



Protest in Benton Harbor, Michigan against the corporate takeover of the town and the building of a Jack Nicklaus Golf Course for the rich on public parkland.

PHOTO/BRETT JELINEK

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Corporations vs. the people: What will it take to win?

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The solution to homelessness is a new society

EDITORIAL

First they came for the homeless. When the Nazis began their campaigns of extermination, they first launched a propaganda war against those they were targeting. Today, the laws against the poorest of the poor, those in the streets, and the way they are being treated and spoken of as little better than vermin, has ominous echoes of this.

The police, who flip through his meager possessions while his life bleeds out of him, shoot down an unarmed homeless man camping in the hills above Albuquerque. In the beautiful city named after St Francis, San Francisco, it is now against the law to sit or lie on a public sidewalk from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m.—after that the ‘lodging’ law kicks in. Sleep deprivation is torture. Tickets for these and other crimes of poverty turn into warrants. A jail cell becomes the only form of housing available.

Many cities are criminalizing sharing food in public. Laws are passed against begging or panhandling. People who have nowhere to sleep but the streets are rousted in the night, or sprayed with power hoses and toxic chemicals, their bedding soaked. Homeless encampments where people attempt to find a little bit of shelter, community and mutual protection are razed and their residents scattered. Bedding, blankets, medicines, personal items and IDs are taken and lost in these sweeps. Untold thousands die each year from the diseases caused by this hard life. Young people travel from town to town in bands of mutual protection, inventing new ways of community in the breakup of the old, which offers them no future.

People whose only crime is that they are victims of a crum-



Grace Hilliard and Carmela Mendoza were displaced by Silicon Valley's \$2200 a month rents and now live destitute on the streets of San Jose, California. PHOTO/SANDY PERRY

bling economic system are criminalized for everything they need to do to survive. Every year more men, women and children are thrown into the streets—glaring evidence that the capitalist system is broken, and those in power unfit to rule.

With computerized labor-replacing technology eliminating millions of jobs, formerly secure workers lose their homes and everything they own. With their labor no longer needed, and thus the value of their labor driven to zero, under the rule of private property they have zero rights. Everything they need to do to survive is criminalized. This Go Die policy is designed to clear public spaces of these remind-

ers of the system's failures. Mass homelessness in the U.S. is the system of private property's Achilles heel. The rulers have no solution.

How insane that anyone should be homeless, hungry and destitute amid the greatest abundance the world has ever

imagined! The demands of the homeless and all those fighting for survival are revolutionary, because they can only be met by an economic system organized around providing for all, ‘to each according to need.’ We organize ourselves to build this new society.

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(800) 691-6888 info@peopletribune.org

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

PEOPLE'S TRIBUNE

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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Publisher: People's Tribune
ISSN# 1081-4787

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The corporations vs. the people: *What will it take to win?*

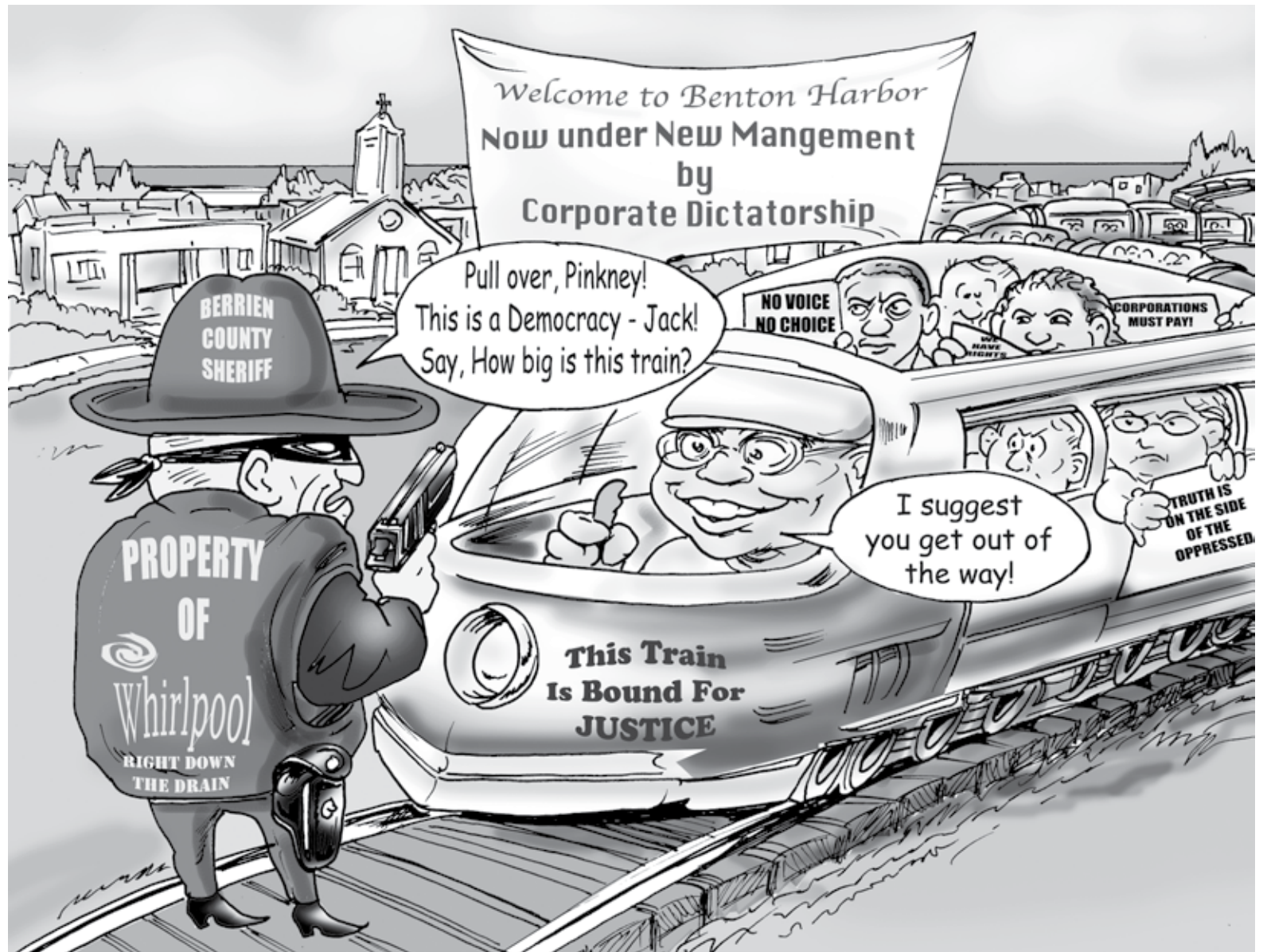
COVER STORY

The people are standing up to the corporations across America, and the corporate state is on the rampage, trying to contain them. The situation appears bleak, but the people also have the opportunity to take the next step forward in their fight to break the corporate stranglehold on America.

Evidence of the corporate assault—and the resistance to it—is everywhere. The U.S. Supreme Court recently refused to hear a challenge to Section 1021(b)(2) of the National Defense Authorization Act, which permits the military to seize U.S. citizens and hold them indefinitely in military detention centers without due process. We live under the most pervasive surveillance and security apparatus ever created. And as journalist Chris Hedges has pointed out, the corporate state can order the assassination of U.S. citizens, has abolished habeas corpus (the right to have a court hearing to secure your release from unlawful detention), and it uses secret evidence to imprison dissidents.

People are murdered routinely by the police, who are in the service of the corporations. Those who show up in the streets to demonstrate—whether against police violence or for immigrant rights or the right to food, clothing and shelter—are typically arrested and sometimes tear-gassed, pepper sprayed and beaten.

In Michigan the state has placed “emergency managers” in charge of certain cities to overturn the authority of local elected officials and directly impose the corporate dictatorship. The ongoing fight against the emergency manager system and the corporate dictatorship has been especially pronounced in Benton Harbor, Mich., where the state is once again attacking



CARTOON/ANDY WILLIS

Rev. Edward Pinkney, trying to imprison him for up to 25 years for false “vote fraud” charges. Another Benton Harbor resident, James Cornelius, is also falsely charged with vote fraud.

Rev. Pinkney’s “crime” was leading an effort to recall Benton Harbor Mayor James Hightower, a puppet for Whirlpool Corporation, which controls Benton Harbor. We have reached the point in America where we cannot even challenge our own elected officials without fear of being arrested and imprisoned.

The whole Michigan battlefront is significant because it’s in the heart of the Rust Belt—the section of America that once

prospered based on the old system of industrial production using lots of human labor. Today, labor-replacing technology has wiped out the jobs and driven down wages. The corporations can no longer offer the people prosperity, so instead they have substituted repression, from the national level on down.

That the corporations are resorting to such severe repression shows their weakness. They have nothing to offer the people—no jobs, no safety net, no future. They know that the millions of us who have no future under this system are forced to fight for a new society where everyone’s needs are met. They

know we are a threat to their ownership and control of the economy. That’s why they attack us.

The people must go on the offensive and build a mass movement for a new society. Whether it is defending our leaders in Michigan, confronting police violence in Albuquerque, demanding our needs be met through the Moral Mondays demonstrations, or the occupy gatherings, we must confront the ruling class without flinching. Our message: We will build a new society controlled by the people and free of oppression, violence and poverty, and no power on earth can prevent this.

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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. 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. Send donations 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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ON THE DEATH OF COMRADE GENERAL G. BAKER

September 6, 1941-May 18, 2014

From the People's Tribune
Editorial Board

As the *People's Tribune* was going to press, we received word that, after a prolonged illness, Comrade General Baker had died.

As an internationally known and respected revolutionary, much has been and will be written about his life and contributions. In future editions of the *People's Tribune*, we will add our understanding of the significance of his life as one of the era's most effective

revolutionaries.

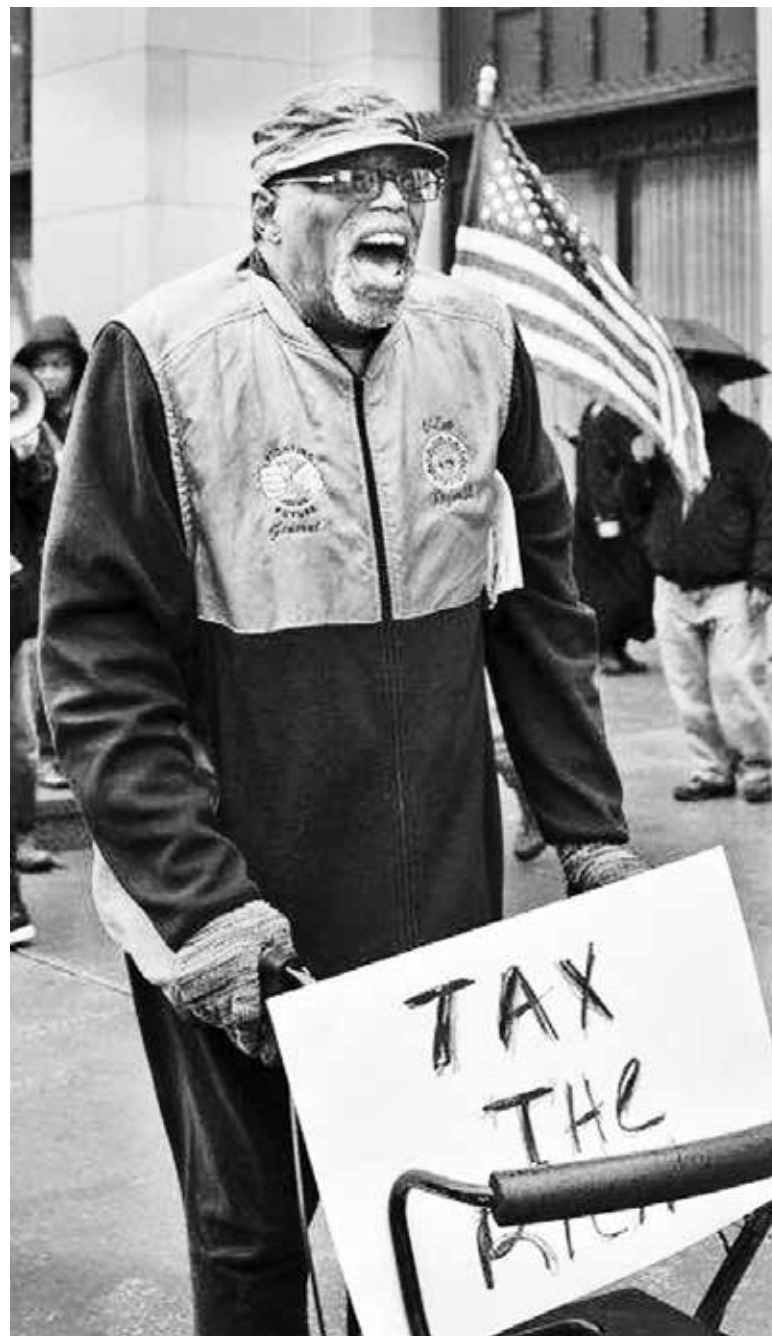
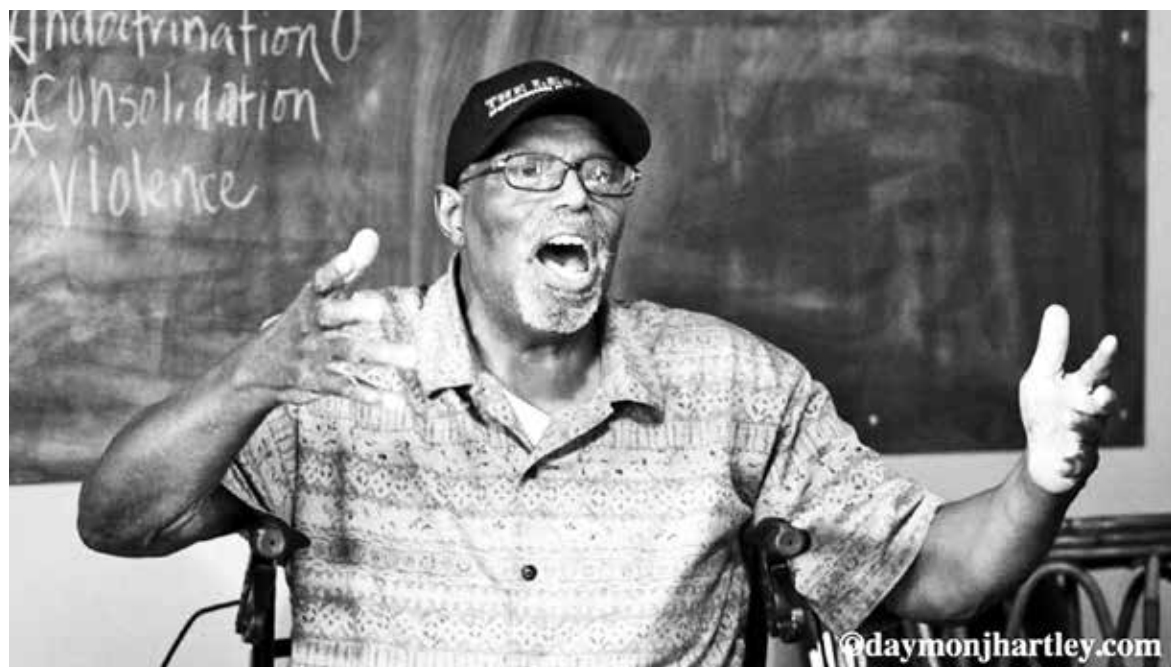
Through the centuries of struggle for the freedom of the working people, we have said farewell to numberless fighters. What they fought for, what they believed in, far outlasts the memory of what they did. The vision of a new world of peace and freedom crowned the legends of struggle led by General Baker.

The ruling class knows how to deal with the spontaneous uprisings of the people, no matter how heroic they may be. What they fear most, what they can

never defeat, is a mass in motion, guided by vision. Comrade Gen's life is summed up as the effort to organize the scattered demands of the exploited into a vision, to organize the fighters around that vision.

In his final days, General Baker said to the family and comrades gathered around him, "Carry on!"

We say farewell to Comrade Gen with the pledge of revolutionaries over the centuries, "This fight will go on until we win!"



As Dottie Stevens joins the elders, our determination to end poverty grows stronger



Dottie Stevens devoted her life to the struggle against poverty. She passed away in March, 2014.
PHOTO/DONATED

times led by Democrats—ripping holes in the safety net, "ending welfare as we know it," and enforcing "workfare" while real jobs were disappearing. As she learned and taught and fought, she helped to prepare us for the next stage in the fight to claim the right to survive and thrive. As we prepare to enlarge and report on that fight, we are inspired by Dottie's example. Excerpts from her obituary below reveal only small parts of a huge life. To join Dottie's work to end poverty, contact www.facebook.com/oneclassonecause

Dorothy "Dottie" Kech-Stevens, October 21, 1941 – March 27, 2014.

Former Massachusetts gubernatorial candidate, Mattapan Woman of the Year, Community Organizer, Editor, Human Rights Cities Leader, Beloved

Friend and Mother.

Dottie Stevens passed away in Massachusetts on Thursday, March 27, 2014. She was a fierce advocate for justice and was unwavering in her struggle for human rights for all. In her last months and days, organizing from her hospital bed "office," she directed her projects of Survivors, Inc., Survival News, and Human Rights Cities, making and receiving calls, working on grants and budgets, and directing bedside meetings.

She founded, with others, Survival News and Survivors, Inc., in 1987, outgrowths of the group Advocacy for Resources for Modern Survival, (ARMS), the organization she started when she was a student at University of Massachusetts/Boston. Survival News became the longest, continually published, original, women's anti-

poverty journal, providing a voice by, for, and about the experience and effects of poverty on women and children in the U.S. Dottie, the journal, and the organization received many awards and honors during these years, culminating in having their historical records included in the Women's History Archives of Smith College, the oldest and largest women's history archive in the U.S.

Dottie was sought out and spoke before countless diverse audiences, with an authority, dignity and respect that moved every audience. Whether it was huge or small demonstrations before the Statehouse, testifying at hearings, in small classrooms, or at national conventions, her message of hope and calls to action were clear, authentic and effective. With Dottie's encouragement and belief in our abilities,

we who worked with her were able to write, speak out, organize, educate and raise ourselves out of obscurity and poverty. Her sweet spirit, her strong voice, her all-encompassing love, her tireless battle against poverty, and her amazing wisdom will be greatly missed by all who knew, loved, respected and admired her. May she rest in peace having left the world a better place than she found it by changing the lives and chances of literally hundreds of women and children specifically, and of all those she met who were fortunate enough to share the sphere of her enduring and living legacy.

A Memorial Issue of Survival News dedicated to Dottie's memory and containing all of the tributes that have been sent will be soon be available at www.SurvivorsInc.org.

Gentrification and displacement in the Bay Area

By Women's Economic Agenda Project (WEAP)

SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA — A recent report on the state of Oakland reveals that it has lost fifty percent of its Black population, most of whom have relocated over the last decade. Throughout the Bay Area, people share stories of living with relatives, on the streets and in hotels. Teachers and professors shed tears as they report of students living in cars, struggling to pay for books and supplies while living a transient life, seeking an education for a career they know they may never have. Well-educated men and women, sometimes with two, maybe three degrees, find themselves without a job, a home and a direction in life. Today, we've gone beyond gentrification. Today, we face the much more massive and increasingly common challenge of displacement.

Communities are being ripped asunder. And while the American tendency to blame oneself continues to pervade unabated, the cold and unwavering reality is that there is a much more objective, all-encompassing reality that is rapidly

engulfing the entire Bay Area, and many, if not all major cities in the United States. That reality is automation. However, the Bay Area, like few places in the United States is unique, in that it bears both the burden and the opportunity of being one of the few locations that are driving the push for automation. Silicon Valley, with its emerging tech giants like Google, Apple, Twitter, Facebook and many of the past giants of Oracle, Cisco and so many others, are at the center and core of this unstoppable process. While one worker gets paid \$100,000 to develop the robots that replace humans, 100,000 of workers are left without jobs, with no clear plan in sight to replace them.

Many recent reports state that within the next 20 years, 47 percent of all jobs will be automated. Another report states that within the next twenty years, 50 percent of all jobs will be part-time. What does this mean for the American worker? In one simple word: displacement. Americans are being displaced from their jobs, their homes, the communities and their humanity. In the meantime, corporations are reap-

ing untold wealth at the expense of millions of people here in the United States, and billions of others throughout the globe. The rapidly developing pace of technological improvement makes it impossible for companies not to compete, and there is no way to undo the technology. The process of displacement and dispossession continues.

What will this mean for us, the people? Well, robots don't contribute to the economy. They don't have to be paid, and they don't buy anything. Further, the massive abundance that they produce cannot be purchased by a population with no money. In this environment, the system of private ownership of the socially necessary means of life cannot be maintained.

On the other hand, as more and more people are forced out of an economy that cannot account for their needs, it will become increasingly critical for people to face this one undeniable truth. The only solution to displacement is abolition of private property and the devastation it causes. A cooperative society where everyone's needs are met is the solution.



People in Silicon Valley, home to the billionaire tech giants, work with people who live in the "Jungle," the largest homeless tent city in the nation, to clean up on Earth Day.

PHOTO/SILICON VALLEY DE-BUG

Privatization's trick bag



One of the many, ongoing protests against the closing of up to 49 Chicago public schools.

PHOTO/SARAH JANE RHEE

By Steven Miller

OAKLAND, CA — Politicians these days all push the Austerity line that "there just isn't any money." The next step is to tout the wonders of privatization, often called "public-private partnerships," which are supposed to keep America's dilapidated infrastructure fixed and shiny, better service at lower costs.

President Obama called for massive privatization in his 2013 State of the Union Speech:

"So, tonight, I propose a "Fix-It-First" program to put people

to work as soon as possible on our most urgent repairs, like the nearly 70,000 structurally deficient bridges across the country. And to make sure taxpayers don't shoulder the whole burden, I'm also proposing a Partnership to Rebuild America that attracts private capital to upgrade what our businesses need most: modern ports to move our goods; modern pipelines to withstand a storm; modern schools worthy of our children."

In other words, Obama plans to turn over ownership of roads, ports, bridges and schools to private corpo-

rations. Obama has even proposed to privatize the Tennessee Valley Authority, the set of dams that brought electricity into the South! Such pacts with the devil are a one-way street to Hell. We can see how well privatization works from Chicago's experience privatizing its parking meters.

In 2008, then Mayor Richard Daley turned over control of 36,000 parking meters to a group of financial investors, who would rake in the profits. Why pay public workers when you can send the money directly to corporations? The mayor didn't bother to explain the small print.

Privatization contracts routinely contain an Adverse Action clause, which forbids government from hindering the profits of the corporations. So what happens when the city puts in a bike lane or fixes the sewers or the neighborhood holds a street fair? These actions idle the parking meters for a period of time, so Chicago must reimburse the corporation for all the lost revenue!

When the meters were public property, there was no need to guarantee private profits. But now, the city must put additional money into every construction project to cover the lost profits of the financiers. Privatization is another scheme to loot the public.

For more on privatization scams, search for Ellen Dannin.

Prayer for Passover

(April 14, 2014)

I passed over twelve destitute today:

homeless on the street,
some with signs, some with cups,
some shaking, some sleeping,
some black, some white,
some men, some women,
all hungry.

Very few passers by even looked their way.
Fewer gave. And who can blame them?

In a city where you pass a dozen homeless people every day,
on your way to, or from, a job that sucks the life out of you,
to just put food on the table, pay the bills,
survive...

Lord,
How did we get here?
Where will we go now?

Where is Moses, this Passover?

Lord,
Let my people go.

— Adam Gottlieb

Fighting the corporate dictatorship in Michigan

Dear Readers,
 Benton Harbor, MI has become ground zero in the struggle against the corporate dictatorship sweeping across our country. Rev. Edward Pinkney has been fighting the take over of Benton Harbor by the Whirlpool Corporation for years. The community's latest battle is the recall of Mayor James Hightower, a puppet for the Whirlpool Corporation. Rev. Pinkney is under house arrest and faces 25 years imprisonment on false "vote fraud" charges. Fellow resident James Cornelius also faces lesser vote fraud charges. What appears on these pages are statements from some of the movement leaders across America in support of those under attack in Benton Harbor. Take this message out. Donate to the defense at BANCO, 1946 Union Street, Benton Harbor, MI 49022 or visit bhbanco.org.
 — The Editors of the People's Tribune



Protests in Benton Harbor against the emergency manager and the redevelopment that is forcing out the poor in the town. PHOTO/BRETT JELINEK

"All of us fighting for justice and humanity are Rev. Pinkney. His arrest and false charges should be a rallying call to all of his brothers and sisters across the country to stand up and get serious about the situation we all face."
 — Cheri Honkala, co-founder, Poor People's Economic Human Rights Campaign

"My earliest memories of Rev. Pinkney include his diligence in including a Hip Hop voice in his messaging. Benton Harbor is ground zero in the assault on democracy, humanity and our planet. Rev. Pinkney and Benton Harbor represent the reality that many of us face if we don't take a stand now. Free Rev. Pinkney."
 — Shamako Noble, President, Hip Hop Congress

"Rev. Pinkney and the people of Benton Harbor are on the front lines of the struggle for democracy and self-determination. The model used in Michigan is similar to what the U.S. has done abroad for decades and is now turning on poor communities at home. I urge people to support Rev. Pinkney."
 — Margaret Flowers, M.D., Physicians for a National Healthcare Program (for identification purposes only)

"It is no surprise that a fascist "Emergency Financial Manager" was imposed on Benton Harbor. What is happening in Benton Harbor is coming to the rest of the country unless we organize and educate a movement. Please join me in making a financial contribution to Rev. Pinkney's legal defense."
 — David Cobb, 2004 Green Party Presidential Nominee

"Rev. E. Pinkney is a friend of Edgewood United Church... [he] has educated our Congregation regarding the use and abuse of the emergency manager law... he has earned wide respect in this community, this state and across the nation for his devotion to justice... Be it resolved that we call for an investigation of all charges against him by an independent commissioner."
 — Edgewood United Church Taskforce, Lansing, MI

"Rev. Edward Pinkney used his democratic rights to challenge a corrupt system. Now there is an attempt to silence him. The same system is also incarcerating and separating families by deporting their loved ones. We need to support each other and not allow these injustices to continue. We need a system that is "of the people, for the people, and by the people!"
 — Gloria Meneses-Sandoval, Central Valley High School counselor, California

"Rev. Pinkney has not been convicted of anything in this matter but the actions by Benton Harbor authorities demonstrate that these authorities will stop at nothing to silence and unjustly convict Rev. Pinkney and anyone else in Benton Harbor who dares to oppose the corrupt corporate, judicial and political system in Benton Harbor."
 — Larry Pinkney, writer

"Rev. Pinkney is standing up for justice and righteousness for all people, not just a few. We need to start looking at what is happening to our nation when we lift up a certain number of people and condemn the rest. Our country is going to Hell if we don't do something righteous. We are asking everyone to stand up for the truth. God wants this nation healed."
 — Rev. Charles W. Taylor, West Addison Church of God, South Bend, Indiana

"All across Berrien County—the Sheriff's Department and the county administrators are making it harder and harder for Americans, particularly, African Americans, to exercise their right to sign a recall petition. These measures include intimidation by the mayor, the Sheriff's Department and the prosecutor's office. The message is clear: Recall any elected official that the corporations support and you will go to jail. The whole city is under siege today. We are now under the power of the corporations, the elites, and the dictators. We must organize and demonstrate that a new world is possible."
 — Rev. Edward Pinkney

"I went out and got signatures, knocked on people's doors, went down to the soup kitchen, got 12 signatures per paper just like I was supposed to. I haven't done nothing wrong. I haven't done any fraud or changed any documents. Why are they treating me like a criminal? I feel Mayor Hightower is not doing a good job. I'm entitled to that opinion. I think they are bothering me because I'm associated with Rev. Pinkney."
 — James Cornelius, charged with election fraud in Benton Harbor mayoral recall

"Whirlpool, Harbor Shores, the PGA, have all the money. They financed Hightower's campaign. He's their boy and that's why they are pushing this arrest. They were shocked when the recall went through. Michigan is a test ground. If they see how easy it is to get us, it will soon be coming your way."
 — Patsy Heinz, Benton Harbor

"They [Whirlpool] want to confuse the community. They will do anything to sabotage the mayoral elections so that Hightower wins. I see them as puppeteers pulling Hightower's strings. They are using the mayor to take control of Benton Harbor. We want them stopped. This is another Occupy—Occupy Benton Harbor."
 — Mary Donald, Benton Harbor

"For over a decade, Rev. Pinkney has devoted time and energy to helping individual citizens have a voice in their government and their lives—in Benton Harbor, across Michigan, and around the country."
 — John Anthony La Pietra, Elections Coordinator, Green Party of Michigan



Pinkney and supporters outside the courthouse after he received a hung jury in the first vote fraud trial in 2007. He was later convicted by an all white jury. PHOTO/DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM

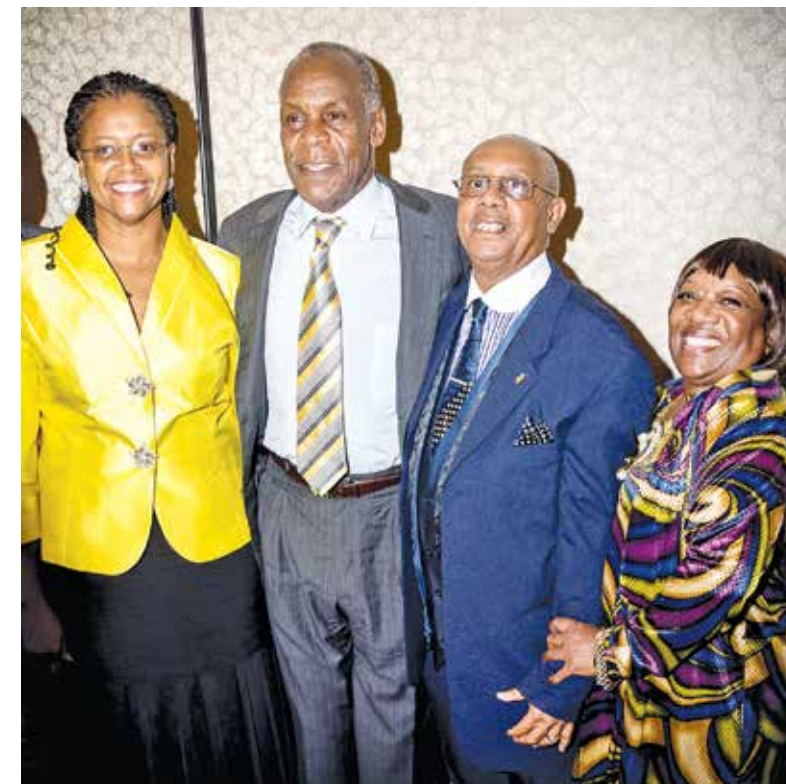
"I am 100% in support of Reverend Pinkney. The biggest oversight is that he is presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt. That has been removed from the table of justice."
 — Marcus Mohammad, candidate for Mayor in the Benton Harbor recall election

"In my mind, the only reason the voter harassment is occurring is to have a harmful impact on eligible voters who are trying to exercise their constitutional rights."
 — Marquette Coates, Benton Harbor

"Rev. Pinkney was charged with election fraud. His issue is political corruption in Benton Harbor. Rev. Pinkney's group was able to provide enough valid signatures to recall their Mayor. This is just another way to postpone the mayoral election."
 — Tijuana Morris, Detroit



Protest against the Professional Golfers Association (PGA) for gentrification and displacement of the poor in Benton Harbor. PHOTO/DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM



Fall 2013 BANCO dinner with keynote speaker actor Danny Glover. From left to right, Belinda Brown, Danny Glover, Rev. Pinkney, Dorothy Pinkney. PHOTO/BRETT JELINEK



Rev. Pinkney faces immediate jail time if he uses his computer. A lawyer said no case had been found where a defendant is told they cannot use your computer at all. It is meant to isolate him from the movement. — People's Tribune

Sacrifice zone for extreme energy extraction corporations

Southern Illinois:

By Cathy Talbott

CARBONDALE, IL — The past two years the region often referred to as “Little Egypt” in the bottom third of Illinois has been *ground zero* in the fight to keep our land, air and water from being contaminated by fossil fuel extraction corporations, i.e., coal, oil, and gas. Coal has been mined here since the start of the twentieth century. Many battles were fought by miners in their quest for control over the conditions of their lives. A century ago 100 million tons were mined by 100,000 miners. Today, 30 million tons is produced by around 3000 miners. The wealth extracted left the area along with the coal.

Most mineral rights do not belong to the occupiers of the land here. Those were bought up long ago by absentee speculators. Abandoned mines and stripped areas burden the state with clean up costs in the billions. Toxins seep into the soil and water. The region suffers from poverty and ill-health as a consequence.

Today the oil and gas industry have sold the people a new snake oil. This one is dangled before the speculator’s eyes, sparkling like fool’s gold. “Fracked” oil

and gas is the new “fool’s gold.” And it is “fools” that plead the case for it. An estimated \$500 million has been spent on leases thus far. Now the corporate marauders are pulling out all stops to guarantee their rewards.

Included in their bag of dirty tricks is to verbally “attack” the working people of Southern Illinois who dare voice opposition to the corporate plan to “frack” the shale, potentially causing earthquakes, contaminating aquifers, despoiling our Shawnee National Forest, polluting air and contributing to global warming. We are now labeled “outside agitators” and “extremists.”

When residents of Johnson County successfully petitioned to put a “Community Bill of Rights” initiative on the March ballot (which if passed would support the county commissioners passing a law to ban “fracking”) the **Illinois Chamber of Commerce** put up \$23,000 to counter the local group’s ads in the two jointly owned county papers. The spokesperson for **Southern Illinoisans Against Fracturing Our Environment** was then called by one of the owners and told they would no longer accept *our* ads and to



Anti-fracking protest in Chicago. Fracking makes billions for energy corporations while potentially causing earthquakes, contaminated aquifers, despoiled forests, polluted air and contributes to global warming. PHOTO/CHARLES MILLER

come pick up the inserts already printed and paid for which were scheduled to be inserted in the papers for two weeks prior to the vote. *However, the oil and gas industry placed vicious and vile ads in those same papers attacking the local groups.* The ballot initiative failed 42% to 58% due

to these bullying tactics. Some county commissioners dropped their opposition to “fracking” and joined in the attacks.

We, the people of Southern Illinois must strengthen our resolve to fight this corporate take over. We can learn lessons from the struggle going on in Ben-

ton Harbor, MI where Reverend Pinkney is under house arrest for initiating a recall vote of the mayor who is in the pockets of the Whirlpool Corporation. We must expand the struggle, unite with our class brothers and sisters, and take control of the corporations before they destroy us.

Challenging corruption and patronage in Alabama



The goal of Kimberly McCuiston (above), running for the State Senate, is to stop the powerful fossil fuel industry’s legislators in Alabama. PHOTO/DONATED

The People’s Tribune’s Cathy Talbott interviewed Kimberly McCuiston of Foley, Alabama, who is running on an environmental platform as an Independent with support from the Liberty Tree Foundation for the Alabama State Senate against Trip Pittman-R.

People’s Tribune: Why are you running for the Alabama Senate District 32 seat?

Kimberly McCuiston: My goal is to stop the fossil fuel industry super majority of greedy legislators who control power in Alabama. The incumbent (Trip Pittman) is corrupt. When BP gave former governor Bob Riley \$640,000 to prepare the coast for the oil onslaught, Pittman was a trustee of those funds and had ties to the contracting company that received the funds. Although the Ethics Commission cleared him of any wrongdoing, the fact that he sat on the commission reveals a conflict of interest.

PT: What are the issues in your campaign?

KM: There are twelve different fossil fuel projects around Mobile. I’m working with MEJAC (Mobile Environmental Justice Action Coalition) to stop expansion of a pipeline through historic Africatown, which is the oldest community founded by

freed slaves. (See link for more on Africatown: <http://bridgethegulfproject.org/blog/2013/alabama-community-founded-former-slaves-now-under-siege-tar-sands>).

I am cofounder of Alabama Coast United (<http://alabamashrimpfestival.com>), an organization of the victims of the BP oil spill and toxic dispersants. We educate and advocate for environmental, economic and social justice. There are many sick people here and BP, along with their greedy politicians, has abdicated their responsibility to the people of this region. We now have Canadian tar sands coming in by rail and we tried to keep a pipeline from going through Big Creek Lake, the only approved source of drinking water for Mobile. I believe that clean water and air are basic human rights and anything less is a human rights violation!

Our state legislature wants to turn Alabama into the “Houston East,” with all the plans for

pipelines and tar sands extraction in the northwestern areas of Alabama. Of course, these are some of the poorest counties in the U.S. and the people aren’t educated and do not understand what is at stake. I’m not only running to help protect my home district but to help all of those in Alabama. I want to see green energy and technology jobs for Baldwin County and all of Alabama.

I also want to see Medicaid expanded and fully funded in Alabama. There are 300,000 residents who cannot get health insurance. I also oppose the Alabama Accountability Act, which former governor Bob Riley’s lobbying company promoted. (see: <http://alreporter.com/archives/2012-september/146-state/6203-riley-sgo-advertises-private-school-scholarships-in-non-failing-districts.html>) It decides which schools are failing and skims \$20,000,000 from the general education fund for vouchers.

PT: What is your vision for the future?

KM: The bottom line is we’re going to need a revolution. I want to see Alabama move forward to a sustainable and secure fossil fuel free future for our children and grandchildren.

PT: How can readers follow your campaign and get in touch with you?

KM: Follow me on Facebook: www.facebook.com/KimberlyMcCuistonforalabamasenate-district32. Anyone can call me at 251-279-7769.

Luis J. Rodriguez California Campaign for Economic, Environmental and Social Justice



Luis J. Rodriguez.

PHOTO/DONATED

By the Luis J. Rodriguez Campaign for Governor

LOS ANGELES, CA — As we embarked on this campaign journey, we knew it would be a challenging road. We have a small core team of dedicated organizers working for free and with heart. Our grassroots budget has been limiting but we have used

it efficiently. The mainstream media has left us out so we have created our own through independent newspapers/magazines and social media. We have faced great adversities but we continue to stay true to our roots, a community oriented grassroots campaign for the people and by the people.

Recently we met with the LA

Times seeking an endorsement. Luis, staying true to his politics, answered questions in an honest way. This may have cost us the endorsement but we stand by him and our commitment to serve no one else but the people of California. When asked by the LA times staffer what he would do “if the wealthy people decided to leave the state,” he answered, “Well, they have the privilege to leave. What about the people that cannot go anywhere? What about those that are suffering and cannot up and just leave? Those are the people I want to make sure we provide for.”

We are asking for solidarity all across California to unite on the essentials of a just and dignified society. We ask that the people of California take a stand for:

1. Ending poverty by providing practical and sustainable solutions for the 9 million people living in poverty in

California.

2. Overhauling the bloated prison industrial monster.
3. Taking care of Mother Earth.
4. A full quality and resourced educational system that is accessible to all and does not burden our young people with debt.
5. Free and quality healthcare.
6. Neighborhood arts policy.

This is how you can contribute:

1. Spider Work. Share this message with all your circles and networks.
2. Help maximize our social media reach by sharing our posts, press releases, endorsements etc. and help our FB page grow in “likes.”
3. Bee Work. Help us pollinate our message. Talk to your family and friends about this campaign. We can email literature for you to print and distribute or coordinate de-

liveries/pick up of printed literature.

4. Donate! Any amount counts. We are a non-corporate campaign and we need every dollar the people can offer. Visit our website for more information.
5. Outreach to your local media. Write to your local journalists, newspapers, and radio personalities and tell them you want them to cover this campaign because it is their responsibility to inform the people of their choices for this Primary Election.
6. Endorse us! Do this as an individual or as an organization/community group.

To help in any way, write info@rodriguezforgovernor.org. Go to www.rodriguezforgovernor.org to find out more. In California, remember to vote June 3—we need real choices, more voices.

Luis Rodriguez speaks at De Anza College: ‘Imagine a new California’

By Sandy Perry

SAN JOSE, CA — Green Party-endorsed candidate for California Governor and renowned author Luis Rodriguez appeared at De Anza College near San Jose on April 28. Luis spoke with students in political science classes and then addressed an audience at the Campus Center patio stage at noon.

The Rodriguez campaign

has stood for immigrant rights, labor rights, universal health care, anti-fracking, pro-environment, closing prisons, opening schools, and ending poverty. He is the only major Latino candidate in the race and was recently endorsed by the Mexican-American Political Association (MAPA).

“I propose cutting across the political, spiritual, and cultural spectrum to unify people around

the vital issues,” Luis told the students. “No more poverty. No more failing prison system. No more poisoning of our air, water and land. Free quality education for everyone. Free healthcare from the cradle to the grave. And access to art, music, dance, theater, public art, writing, and festivals in every neighborhood.

“This campaign is like no other, addressing the intersection of the environment, the economy and social justice. Presently these pillars of a healthy society are largely disconnected, even at odds. We need an integral California—where a strong economy is needed for a clean and green environment, where a clean and green environment is best for a strong economy, and where social justice is inseparable from both.

“People can have their own political perspectives, faiths, and traditions, but when the economy tanks—when homes are foreclosed, jobs lost, services cut—it matters little who is Republican, Democrat or independent. Who is Christian, Muslim or atheist. Who is Black, brown or white. Everyone is affected.

There is now a sense that what’s important is the social

Arrests at San Francisco protest

By Keenan Putansu

SAN FRANCISCO, CA —The San Francisco Police Department (SFPD) started arresting people for standing up for what they believe in. There were 11 arrests that day, 10 were released, one is still locked up at 850 Bryant St. They started getting aggressive toward the community. They did not like it when the Latino community started chanting, “Who killed Alex? SFPD!” I was the first person they snatched and loaded into the paddy wagon (meat wagon). If you’re wondering who Alex is, he was a Latino student at City College of San Francisco who was gunned down by SFPD on Bernal Hill, for supposedly aiming his taser from a distance at one of the officers. He was also a community activist. There were many demonstrations in the Mission District because of his murder.

OccupySF activist Keenan Putansu wrote this account of his arrest after a diverse and spirited May Day march up San Francisco’s Mission St. for immigrant, workers and human rights. Young demonstrators took the intersection where Food Not Bombs members were sharing food, and were arrested.

class one belongs to—who has the power and wealth, who doesn’t? Who is part of the one percent or the 99 percent?”

This June 3 you can vote for a Governor you believe in. You do not have to vote for “Austerity Jerry” Brown or “Tea Party Tim” Donnelly for Governor. Luis is running to become one of the “top two” candidates who will proceed to the November

general election, and confront the other parties over their policies of budget cuts, jails, deportations, and poverty in the midst of plenty.

Luis’s appearance was sponsored by the De Anza Green Party club.

For more information go to rodriguezforgovernor.org



De Anza Green Party members and friends celebrate the Global Climate Convergence from Earth Day to Mayday 2014. They organized four days of education and action including an appearance by Green Party candidate for Governor, Luis J. Rodriguez.

PHOTO/SHAMAKO NOBLE

Students for Quality Education fight fee hikes

By Robert DeWitz

LOS ANGELES, CA — Students for Quality Education (SQE) is leading a campaign to defeat a proposed \$560 fee hike at California State University, Dominguez Hills. SQE circulated an online petition via change.org asking the university's President Hagan to remove his proposal. The petition with nearly 1,700 supporters, can be found at <http://chn.ge/1k8mHLW>.

SQE organized several actions during Hagan's Week of Inauguration demanding that he respect the petition by dropping his proposal. This included actions on International Worker's Day and for his inauguration the following day.

The fee hike defies the four-year freeze on tuition, pushes low-income students out, will force many students to work more and have less time to study effectively, hindering students' ability to excel academically. Fifty-nine percent of the school's students are classified as low income.

This alternative fee hike strategy is an attempt to avoid public scrutiny and accountability in three ways.

First, by using a divide-and-hike tactic to introduce fees campus-by-campus, obscuring what is in reality a system-wide hike, in defiance of Governor Jerry Brown's freeze on tuition.

Second, by actively co-opting student governments who have questioned new fees in the past, administrators are grooming student government leaders and coaching them on how to best "sell" the new fees to students, and without allowing for a

referendum vote by the general student body.

Third, the usage of Orwellian language, such as the word "success," is used to spin the issue. Internal communications within Associated Students Inc., reveal that the funds may in fact be used for campus beautification projects or new buildings. One is a proposed recreational building that ASI is working to establish.

There is an effort to re-market CSUDH as "The Cal State of the South Bay" and attract more students from the beach cities. In the first fee forum, Hagan argued, "We need to raise fees to compete with other campuses... because students are passing us by to go to Fullerton and Long Beach." In effect, they are continuing to push out low-income students in favor of said population.

I'd like to note that the population of African-American students has dropped from 28% in 2009 to 17% in 2013. The process is completely undemocratic. Showpiece "transparency" in one-sided stage-managed "forums" do not equate to campus democracy.

Administrators are also undermining campus democracy by not adequately informing students that the already poorly advertised "alternative consultation" forums held on their campuses are part of one of two methods allowed for implementing campus-based fees. The alternate method is that of a referendum vote, which would allow for the democratic participation of all students in deciding whether or not to increase fees. Considering the successful student mobilizations against fee increases that occurred less than two years ago, administrators



(Above) Students for Quality Education fight fee hikes at California State University. This action is outside the president's office. PHOTO/DONATED

(Right) Ana Marie Cateano, leader of the Student Empowerment at Mission, is one of two students suspended from school speaking out. PHOTO/PATITA FEA CATANO

undoubtedly fear that the student body may vote against the fees.

Once a fee hike is implemented, the amount can be raised easily without informing the majority of students. The only requirement is holding an "alternative consultation." Also, there is no legal obligation for the administration to incorporate any of the feedback from said consultation.

SQE can be contacted at csudh.sqe1@gmail.com.



Student suspensions for questioning denial of teachers' tenure

By Eugene Hernandez

SYLMAR, CA — It is now mid-semester and the tides of protests have died down. Two students have been suspended from Los Angeles Mission College, located in Sylmar, CA, for simply questioning a college administration decision denying tenure to Guillermo Aviles, a popular drama teacher (Guillermo is actually the only drama teacher at Mission).

Those suspended were Norma Ramirez, famous community activist who has been in community battles since 1990 and was the leader of United for Education Coalition. The second was

Ana Marie Cateano, leader of the Student Empowerment at Mission.

Mission College has been designated by the federal government as a Hispanic Learning Institution. It has an 87% Chicano student body, but the faculty is all white and very racist. The faculty has fought for years against the establishment of a Chicano Studies Department and against hiring Chicano full time faculty.

Two semesters ago, Academic Senate leader Angela Echeverria, Vice President Alma Hawkins and the Associated Student Advisor urged an older student, Evy Trevant, to create

racial divisions between Chicano and the few Black students on campus. With it, they engineered a recall of the ASO president, Danny Campus, before he had even taken office. They held up appointment to the ASO for months destroying any progress for an entire semester. The administration did nothing against them.

I am a community member and I was one of the first members of the community to help establish Mission College. As I spoke before the Academic Senate to voice my opposition to the suspensions of Norma and Ana, the college had eight armed deputy sheriffs and surveillance

cameras in the room. Norma and Ana Marie's only crime was to ask why the recommendation of the Accreditation Committee had not been implemented.

Last year, Los Angeles Mission College was dinged with 17 infractions and was put on probation by the Accreditation Committee. One of the recommendations was better communication and respect between the faculty and students, in addition to including students in college government decisions, which the Academic Senate has earned an "F" for this semester. Mission has gone backwards rather than forward.

Mission College communi-

ty members and students have gone to the Board of Trustees to plead for intervention, but have been met with deaf ears. It appears they have crushed the student movement this semester. The kangaroo court which condemned Norma and Ana Marie did not consider the evidence, which clearly shows that there were no threatening moves by either of them. Armed Los Angeles County Sheriff's Deputies took out Ana Marie's two babies from the Campus Day Care Center and they are banished for the semester.

Eugene Hernandez is from the San Fernando Valley Green Party.

Kids for cash

By Leslie Willis

CHICAGO, IL — “Kids for Cash” is the name given to a scandal and to a new documentary film about what’s been going on in Luzerne County, PA, over the last decade. In 2011, two judges were convicted of taking millions of dollars from two private profit making juvenile detention centers in return for sending thousands of juveniles to their detention camps. Harsh sentences were handed down for minimal offenses such as mocking a principal, trespassing into a vacant building and petty theft. Children as young as 14 ended up spending years locked up in these detention centers. Young lives were interrupted and destroyed by these actions and the heartache for their families can never be erased.

While prison sentences and fines were given to the two judges and one property devel-

oper, this couldn’t have happened without the participation of courtroom officials, the police and even school officials carrying out a “zero tolerance” policy towards children. You hear about a pipeline from school to prison operating in urban centers in mainly minority communities, but Luzerne County is over 90% white. The huge numbers of African American and Latino youngsters and adults that are stopped, searched, and incarcerated for minor offenses or even falsified offenses is documented fact, but racism is not the whole story as it doesn’t explain Luzerne County. So what’s going on?

In Luzerne County, 15% of the people live below the poverty line and the medium income is well below the national average. One thing all youngsters have in common is that they are soon to be in need of a place in the economy. And that’s a problem. No amount of job counseling and re-

sume writing classes can create a labor market. Computers and robotics are constantly eliminating the need for workers in every sector of the economy. It’s not that there isn’t plenty to do, for example fixing the infrastructure, taking care of people and saving our environment. But if it doesn’t make a buck, if it isn’t corporate controlled—then it has a hard time surviving. Instead of jobs, locking up unemployable people is now a fact of life.

The “Kids for cash” scandal opened the door for the community to demand reforms. Commenting on these reforms, Robert May (the maker of the film) said that now in PA, “You can’t go before a juvenile court without having a lawyer, and you can’t shackle and handcuff a kid except in extreme circumstances.” But, he added, the state of PA still spends \$800,000 a day, or \$300 million a year on “the incarceration of children.”



Still from documentary, “Kids for Cash.”

All across the country parents are protesting “zero tolerance” policies, recognizing that it is not solving problems. Fear of young people is an excuse to spend tax dollars, not on providing jobs, but on putting young people in cold storage. If they are locked up—they can’t vote,

protest or organize for a better future for themselves. If we are to unite and truly make reforms, everything depends on our understanding that there is enough knowledge and resources to do so. We don’t have scarcity; we have an abundance that should belong to our children.

The struggle for affirmative action

By Raymond L. Smith

Editor’s note: This is part one of a two-part article.

NORTH LITTLE ROCK, AR — Since The Star Spangled Banner became the national anthem, “The Land of the Free,” has been the claim of America. However, fifty years ago, that claim was a work in progress. And, there was plenty of work to do. The late 1950’s, the 1960’s and the early 1970’s marked the years of the major Civil Rights battles in the United States. Protest marches and other acts of civil disobedience prevailed in many cities across the land. In Washington D.C., Martin Luther King, Jr. proclaimed his dream as he stood before 250,000 people; Americans braced for a nuclear confrontation with the Soviet Union over missiles in Cuba. Racists in the American South bombed churches and shot young people who dared to register African-Americans to vote; signs, marked “colored” or “whites only,” expressed the division in the country. President Kennedy was shot down in Dallas, Texas, in 1963; Martin Luther King, Jr. and Robert Kennedy were both murdered in 1968.

Another public official who was a governor of a Southern

state, George Wallace, was shot down as he campaigned to become president of the United States. As a result of this attack, he was left crippled and unable to walk.

Viet Nam War protesters were killed by National Guard soldiers at Kent State University. Civil Rights leaders were jailed, martyred, and beaten; militants shouted for “Revolution.” Flower children sang for “Peace.” The United States put a man on the moon; psychedelic drugs distorted minds and Woodstock music festival in New York became the epitome of peace and brotherhood.

It should be noted that a little earlier during this time period Elvis Presley was crowned the “King” of a fast growing music phenomenon—Rock and Roll. On the other end of the musical pendulum, another Icon was acknowledging that he didn’t know much about history, and he didn’t know much about algebra, but Sam was cooking. Young people were dancing at “Sock Hops.” Muhammad Ali proclaimed himself as “The Greatest;” baseball dominated the sports scene. Music encompassed the changing times; it was “groovy and soulful” with the four J’s: Joan Baez, Janis Joplin, Jimmy Hendrix, and James

Brown, and Otis Redding was “Sittin’ on the Dock of the Bay.” America’s “melting pot” boiled over with conflict and confusion, and during this era of change and challenge, the United States government launched the most far-reaching civil rights’ legislation this country has ever seen. The executive, legislative, and judicial branches pushed through the most comprehensive human/civil rights bills in the history of this country. President Lyndon Johnson signed the legislation, and although the war was not over, many battles had been won on the civil rights’ front. America began to live up to its creed of “liberty and justice for all.” (To be continued.)

Appeal to People’s Tribune readers

If you find yourself in a position to share, the People’s Tribune will put your donation to work. The People’s Tribune offers its pages to those in the movement who want to get coverage of their struggles out to others. At the same time it offers analysis, direction and solutions to the problems our society faces. We tell the truth!

We operate on a shoestring budget, with a dedicated all-volunteer staff. Printing, shipping and mailing costs have continued to rise. As an independent press, we rely exclusively on donations. While donations and sustainers are increasing, they are not meeting our expenses.

Simply stated, we need money. We need to raise \$15,000. Your regular donations, large and small are the only solution. For instance, 26 sustainers at only \$25 per month, plus 60 sustainers at only \$10 per month equals \$15,000 annually.

Please become a consistent, regular donor to the People’s Tribune. Become a monthly sustainer now. Donate via pay pal at www.peopletribune.org or send a check to PO Box 3524, Chicago, IL 60654-3524.

Thanks in advance.

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Flint protest exposes Emergency Manager order to silence public

By Claire McClinton

FLINT, MI — With tape over their mouths, members of the Democracy Defense League, held a silent protest in the Lobby of the Flint City Hall to challenge yet another assault on any semblance of democracy in the city of Flint.

The issue at hand is a new “order”/“edict” issued by Flint Emergency Manager Darnell Earley. It limits public comments to just three minutes at City Council meetings. Furthermore, these comments must be reserved for the end of the meetings.

The order was meant to derail any attempts to protests and public outcries against the Emergency Managers “7 point plan” to put Flint on the path to “fiscal solvency” and “return democracy” to the city. The new rule only enraged the community and

underscored the inability of the Flint City Council to set their own council meeting agenda.

Emergency Managers, under Michigan’s PA 436 are dispatched around the state to municipalities and school districts supposedly to put their financial houses in order. However, their superpowers allow them to not only replace local elected officials, but to revise and dismantle union contracts, sell public assets, and even dissolve the municipality or school district. The unelected “manager” may carry these out without a vote of the people or its elected representative and can only be removed by the Governor.

With every new and draconian order issued, be it raising water rates, gutting police and fire services or selling precious public assets, Flint residents are growing enraged and aware as the Emergency Manager shows



Protest in Flint, MI following the arrest of Pastor Flynn for expressing the community’s anger at their unelected emergency manager’s plans for a hike in sewer and water rates.

PHOTO/DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM

himself for the corporate shield that he is, led by Michigan’s Governor Rick Snyder. Meanwhile, Emergency Managers establish a culture of fascism even after they leave, as demonstrated by the recent arrest and charges against Reverend Pinkney of Benton Harbor. (See cover story

of this paper on Page 3.)

The Flint City Council meeting held several days after the “Silent Protest,” was met with jeers and chants of “Democracy Now” and “Dictatorship” by an irate public, which included embattled city retirees whose healthcare is threatened by a pre-

vious Emergency Manager order and are now in federal court to salvage it.

The battle unfolding in Flint and around the state of Michigan is one like we have never seen but it ‘s one we can and must win.

Why the rise of civil disobedience?



Civil disobedience in the struggle for justice and a moral society is sweeping the South. Over 900 people were arrested in North Carolina protests. This photo is of a protest in Georgia.

PHOTO/STEVE EBERHARDT

By John Slaughter

ATLANTA, GA — In North Carolina a growing movement has arisen to confront a government and political structure that is standing in the way of the people receiving even the most basic necessities of life. In their demands for justice and a moral society, over 900 were arrested. These acts of civil disobedience are an expression of the moral outrage over conditions which

can no longer be tolerated.

The Moral Monday Movement has spread to Georgia, South Carolina, Florida and other Southern states. They find themselves confronting conditions that are virtually identical: those on the bottom – the have-nots – are seeing unemployment benefits cut, food stamps cut, drastic cuts to education, being cut off from health care, especially Medicaid –in a time when more and more jobs are being

eliminated by automation, and when the jobs that remain are low-paying, part-time or temporary with no benefits. For the undocumented workers, legislation blocks any access to health care, housing, unemployment benefits, education or any kind of worker rights..

This wave of civil disobedience across the South is only part of a much larger movement developing across the country. People in Michigan are going to jail in opposition to the building of an oil pipeline that threatens the environment. Others are arrested in California and Albuquerque who oppose police violence. In Alabama 7 protesters chained themselves to the gates of a private prison holding undocumented immigrants, demanding “Not one more deportation.”

Why civil disobedience now? That same question confronted a movement in the South in the middle of the last century. At that time millions of African Americans were held in check by Jim Crow, one of the most brutal systems the world has ever known. It was illegal to sit at a lunch counter, illegal to ride in the front of the bus, illegal to seek an education, illegal to find

housing or work in certain areas, and illegal to vote.

Civil disobedience was the catalyst that sparked a massive movement for change. And when the right to protest was denied, the people braved fire hoses and police dogs and beatings and bombings and went to jail by the thousands to express the aims and dreams of a movement that would not be denied.

Now, as then, we are in a time when the people are confronted with intolerable conditions, but today we face a new situation. We face a government that has merged with the corporations and is standing in the way of reform. But civil disobedience is not just a way of getting the poli-

ticians attention. It represents a fundamental change in the posture of the movement.

We will no longer beg. We will no longer be on the defensive, trying to hold on to what is already lost. Instead, civil disobedience represents a forward-leaning posture that is intent on fashioning a transformed society that is just and moral, and a government that operates in the interests of the people.

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