as these, contact the Michigan Welfare Rights Organization at 313-964-0618.



Members of UAW Local 60 picket the state of Michigan over welfare cuts to the state's poorest families.

PHOTO/DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM

A TALL ORDER FROM A TALL UNION MAN

By Gregg Shotwell

MICHIGAN — I told myself I was done kicking dead horses, sleeping giants, and inanimate movements. And then Right To Work For Less came to Michigan like a fiery cross staked in front of my house.

At the capitol in Lansing, Michigan the day Right To Work For Less was signed into law, thousands of union staffers working on the clock, and local union officers collecting "lost time" wage reimbursements chanted, "Veto! Veto!" As if the governor who invented the Emergency Manager law to overthrow democratically elected city councils and revoke labor contracts would decide that Right to Work For Less wasn't fair.

Laid off construction workers in hard hats milled on the capitol lawn like cattle agitated by the smell of blood. They'd already felt the prod of too few jobs and nonunion wages. Retirees like myself flocked from all over the state scared ****less by the realization: we aren't safe, we're next.

King, the president of the UAW, told Crain's Automotive News that Right To Work For

Less was not a threat to the UAW because his members are loyal to the union... and that "90 percent of UAW-represented autoworkers in right-to-work states have chosen to stay in the union."

I'm not a statistician but I do know my autoworkers and I do check my sources.

It's true. At factories in Right To Work For Less states where the majority of UAW members transferred from plants up north with the golden handcuffs of top tier wages and pensions very few workers pull their cards.

What should we do when Right To Work For Less comes to our state or a union president gets in bed with the boss?

First and foremost, we must speak the truth. It doesn't help to pretend the institution of Labor isn't infected with opportunists who claim we can cure the afflictions of capitalism with a heavier dose of capitalism.

A union is forged in trust and camaraderie... Working with someone who collects the benefits of a union contract but doesn't pay dues is like working with a scab. It must leave a bad taste in one's mouth and that poison is the boss's intention.



Thousands of Michigan protestors at the state capitol in Lansing, Michigan to attempt to stop the passage of right to work laws by Governor Snyder.

PHOTO/DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM

After the UAW lost a long bitter strike against Caterpillar, union members, as part of the new contract, had to go back to work with scabs. I asked George Cornwell, a veteran in the struggle against Caterpillar and a Blue Shirt from UAW Local 974, "How does one deal with a scab?"

"You get close to him," George

said. "You're at his side all the time. You go to break with him. You go to lunch with him. You become his best friend because as soon as you abandon him the boss will take your place."

That's a tall order from a tall union man but fellowship, not animosity, is what it takes to build a labor movement that can thumb

its nose at Right To Work For Less and scour the carpetbaggers from the halls of Solidarity House.

This is an excerpt from the full version at autoworkersunderthegun.blogspot.com. The author is a retired UAW member and author of *Autoworkers Under the Gun* from Haymarket Press. Email GreggShotwell@aol.com.

WHY IS THE PRICE OF GASOLINE SO HIGH?

From the Editors

Today, the average car owner spends \$3,000 per year on gasoline. Pain at the pump? It's more than that. It's highway robbery combined with imperial politics camouflaged by propaganda that

borders on the downright silly.

A few years back when the oil giants turned the screws upward, the people—including much of the political left—bought the idea that the world is running out of oil so prices have to go up. Oddly, we don't hear that line any more.

Now the line is that we don't have the refinery capacity to keep up with demand. To make that true, refineries on the East coast and the Virgin Islands recently cut capacity over a million barrels a day. The refinery giant, Valero gloated that this allows them a significant increase in profit.

There are any number of phony explanations out there such as the fall in the value of the dollar pushes up the price of gas. How do they reconcile that with the line that the rise of the dollar is making it difficult for American producers to compete on the world market? Then there is the line that speculators are driving the price up. No serious person would consider that speculators could influence such a huge global market.

In the 1950's gas was very cheap—and the line then was America was self sufficient in oil. What was the real reason? We were in a deadly Cold War with the Soviet Union. With 28 million killed in the war and countless others injured, with billions of dollars of destruction by the war, the only source of income for the Soviets was oil revenue. The United States paid the Saudi royalty billions of dollars to place their oil on the market at the then high price of \$11 a barrel that



Gas prices go up by the day. The five biggest oil companies earned a combined profit of \$375 million per day, or a record \$137 billion profit for the year, in 2011, despite reducing their oil production. PHOTO/DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM

WHERE YOUR GAS MONEY IS GOING

The five biggest oil companies earned a combined profit of \$375 million per day, or a record \$137 billion profit for the year, in 2011, despite reducing their oil production.

In 60 seconds, these five companies earned \$261,000—more than 96 percent of American households make in one year.

These five oil companies received \$6.6 million in federal tax breaks every day.

In 2011, the three largest domestic public oil companies spent \$100 million of their profits each day, or over 50 percent, buying back their own stock to enrich their board, senior managers, and largest shareholders.

The entire oil and gas industry spent on average \$400,000 each day lobbying senators and representatives to weaken public health safeguards and keep big oil tax breaks, totaling nearly \$150 million.

Each CEO of the Big Five companies received an average of \$60,110 in compensation *per day* last year. On average, their pay jumped 55 percent in 2011. Exxon CEO Rex Tillerson's compensation came close to \$100,000 *per day* last year.

Statistics from thinkprogress.org, written by Rebecca Leber

forced the Soviets to do the same and which would bankrupt them.

Now, it is in the interest of US imperialism to keep oil prices high in order to slow the growth of China. This is leading to the opening up of vast oil reserves throughout South America and Africa, let alone the huge new field opening in Iraq. No one told us before that Venezuela had greater oil reserves than Saudi Arabia. How do you resolve the contradiction between a world awash with oil and the screams of scarcity?

Couple the political role of oil with the basic law of monopoly capitalism—maximum profits—and you have the answer to why the pain at the pump. (See box on oil industry profits on this page.) Can we do anything about it? Yes, we can. However, there comes a time when you can no longer do little things. Today we have to think big! We have to think in terms of taking over these oil companies and running them in the interest of the people.

Eaarth: Making a Life on a Tough New Planet by Bill McKibben

Book Review

By Chuck Parker

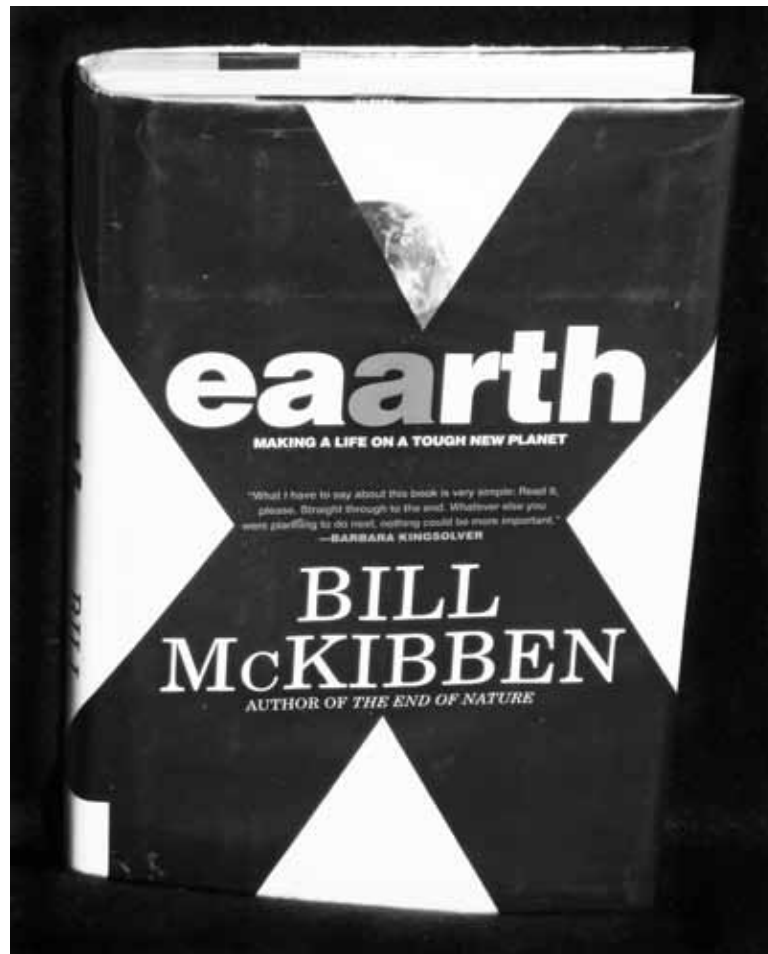
You must read this book! In it, the founder of the environmental group 350.org delivers the bad news that global warming has already altered earth's climate in ways that cannot be reversed, and that drastic action is necessary to adapt our way of life to be able to survive on a changed planet. The good news is that we can lower the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere from the current 392 parts per million to a safe 350 parts per million by mid-century. (350 parts per million is the safe upper limit for carbon dioxide in our atmosphere.) But to return to 350 ppm, we must immediately stop taking fossil fuels out of the earth and burning them, and instead rely on energy sources such as solar and wind power. We also must change our methods of agriculture so we don't rely on gigantic industrial farms powered by fossil fuels and chemical

fertilizers and pesticides. Instead the book advocates returning to smaller farms producing for a local market, and that our society must learn to live on a smaller, more local scale. The richer countries must be willing to subsidize the poorer countries so they can convert their growing economies from coal and oil to renewable forms of energy.

But this is a very tall order which will require a massive social movement which can force the political changes that can overcome the power of the energy corporations. The book also contains many good organizing ideas, and resources to use to organize protests. It describes how they organized several mass demonstrations around climate change. In 2007 they sent out emails asking people to organize local rallies on April 14, and as a result there were 1400 rallies all over the world—the largest environmental protest since the original Earth day in 1970. What was the result? Both Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton, who

were then running for president, signed the pledge to reduce carbon emissions by 80 percent by 2050. Then Obama was elected and he not only broke his promise, but went over to pushing the XL pipeline, fracking, and adopting the “drill, baby drill” mantra of the Republicans. This shows the power of the energy corporations in government.

Even though the book was written in 2009, and the author still held out hope that the new Democratic administration would pitch in to save the environment, I'm sure he would now agree that our only hope is to get behind a political party that is independent of the energy corporations—like the Green Party. The changes demanded by this environmental crisis are huge. We must begin to unite now around the changes that are necessary in order to make them happen in time. As he says in the book, we do not have to stop global warming for our grandchildren, we need to do it for our parents! To learn more please go to 350.org.



Injured L.A. teacher speaks out about CA worker's comp corruption

By Rozy Press

LOS ANGELES, CA — I was an art teacher at Sepulveda Middle School in the San Fernando Valley near Los Angeles, when on December 8, 2000 I was sprayed in my face with the toxic chemicals from a fire extinguisher by one of my students. I was gasping for air, and my tongue was swelling and my nose closing. The rest of my students were exposed to the chemicals and they were also getting very sick. Another teacher died from a similar injury at another school in June 2000. Neither paramedics nor Hazmat clean-up were ever called, and 180 of my students sat exposed to the toxic yellow dust from the fire extinguisher which coated surfaces all over the room for months. I have documented lung damage, Fibromyalgia, pain, and exhaustion. Dr. Silverman, a rheumatologist, rated me 100% disabled due to Fibromyalgia from being sprayed at work. Because of a teacher's union grievance, the L.A. school district admitted that I had suffered an "Act of Violence" physical injury in 2002. I have a twelve-year-old Worker's Comp case. I was receiving benefits until 2009 when they were cut off.

Since then, all L.A. Unified School District and Workers Comp have wanted to do was lower my rating and deny my benefits. They did it by violating Insurance Code 1871.4, committing fraud and breaking other laws. My case went all the way to the California Supreme Court. Not one judge would base their decisions on the substantiated evidence and make a fair, just and impartial decision.

The Van Nuys Workers Comp Board Judge in my trial—Jerold Cohn—made a medical diagnosis. He is not a doctor. He changed all the facts and testimony, added his own facts, and used inadmissible evidence. He lost Dr. Silverman's original reports, delayed my case, maligned my character, and libeled me throughout all of his Findings, Opinions and Decisions.

He found a willing "Partner in Crime", Dr. John Stalberg who changed all the facts to adopt Judge Cohn's medical diagnosis. LAUSD paid Dr. Stalberg \$16,770—that's \$700

a page—for his 2011 Medical Report. Dr. Stalberg hadn't seen me, talked to me, or examined me for four years. He admitted under oath, in 2012 that he didn't even have all the records, or the evidence to prove Judge Cohn's medical diagnosis. And he didn't care.

Another "Partner in Crime" was Dr. Alvin Markowitz who did a stethoscope exam to determine Fibromyalgia instead of the standard pressure point exam. No ethical doctor uses a stethoscope to determine Fibromyalgia.

Criminal Fraud, Corruption and Injustice—that's my California Workers' Comp Case. Millions of California injured workers experience the same criminal corruption in their Workers Comp Cases. It's time for ALL injured workers to unite. UNITED WE CAN WIN!

Contact me at: 818-631-0513, rozywow@aol.com. I'm on Rev. Pinkney's Radio Show blog-talkradio/pinkney every Sun 2-4 PM PST



Autoworkers and their supporters protesting at the GM building in Detroit. Injured workers, as this article shows, are also treated as disposable workers. PHOTO/DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM

Memorial to Sheridan Talbott, a fighter for a better world

The movement for a better world lost a committed comrade and friend, Saturday, February 23 when Sheridan Talbott of Southern Illinois took his last breath.

Growing up, as Sheridan often said, on the wrong side of Lafayette Street in Mobile, AL in the Jim Crow South, his desire to understand his world and what Walter Cronkite said on the evening news led him to work three jobs at a time, as he studied for a degree in Philosophy, graduating from the University of South Alabama. He entered Southern Illinois University at Carbondale as a PhD candidate, with the intent of studying Marxism under Doug Allen, whose contract was terminated over his criticism of the Center for Vietnamese Studies. Sheridan went on to complete his Master's Thesis on Marx, only to leave SIU-C in protest over changes in their doctoral requirements. A man of principle, he never looked back.

Always a staunch fighter for peace, equality and social justice, Sheridan returned to Mobile, AL and entered a labor-intense factory. He earned the respect of those he worked with and they fondly called him "Fess" as he taught while he fought. Penning an article for the People's Tribune titled "Slave Labor in Alabama," he was able to distribute the paper to 10% of the workers, which influenced and united both white and Black workers to fight for control of their union in their own defense. He also helped to build the Equal Rights Congress, serving as editor of their paper for a time.

After moving to Chicago in 1978, he went to work as the PR person for Vanguard Books. He enjoyed traveling from coast to coast, setting up authors' parties and attending book fairs. He especially loved learning about local histories and became quite knowledgeable on labor struggles, especially here in Southern Illinois, where he returned to live in 1981.



Sheridan Talbott.

PHOTO/DONATED

As the jobs began disappearing here in the '80's, Sheridan used his carpentry skills to eke out a living, often forced to go on the road to find work. He never lost his focus, and he never hesitated to distribute the People's Tribune wherever he went, talking to anyone who would listen about the necessity for replacing this system with one that meets the needs of the people.

After hanging up his tool belt, he became a substitute teacher, primarily for the Herrin School District. He loved imparting his knowledge of history, science, and literature to the youth. He joined the League of Revolutionaries for a New America in 2007, and up until his death, he was teaching those around him. His most recent contribution was his participation as a co-host on 'Occupy the Airwaves' radio show on WDBX in Carbondale. Even though he struggled to walk and breathe, he mustered up the energy to go on air as often as he was able.

He is survived by his wife, Cathy, five children, son-in-law, and grandson.

Memorials can be made to the People's Tribune. PO Box 3524, Chicago, IL 60654-3524 or to WDBX Radio at 224 N. Washington St. Carbondale, IL 62901.

Letter to the Editor:

Dear *People's Tribune*,

I thank you guys for doing a wonderful job. Your paper is keeping us up on what's going on on the outside. Keep up the good work. Thank you.

— A prisoner from California

To our readers,

The *People's Tribune* provides prisoners with free subscriptions. Prisoners say the paper plays a tremendous role in bringing political clarity and in keeping spirits up. Please donate to the *People's Tribune* so we can continue this effort.

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Poverty and the profit motive

By Mark Lipman

LOS ANGELES, CA — Disparity is all around us, pocketed by great bunkers of wealth. Fortified swimming pools and Rolls Royces share the same intersections as shopping cart homeless. Invisible to all, poverty is everywhere.

The common theme we see from California to New York, from Benton Harbor to New Orleans, is that in every single community in this country there is an all out war on the poor and dispossessed, with a mishmash of local “quality of life” ordinances targeting and criminalizing the weakest among us. Any sign of community or compassion is jeered at and attacked relentlessly by vigilante neighborhood watch groups.

The wealthiest and well connected do not want to have to see poverty; do not want to be directly confronted with the by-products of the system that made them rich—the system that supports their every need and desire—as only money can for the few. They do not want to feel guilty, so they get angry and look for someone to blame.

Unable to find a mirror, they instead turn their fury to the very victims of the system, convincing themselves that the poor are there because they are lazy and don’t want to work.

That however would better describe those trust-fund socialites, than the family of four trying to scrape by in a system that has trained them to be dependent on factories and corporations—dependent on the next paycheck—which then overnight took all the jobs away, casting aside countless middle aged workers, who are then left unprepared for survival in a jobless economy.

Those, who somehow think that merely “working hard” is the solution, have forgotten the founding principles that govern the economic system known as capitalism.

For every “boom” in one corner of the world, a “bust” is required in another. The very cornerstone of the profit motive is founded on the exploitation of others; of disposable workforces and communities that are used up for their resources and labor, which are then quickly discarded as soon as a cheaper means of production—through both the use of robotics, and the exportation of local manufacturing to unregulated markets abroad—presents itself.

Poverty is a necessary and inevitable pillar of capitalism, for the greater the poverty; the more widespread the destitution and destruction, the more wealth that is accumulated and hoarded by

those at the very top.

At this very moment, while America reels from one financial crisis after another, with tens of millions of families living in abject poverty, the richest one percent are sitting on a combined wealth of \$4 trillion, which lies stagnant outside of the economy in private coffers and offshore accounts.

Any attempt to tax or redistribute this wealth for necessary social programs is immediately scoffed at by the politicians, who are indentured to corporate lobbyists and campaign contributions, in order to maintain their own positions of privilege and power. The ability to concentrate wealth enables the capitalists to also concentrate power, leaving all those without out.



Occupy Detroit protestors at Chase bank in Detroit to bring attention to the bank’s role with Tar Sands and bank foreclosures. PHOTO/DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM

Without poverty and the massive debt it ensnares, capitalism would not be able to function. Therefore, when we speak of overturning the system of

capitalism, we are going directly after the root causes of the poverty that we see in our everyday lives.

CABRINI GREEN EVICTIONS

By Joseph Peery

CHICAGO, IL — March 6, 2013 marks the 156th anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court’s Dred Scott decision in which Chief Justice Roger B. Taney declared that African Americans “had no rights which the white man was bound to respect; and that the Negro might justly and lawfully be reduced to slavery for his benefit. He was bought and sold and treated as an ordinary article of merchandise and traffic, where ever profit could be made by it.”

We who live in public housing are frequently reminded that we have no rights. One such case is that of Jeffie Carroll, a 51-year-old unemployed Cabrini resident who is facing eviction for “bad house keeping.” Mr. Carroll failed a house inspection in March of 2011. A short time later he was summoned to the H.J. Russell management office and was given a 30-day eviction notice. After reading the notice, he disputed the validity of some of the statements in the notice and orally requested an informal grievance. He was denied. He returned the next day and asked for an informal grievance request form and was again denied. HUD regulations require that forms be available upon request and that the Grievance Procedure Manual which includes the forms be posted in a conspicuous manner in the management office. The manual was not posted.

Furthermore, when Jeffie signed his lease in 2010, he should have received the Lease Part I: Terms and Conditions,



CARTOON/ANDY WILLIS

the Admissions and Continued Occupancy Policy (ACOP) and the CHA Grievance Procedure Manual along with them “thoroughly explained” as stated on page 26 of the lease. “I didn’t get any of that,” says Carroll. He also says, “I didn’t get anything in writing on what to do to pass inspection.” After much persistence, his grievance reached CHA and he received a letter from their Deputy General Counsel Elizabeth Silas. He was again denied on the basis that he cannot grieve policy. This seems counter to HUD regulations which exclude grievances in evictions only for violent criminal or drug activity, and arrest that leads to felony conviction.

It should be noted that there is a difference between policy and the way it is carried out by private management corporations like H.J. Russell. Jeffie Carroll is currently defending himself in

eviction court without a lawyer before Judge Orville Hambright. He has lived in Cabrini since 1990 and yet it is now that he is being evicted. What is different now? The answer is all CHA properties are now managed by private corporations. H.J. Russell has conducted mass evictions ever since they got the contract to manage in Cabrini, and even though it is against HUD regulations, they receive money for empty apartments the same as if they were occupied.

The slave masters of old have been replaced by these corporations. We have no rights which they are bound to respect. In their lust for maximum profits they reduce us to a fate that may be worse than slavery, i.e., miserable homelessness, hunger and death on the streets. We fought the Civil War to rid ourselves of the slave masters. What’s it going to take to rid ourselves of corporate rule?

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People’s Tribune, PO Box 3524, Chicago, IL 60654

CROSS-BORDER UNITY AGAINST CORPORATE PARTNERSHIPS

By Arthur Stamoulis

WASHINGTON, D.C. — A movement of movements is reuniting across the globe to say “ENOUGH!” to the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP)—an international proposal being pushed by the Obama administration at the behest of big corporations that would spread NAFTA-style trade and investment rules throughout the Pacific Rim.

“It’s impossible to overstate how devastating NAFTA has been to working people and family farmers over the past twenty years,” said Manuel Perez Rocha, of the Mexican Action Network on Free Trade and associate fellow at the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington, DC. “Leaked documents suggest the TPP would actually go beyond NAFTA in the power it hands to transnational corporations. Thankfully, a transnational movement is rising to stop it.”

The TPP is currently under negotiation between the United States, Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore and Vietnam, but it is also being specifically written as a “docking agreement,” meaning that other countries will be pressured to “dock on” or join over time.

A free trade agreement with the eleven countries currently at the table would be the largest free trade agreement in U.S. history, but it is explicitly discussed as a first step towards an even larger free trade area of the Asia Pacific.

After having completed 15 major rounds of negotiations over a period of years, negotiators from each country still refuse to tell the public what they’ve been proposing in our names. Meanwhile, U.S. negotiators have granted approximately 600 corporate lobbyists special “cleared advisor” status that grants them access to the texts, including lobbyists from companies like Walmart, Cargill and Chevron.

Despite the secrecy, a number of leaked texts have been published at citizenstrade.org, and the things corporations are demanding are out in the open. The leaked texts and public testimony from a range of corporate interests show: a number of manufacturers, brands and retailers want to use the TPP to offshore jobs to countries like Vietnam where workers are paid less than even Chinese sweatshop workers; pharmaceutical giants want to use the TPP to extend the length of medicine patents; Big Oil and



Members of the Comité Latino take their campaign for Legalization Now to the streets of four Coachella Valley cities on Martin Luther King Day. They receive a warm reception by passing motorists in both Latino and Anglo neighborhoods. PHOTO/CHUCK PARKER

Gas want to use the TPP to block future climate regulations; Wall Street wants the TPP to prohibit commonsense financial regulations; and agricultural middlemen want to dump subsidized grains on additional countries, consolidating global food supplies into fewer and fewer hands.

On December 1, a coalition of trade justice activists from the U.S., Mexico and Canada announced a goal of collecting 1,000 organizational signatures on a “North American Unity

Statement Opposing NAFTA Expansion through the Trans-Pacific Partnership.” Groups can read it and sign-on at TPPxBorder.org.

“We’re calling on social justice organizations throughout Canada, Mexico and the United States to sign onto the Unity Statement, first in recognition of the threat the TPP poses to their members, and, second, in recognition that it will take all of us coming together across geographic and issue-area borders in order to win,” said Stuart Trew,

trade campaigner for the Council of Canadians.

Organizers point out that, by working together, similar corporate power grabs from the World Trade Organization’s Millennium Round to the Free Trade Area of the Americas have been defeated.

For more information, contact Arthur Stamoulis, Citizens Trade Campaign at (202) 494-8826.

Americans of African Descent: From the cotton fields to corporate offices

By Raymond L. Smith

Editor’s Note: The following is Part 2 of a 4-part article

LONOKE COUNTY, AR— The community centered on the crossroads of U.S. Highway 70 and what is now State Highway 15. This intersection was affectionately known as “the corner.” On “the corner” was Phillips General Store, a white-owned grocery store with gasoline pumps in front. Just across the highway was a black-owned store/café. Charlie Parker was the proprietor of this business. At some point in time, Parker leased the business to younger African Americans. Joe Bryant and his older brother, Robert, enhanced the café but they were also sharecroppers on a neighboring white-owned farm.

Union Valley Baptist Church and Union Valley Grade School were about a hundred and fifty yards away. Union Valley Baptist Church was established in

November of 1867. During the 1940’s and 1950’s Reverend Cornelius Holmes was the pastor, whose cup of old-time religion was overflowing. Decades after the church was established, Mr. Buck Fletcher, a prominent white landowner and farmer who was concerned about the social and educational opportunities of African-American children helped establish Union Valley Grade School. He was a benefactor of the school throughout its existence and he was a man that Black people held in high regard. Mr. Eddie Brown, an African-American, served as principal or supervisor of the school during the time the school operated. For a long period of time Mr. Brown served as Sunday School superintendent of the church. He was highly respected by Blacks and whites and he unequivocally filled the role of counselor/advisor for many in the area. Another Black school,

Martin Grade School, was

approximately two miles west of “The Corner,” and Furlow Grade School was approximately a mile and a half north of “The Corner.” St. Matthews Baptist Church and Zion Chapel Baptist Church were both within two miles west of “The Corner.” Belle Grove Baptist Church and Turner’s Chapel CME Church were within two miles north of “The Corner.” Green Olive AME Church, Pea Ridge Christian Church and Walnut Grove Baptist Church all were within two miles south of “The Corner.” Sometimes churches got together for joint revival services. Baptisms were always held together at Bearskin Lake or Bayou Meto. They supported each other when one had a musical (singing) program and when the other hosted a picnic (box supper). Samuel Moragne and a few of his siblings formed one of the more popular singing groups.

Carvings on gravestones in the cemeteries tell us that there



were several fraternal organizations which were active in the community. Stories passed down through the generations provide details of how all of the churches worked together to sustain harmony and cooperation throughout the population. Young men of the area formed baseball teams and during summer months competed on Sunday afternoons in fun and

wholesome games. Brothers Joe and Robert

Bryant and their brother-in-law, Joseph Brown, were some of the players on the Union Valley Team. Joe and Robert would have hot dogs, candy and cold drinks from their café to sell at the games. Others from the area would fry fish and sell dinners during the exciting games.

Benton Harbor and Detroit are under a vicious fascist attack

By Rev. Edward Pinkney
bhbanco.org



BENTON HARBOR, MI — The majority of the African-American people in Michigan are

under the fascist new Emergency Manager law. But we are all threatened by this legislation. It will sweep through the state and country if we do not stop them.

The Law undermines the will of the people as expressed through the ballot box, which is the cornerstone of democracy. Democracy by self-rule ceases, collective bargaining is stopped, public discourse is minimized and local elected officials are stripped of all authority.

The Emergency Manager has the power to remove elected officials from office, disburse all state, federal and local funds with no oversight, subpoena witnesses and compel the production of papers, control all local appropriations, contracts, expenditures and loans, create new positions and fill vacancies at the expense of the residents. The Emergency Manager can ignore the minimum staffing level required by contract

or charters approved by the voters. The Emergency Manager can reject, modify, or terminate any contract, sell off local government property without any accountability, borrow money and ignore notice requirements for the public in the adoption of ordinances.

The Emergency Manager is a dictator with absolute power over the elected officials and the citizens. When you bring in an Emergency Manager you are saying, the local elected officials are too stupid to manage your own city and people.

Governor Rick Snyder, along with his rich buddies and the big corporations, are the state's real Emergency Managers. So regardless of who Snyder puts in the position of Emergency Manager for the city of Detroit, they are in total control.

Snyder has been the dictator over Detroit for close to two years. Appointing an Emergency Manager is a diversion as he is already in control of the responsibilities for running the city. Snyder used the threat of an Emergency Manager to the Detroit City Council to get them under his control. The Mayor, Dave Bing, already is under Governor Snyder's complete control. Snyder's



Members of Occupy Detroit demonstrate outside the McNamara Federal building in downtown Detroit. PHOTO/DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM

rule will continue when he appoints an Emergency Manager in Detroit. The Emergency Manager will do nothing without the permission of Governor Snyder and the big corporations.

Elie Wiesel said, "I swore never to be silent, whenever and wherever human beings endure suffering and humiliation. We must take sides; neutrality helps the oppressor, never the

victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented. To remain silent and indifferent is the greatest sin of all."

flame

last year this time
sleeping out there
he was so cold he dreamed
he'd spontaneously combusted
at 4am

jumped up in flame
and walked around the rest of the night
to keep from freezing he said

*

the kids are trying to hide
from the cold
in doorways and down
in the station
and hold onto their bedding
the cops keep taking from them

they're organizing
late online

*

what is new and arising
shoots its flame
thru the broken places

—Sarah Menefee
the homeless kids of OccupySF

Obituary: \$7.25 A Week For Food

Embarrassed to plead
For his weekly grocery dough
George stayed home. . . and starved.

The Proud, Joyful Man

Prudhomme L'Joie crawls
Crying for bread, hands outstretched,
Only finds stale crumbs

—Lew Rosenbaum

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—The *People's Tribune*