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A homeless man stands by a Detroit freeway asking for help on the 4th of July. Homelessness is growing as factories automate production, eliminating human labor. PHOTO/DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM

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# ABUNDANCE OF FOOD WHILE PEOPLE STARVE

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# From racial division to class unity

## EDITORIAL

There is an old saying, “a hungry belly has no color.” This is the reality the ruling class fears. While starving the workers it no longer needs to exploit for profit, it must sow division among them. People are beginning to wake up to the reality that they are in the same leaking economic boat, and have every reason to unify. To counter this, the capitalist billionaire class uses its historical weapons, nationality, color and the myth of race, and targeted fascist terror, to keep people divided. In reality, there is only the human race.

People of all colors and backgrounds are being pushed out of the economy. Vast computerized production is replacing workers forever, and they are thrown into contingent and part-time work, or out of work altogether, into insecurity, poverty, and homelessness. People who once had stable jobs and housing find themselves living in their vehicles or in the streets. This is irreversible, because this labor-replacing technology can only increase. The only solution is a new economic system compatible with the productive forces of today and the future. The ruling class is using all the weapons in its arsenal to prevent this.

It is in the interests of the exploiters to keep us divided and confused. Given American history, to do so they must attack the



Chicago Fight for \$15 activists gather in solidarity with New York workers whose \$15 demand is before the New York Labor Board.

PHOTO/BOB SIMPSON

working class in such a way as to first isolate the Black worker, and make the attack seem to only be about race. A whole section of the working class, of all backgrounds and colors, is being thrown out of production and out of work forever. What they all have in common is that they have been forced out of society and, if united politically, are a threat to the ruling class. The ruling class must impose fascism to suppress their demands.

As long as the capitalists needed workers they were will-

ing to concede certain rights to the workers, while maintaining an uneven system of laws and practices to keep the class divided. The rule of capitalist profit and private property is colorblind. It will not grant anything to anyone on the basis of need. It can only throw up artificial barriers between the abundance the new technology creates and those who need what it produces, and use fascist terror to enforce this.

Class unity can begin when workers who are equally improv-

erished unite around their common interests: the need for housing, food, health care, education and all those things that not only allow them to survive but to lead a creative and socially fulfilled life. These are human needs and have no color or nationality. They can only be realized under an economic system based on cooperation and distribution according to need. The task of the revolutionary is to promote class unity in the struggle for this new society.

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— The Editors

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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.

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# Abundance of food while people starve

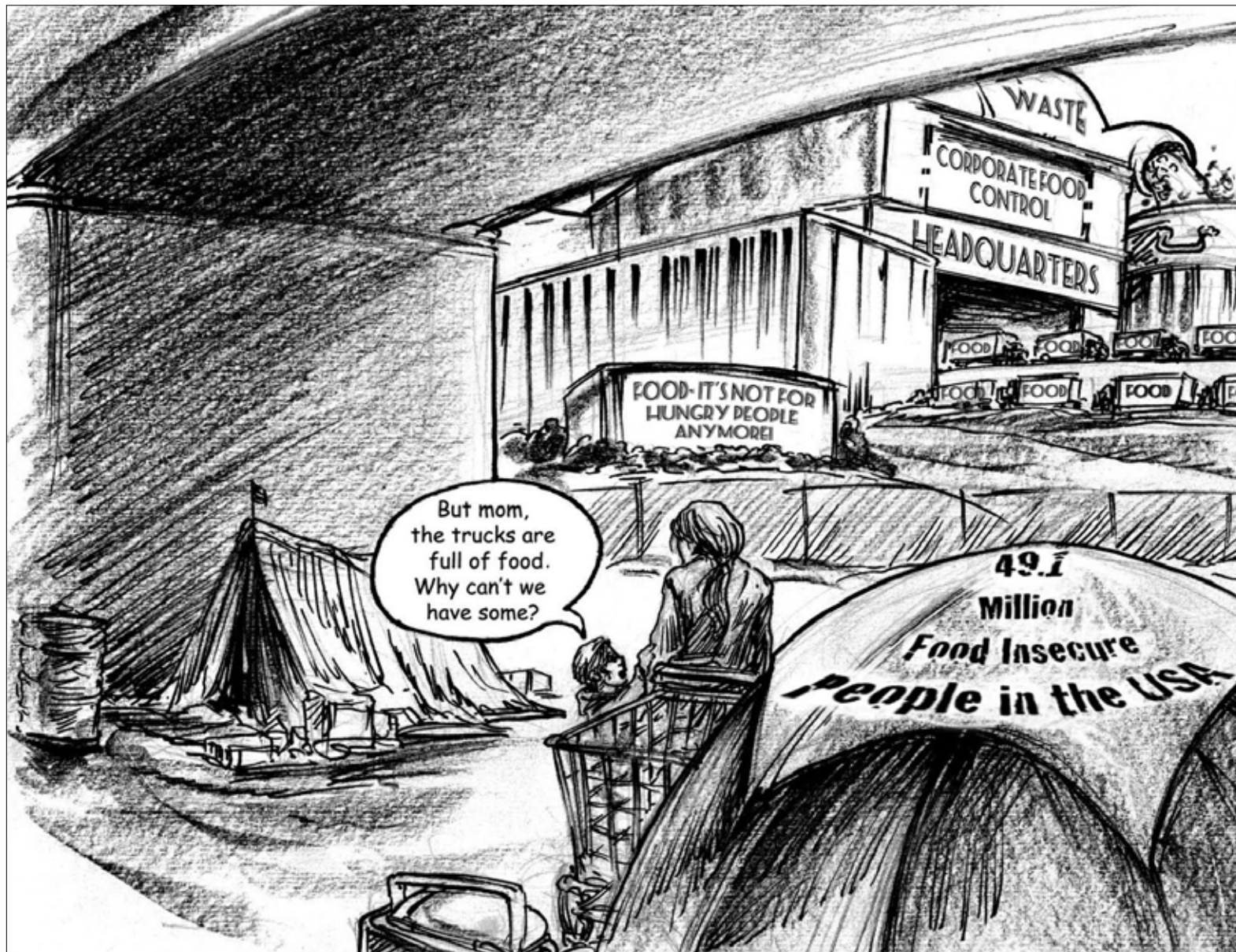
## COVER STORY

If you had to make a choice between buying food or paying your bills, what choice would you make? This is the dilemma millions of Americans face. According to a recent report in *USA Today*, eight million Baby Boomers between the ages of 50 and 64 are especially vulnerable because they are not eligible for federal programs.

Over the past three years, more than 46 million people have been on the SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program), an all time high, while Congress passes laws to cut the program. The latest statistics from 2013 show that 49.1 million Americans have trouble putting food on the table, affecting 20 million children. Parents and grandparents report going hungry so their children and grandchildren can eat.

And yet, food is abundant. Our planet has seven billion people and produces enough food to feed 10 billion. The problem is that the food is privately owned, and many people do not have the money to buy it.

That private ownership of food by the giant conglomerates is in the way of feeding people is shown by the fact that 40 percent of what is produced in the US is not eaten and thrown out. Some of it never leaves the fields or is disposed of before delivery to the market. Businesses discard perfectly edible food in locked garbage bins with strict orders to workers not to take it or lose their jobs. Many of these workers are low wage and the very people going hungry. Food that is kept off the market lowers the supply and has the effect of raising the price of the food we buy. And the private owners cannot give away the food without threatening their



CARTOON/ANDY WILLIS

ability to sell it.

To the capitalist ruling class that owns the giant corporations, if our labor is not needed, we are worthless and can be starved or cast aside like yesterday's news. Automation creates an abundance of food and other necessities, but eliminates jobs, lowers the value of labor, causes real wages to fall and cheapens life. If one earns their daily bread from money obtained through the sale of their labor power, and the value of their labor power is heading

toward zero because the robot is doing the producing, then the system is going to push people into starvation.

It's obvious that this cannot continue. It begs the moral question: Should a system that starves children and the elderly by the millions because they cannot afford to buy food be allowed to continue? As we ponder that question, some of us may naturally wish a return to earlier, less troubled days when good paying jobs were plentiful. But the

jobs aren't coming back. The corporations won't pay workers to do what can be done faster and cheaper by automation.

The capitalists know it is just a matter of time before a serious demand is raised that government "of, for, and by the people" take over the corporations in order to feed "We The People." We must start raising that demand now. Because, when that day comes we will have begun securing life and a happy future, not just for ourselves, but all of humanity.

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Marchers on a “Water Justice Journey” from Detroit, where thousands have had their water cut off, to Flint, where people are becoming ill from their water. PHOTO/FAHOOME

# Water Justice Journey

The People’s Tribune interviewed Kim Redigan, Vice Chair of Michigan Coalition for Human Rights, who helped organize a 70-mile march from Detroit to Flint, MI, to unite people statewide in a fight for water as a human right. The “Water Justice Journey” was organized by the People’s Water Board Coalition, the Highland Park Human Rights

Coalition, and the Flint Clean Water Coalition.

People’s Tribune: Tell us about the Water Justice Journey.

**Kim Redigan:** The march came out of the International Gathering on Water and Housing held in Detroit in May. It began in Detroit where tens of thousands have had their water shut off and

the city council passed the Water Affordability Plan in 2005, which was never implemented. We felt the need to connect stories from Detroit, Highland Park, Flint, and across the state.

The walk was the thread to weave together a series of important public events that highlighted people working on the front lines—community activists,

public health workers, attorneys, pastors, and people committed to water justice, some of whom have been personally affected by unclean and unaffordable water.

PT: What were some highlights of the march?

**KR:** The key events included: the sendoff from Detroit, a cultural event and town hall meeting in Highland Park which has been threatened with mass shut offs, a public cross-county speakout in Pontiac where people from 20 cities assembled, and a rally in Flint (where residents report serious health problems related to water from the Flint River). The focus was on connecting communities and bringing people together to organize for clean, affordable water and to uphold water as a human right that should be held as a common rather than a commodity. Then we boarded buses to Lansing where we hoped to meet with the governor to present him with thousands of signed cards calling for legislation to guarantee water as a human right.

PT: Did you meet with Governor Snyder?

**KR:** No. He sent his liaison instead. We decided to hold on to the cards until we get a meet-

ing with the governor.

PT: What are the demands of the People’s Water Board?

**KR:** 1) STOP the water shut offs and restore water. 2) An income based water affordability plan like the one passed by the Detroit City Council in 2005 that was never implemented. We have income based housing and food programs. We should have the same for water. The UN says only 2.5-3% of income should be spent on water. Rates are increasing even in rural and suburban areas. 3) And finally, we say NO, NO, NO to privatization... water must be held as a common good. Water is a human right. It must be guaranteed even to those without income. This is a global issue.

PT: How does Michigan’s Emergency Manager system affect this struggle?

**KR:** This is how privatization (of water) was introduced. People don’t realize that this is coming to a suburb near them. Every major Black city in Michigan has been brought under the Emergency Manager system. That was done deliberately to divide and conquer. But people are waking up to the fact that their vote does not count.

# Access to water is a human right

“...[A]ccess to safe drinkable water is a basic and universal human right, since it is essential to human survival and, as such, is a condition for the exercise of other human rights.” — Pope Francis

By Maureen D. Taylor, State Chair, Michigan Welfare Rights Organization

DETROIT, MI — Michigan Welfare Rights Organization and the Peoples Water Board have fought tooth and nail over these last 16 months, in every way possible to convince the City of Detroit Water and Sewerage Dept. that the path they had chosen was both wrong and not cost-effective.

We have tirelessly offered solution after solution to this crisis demanding that a Water Affordability Plan be instituted, even if it is implemented at first as a pilot project to be tested. Always the answer is “NO,” so we find ourselves again in this painful gap of pending defiance and civil unrest as we are unable to do anything but stop this by any means necessary.

Water Assistance Plans have little value, and are based on pots

of money that always run out. Water Affordability Plans are significantly superior as it is based on water being affordable from the start. We are not asking for a rate adjustment. Payments must be made based on income levels, an approach practiced by utility companies across the country.

We urge our elected officials to review this crisis and that they put the issue of mass water shut-offs at the top of the list as the deadline for continued tolerance approaches. As Michigan Welfare Rights Organization is the recognized union for low-income families, we cannot turn from this struggle.

If our colleagues from the United Nations are correct in that the USA cannot deprive low-income populations of access to clean water and sanitation, we will then pursue the path of litigation as we seek to file suit against this violation of international law. We will not stop there.



Participants in the Detroit to Flint “Water Justice Journey.” Melissa Mays, (Front) of “Water You Fighting For” in Flint, Michigan, is a mother of three who is slowly being poisoned by the chemicals in the water she has been drinking. Symptoms (which include her children) are hair falling out, skin rashes, suspicious nodules detected internally, vertigo, and a list of other conditions. Melissa says that across the city of Flint, water is clear to blue to almost black. PHOTO/DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM

We will press you to create legislation that outlaws such practices now and forever. We will not stop there. We will demonstrate, picket, and agitate. We will interfere with business as usual every-

where we can in an effort to erase forever the notion that water is a commodity to be bought and sold. Access to water is a human right, and must always be held as a common trust never to be

denied because people are too poor. Shame on those who created this concept, and shame on us if we allow this “cancer” to exist without an all out battle against it.

# West Virginia fighters speak out at water conference

*Editor's note: At the International Social Movements Gathering on Water and Affordable Housing in May in Detroit, the People's Tribune interviewed two participants from southern West Virginia, Paula Swearengin and her brother William Foley. They are part of the Direct Action Welfare Group and the Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition. They are fighting mountain top removal and for clean water in West Virginia's coal country.*

By Bob Lee

DETROIT, MI — “My stepfather, father, grandfather and uncles all worked in the coal industry,” said Paula. “My grandfather was in the industry 45 years and died of black lung. We lost our dad to cancer.”

“I was raised in Wyoming County, in the coal camps,” said William. “The water was solid red when I was growing up, it was so tainted and poison. We didn't drink it but washed our clothes and took baths in it. We had to

haul our drinking water. And my dad and my mom's mom and her dad all died of pancreatic cancer, throat and lung cancer.”

“I drank that water when I was young,” Paula added. “It had high levels of manganese and other chemicals. My little sister was born with a birth defect. She has a cyst the size of a baseball at the base of her brain. She is totally disabled. That was our childhood.”

She said the coal industry uses hundreds of chemicals to clean the mined coal. The waste water from this process (coal slurry) is injected into underground mines and poisons the ground water.

“My neighbor's little girl got sick with a rare form of bone cancer and another little girl got that kind of cancer, and so I started trying to connect with people about that because I got angry,” Paula said. “And then I found out that mountain top removal was in my back door [which also causes water pollution and other disasters]. Then when the Elk River

chemical spill happened [in 2014] I got deeply involved with that. It's all connected. We live in a toxic dump.”

Paula noted that the area is dependent on the coal industry. She said the area's political leaders are beholden to the industry, and workers keep re-electing them because they fear for their jobs. She would like to see “greener technology and a diversified economy” in West Virginia.

“We have a big racial divide in the nation,” she added. In West Virginia we've lived under this stigma that we're hillbillies with no teeth, shoes or brains. We're human beings and we bleed like everyone. We live in a sacrifice zone. This nation is fueled by the blood of my people. When you turn on your lights, another child is getting cancer in Appalachia. It's not a racial thing, it's a poor thing. They've kept us depressed and poor because of the coal industry... The industry and corporations and our legislators want to keep us divided. They want to make people think it's a Black



William Foley and Paul Swearengin, water activists from West Virginia. PHOTO/DONATED

issue, but it's a human issue. We're all suffering and there are people suffering with a lot of issues across the nation. And that's why I came here, hoping

we can build an international collaboration, get the corporate money out of our elections. It needs to be a group effort.”

# Emergency Manager law enables corporate takeover of MI's water



This boy's community is getting sick as a result of the poisonous Flint water. His mother's health deteriorated with no one held accountable. PHOTO/VALERIE JEAN

By Claire McClinton

*Privatization: to transfer from public or government control or ownership to private enterprise*

FLINT, MI — In 2001, the notorious right-wing think tank, Mackinac Center for Public Policy, devoted their quarterly magazine “Michigan Privatization Report” to the

city of Detroit. The menu of articles dealt with everything from Detroit's Emergency system, their DOT (mass transit, bus service), to the mammoth water treatment plant that services multiple counties in lower Michigan. The article was a wish list, extolling the virtues of corporate takeover of these public assets.

In 2011, corporate and financial capital scrambled

to pass a new and improved Emergency Manager law laying the basis for a corporate coup d'état. An unelected Emergency Manager was dispatched to municipalities and school districts by the governor. The Emergency Manager is empowered to replace local elected officials, dissolve union contracts and, oh by the way, sell off precious public assets without a vote or say so by the

people or their local elected officials.

Both Detroit and Flint's municipal water systems are in the hands of a “Regional Authority” through a lease (Detroit) or outright takeover (Flint). In both cases, Emergency Manager orchestrated the moves. Experts warn that these transfers become easy pickings for outright corporate takeover, not to mention the investment banks and bondholders already hooked in.

## Whose Water? Our Water! Reclaim the Commons

In Flint, residents have been experiencing living Hell ever since the Emergency Manager ordered the switch from Detroit as a water source to Flint River water. Numerous health problems include rashes, loss of hair, and severe physical side effects. Chlorine smells and brown water are common occurrences, while we're told the water is SAFE! Letters from the city warning residents of excessive levels of cancer causing TTHMs in the water advise that “elderly, infants, and those with compromised immune systems should consult their doctor”.

Many residents opted to independently test their water only to find dangerous levels of lead and copper as

well. When General Motors cried foul because Flint River water was rusting their parts, they were allowed to return to the Detroit water source. Residents demanded the same option, but were told it was “inconceivable”.

The Flint contaminated water is also the highest rate in the nation! Eight families at Ambassador East Mobile Home Park are still without water after two years. (The landlord lives in another state, and refused to pay the water bill). Most of the residents are disabled and go to a neighboring cemetery to get water—not knowing from day to day when the city will execute evictions of the recently condemned park.

The drive to turn over water—that is life—to corporate is well under way in Michigan, and moving rapidly. The process of fulfilling the dreams of Mackinaw Center for Public Policy clients is accelerated via the Emergency Manager system. To date, 17 municipalities and school districts are under this mire of dictatorship. With local democracy gone—the ability to redress these life threatening grievances are gone. Toxic water and a toxic system are inseparable in this fight.

# Grassroots movement of the homeless is forming



A homeless man speaks to reporters from inside a prison-like “courtyard” surrounded by a wire fence at a shelter in St. Petersburg, FL.

PHOTO/CHRIS MCGONIGAL, THE HUFFINGTON POST

By Rev. Bruce Wright

ST. PETERSBURG, FL — A statewide grass roots movement of homeless people, formerly homeless, and their supporters is forming in Florida to resist those who would criminalize folks simply because they are homeless. Groups in several cities are uniting around the idea of fighting

back and not allowing the non-profit industrial complex to sell out the homeless community simply because they don’t want to “rock the boat” and lose their funding. Homeless folks who have been criminalized by the system and “left out to hang” by non-profits are coming together in cities including St. Petersburg, Tampa, Ft. Lauderdale, Miami,

Orlando, Jacksonville, Lakeland, Sarasota, Brooksville, and Gainesville. They are from groups such as Living Water, the Well, the Refuge, Speak Up Florida, the Poor People’s Economic Human Rights Campaign Florida, Hearts for God Worship Center, Transitions Support Group, Revolutionary Caucus, Revolutionary Road

Radio Show, Food Not Bombs, and Students for a Democratic Society (USFSP).

The movement organizes around the premise that housing is a human right, along with food, jobs, health care, and freedom of speech and movement. We are standing up against the various “Homeless Coalitions” run by non-profits, businesses, and government bureaucrats that marginalize and dismiss opposing voices. We resist those who attempt to remove or hide the homeless community by putting them in modern concentration camps, detention facilities, or jail-style shelters, such as the so called “Safe Harbor” in Pinellas County - or cage them in small fenced-in areas with 50 or more people like St. Vincent De Paul. We speak out against charlatans like “Dr.” Marbut, the Joseph Mengele of the homeless, who promote jail-style shelters. We will fight municipalities when they arrest Food Not Bombs or Good Samaritans, like the 90 year-old gentleman arrested in Ft. Lauderdale earlier this year for sharing food with the homeless community. This must stop!!

We are forming to speak, act, protest, and disobey injustices against homeless and poor folks by the corporate state

dominating these cities. We will make cities a safe and welcoming place for all, including the homeless, by any means necessary. We will not stand by, but will struggle in solidarity and under the leadership of this class that includes the poor and homeless. We intend to demand that all “Homeless Coalitions” adhere to the federal “Housing First” policy, and include at least 50% homeless and formerly homeless in their leadership. We will challenge hate crimes and police brutality against the homeless, demand a comprehensive Homeless Bill of Rights, and form homeless and temp worker unions and worker centers, beginning in St. Petersburg.

We will no longer tolerate marginalization. Too many homeless are dying. We intend to bring human rights violations to any and all the courts or agencies that would hear us, both here and abroad.

For information contact Rev. Bruce Wright, Rev. GW Rolle, or Rev. Robin Harris at 727 278 1547 or [bruce@stpeteprogressives.org](mailto:bruce@stpeteprogressives.org). For information about Economic Human Rights visit [economichumanrights.org](http://economichumanrights.org).

## Homeless face a fight for survival

By Cathleen Williams

SACRAMENTO, CA — They come here to Los Angeles to sleep under the invisible stars because they would die elsewhere.

In New York City they might find temporary housing—New York has beds for about 60% of its 50,000 homeless residents, lodging many in filthy shells of buildings, abandoned hospitals or run-down motels. In January of 2013, in a city maintained shelter, a tiny, pre-maturely born baby stopped breathing in her crib one day due to the cold, the contaminated air, and the mold. Afterwards, some families with asthmatic children were quietly moved to subsidized apartments.

But in Los Angeles, which shelters only 27% of its homeless population, it turns out you can survive outside. According to this year’s homeless count, homelessness in L.A. has risen 12% over the past two years to 44,359 people. About 10 percent are veterans. And this is despite

the fact that organizations in L.A. claim to have housed over 20,000 people in the last four years, and 7,500 “beds” were created for veterans.

Those who do find housing will pay almost half of their income on rent in many areas across the country. In San Francisco, the rent for a one-bedroom apartment rose by \$13.4% in 2014 alone, for a median price of \$3,410 per month. Evictions exempt from rent control restrictions (under the Ellis Act) have increased 170% to over 100 per year. The word “gentrification” no longer describes the brutality of this process.

In order to save money, policy makers are pushing solutions to homelessness based on “data” regarding the most “vulnerable” and “distressed” homeless individuals, with the goal of identifying them while locked up in the medical and maximum security units of jails or rolling in on gurneys to emergency rooms.

But even if permanent sup-

portive housing for the few are put into place—and there are well-meaning, if underfunded, attempts to do so—they will not address the deeper dislocation and dispossession that has its roots in the ongoing decay of America’s urban industrial base, the fast moving elimination of work due to automation and technology, and the growth of the “new economy” of low paid, non-union service work. It is the tech and finance industries—the sectors of the new economy that are thriving—that are fueling the “hot” housing markets in our big cities, as neglected outlying neighborhoods sink into poverty and foreclosure.

From rent strikes and mass resistance to evictions during the Great Depression, to the labor coalitions that fought for (segregated) New Deal housing programs, to the Civil Rights-era uprisings which demanded civil rights, tenants’ rights, and economic justice—the right to housing has only been



Homeless unemployed worker in Sacramento, California.

PHOTO/SARAH MENEFFEE

advanced by broad movements which address all the intertwined necessities—food, health care, education, housing, a living wage—essential to survival in a time of crisis. That time is

approaching.

Cathleen Williams is a board member of the Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee and a Civil Rights Attorney.



# 'Let us put humanity first!' says formerly homeless woman

*Editor's note: This is a talk given by Julianna Cheng at the release event for the Coalition of Homeless study titled, "Punishing the Poorest."*

SAN FRANCISCO, CA — I have been homeless for the past three years, just moving out of homelessness recently. I'm here to talk to you about my personal experiences with homelessness here in San Francisco.

Being homeless is a constant struggle. I slept in the streets, in BART stations, the Embarcadero, in Golden Gate Park. You are constantly shuffled around and banned from public spaces. Laws are enforced against us, like the sit/lie law, which has been con-

**Protesters at a march and rally against a proposed law that would criminalize homeless people in Berkeley, CA.**

PHOTO/SARAH MENEFFEE

demned by the United Nations. I myself have been arrested for 'attempt to sleep'. They took all my belongings, under 647-e, which says that any structure used for camping or 'lodging' can be confiscated, including a blanket, a sleeping bag or even cardboard! The police take gear that you need to keep warm, and it isn't returned to you, it's kept as 'evidence' and destroyed, and you're back out on the street in the middle of the night, in the cold.

Sleep was a constant issue, finding a place to sleep, having time to sleep without being harassed. Sleep deprivation is a form of torture. The DPW (Department of Public Works) constantly sprayed the streets with chemicals that make you sick. I was pregnant at the time, and another young woman I knew miscarried soon after a spraying. People with emphysema, asthma and other breathing issues got severely sick each time they sprayed. I've seen people kicked awake by the police in the morning. The lack of space, of privacy in our personal lives, the lack of toilets, is a huge issue.

People are denied access to food, shelter and the necessities of survival in San Francisco, where there truly is plenty of resources. Think how many houses are emp-

ty while people are on the streets. The criminalization of homelessness is on the rise.

I am currently living in the Tenderloin and I observe police interactions daily. Most of the time it's citations and harassment of people who are just trying to survive. When I walk down the street I hear people, tourists, saying: "Such blatant inequality! To have this glitzy shopping area just one or two blocks away from people living in such poverty, it's uncivilized." Gentrification and evictions are pushing out working-class families, especially people of color, and also artists and poets and musicians. Everything that makes San Francisco great is being forced out. These things are creating more poverty and homelessness. They are turning the city into a playground for the rich and elite.

The 83<sup>rd</sup> Annual Conference of Mayors is this weekend. Let's go there and tell our mayor: We do not want to fund and build a new jail! We do not want more police on our streets. We want more truly affordable housing to help end homelessness, and an end to all the evictions.

It is time for us to take back the city and put people over profit. Let us put humanity first!

## Help get the people's Tribune out to homeless organizations and places where the homeless gather!

Homelessness is a stark example of the degeneration of an economic system based on the private property of a billionaire owning class. Automation is replacing workers. The rulers will not provide for workers they can no longer exploit. The only solution is a cooperative society where the needs of all will be met.

Order bundles of papers. Send stories about arrests for assisting the homeless or the criminalization of the homeless. The PT opens its pages to this fight. Call 800-691-6888 or email [info@peopletribune.org](mailto:info@peopletribune.org)

# Sixty-one auto plants close in metro Detroit since 1979

By Al Gladysck

DETROIT, MI — The other day on my way home, three kids were selling bottled water for a dollar to the drivers stopped at the light at the corner of Mack & I-75. That is not unusual during the summer months today in Detroit. When school reopens, their place will be taken by an adult waiting for the drivers to feel some compassion and hand him a dollar or two during the fall, winter and spring.

## The end of the past

I grew up near E. Grand Blvd and Milwaukee in the 1950s and early 1960s. I-75 didn't exist yet and I-94 was just being built. On Saturday mornings in the summer, we would walk the neighborhood curbs collecting bottles to get 15 cents to go to the Home Theater on Chene St. to see the Saturday

matinee of two movies, a serial, and six cartoons.

It was a neighborhood that developed in the 1870s and experienced its greatest growth in the 1920s and 1930s as the auto industry grew. Most residents worked at Dodge Main in Hamtramck or the Packard plant on E. Grand Blvd. The Dodge Main plant opened in 1910 and closed in 1980. The Packard plant opened in 1903 and closed in 1958.

The neighborhood was demolished in 1980 to make way for GM's Poletown plant which opened in 1985. It employed 4500 workers and introduced 260 robots into the production process to produce 60 front wheel drive Cadillacs per hour.

The social cost of building that plant was that 4,200 mostly first and second generation immigrants lost 1300 homes, 140 busi-

nesses, 6 churches and 1 hospital.

In 1987, GM closed the Clark Avenue and Fisher Body Fleetwood plants in Southwest Detroit. GM permanently laid off 6,100 people producing the rear wheel drive Cadillacs at a rate of 50 per hour.

## The beginning of the future

In 1990, Chrysler demolished the old Jefferson Assembly Plant which opened in 1907 and included factories on both sides of Jefferson. Chrysler opened Jefferson Assembly North which now employs around 4,500 on three shifts. It also uses approximately 500 robots in the production process that produces 75 cars per hour.

In addition to cutting the workforce in half, the neighborhood on the north side of Jefferson Avenue around the old plant was destroyed to make room for the

new plant forcing thousands of mostly first and second generation migrants from the South to lose their homes. The south side of Jefferson remains to this day a field of hundreds of acres of flat debris laden land.

We are living through the transition from industrial production using people to build cars to electronic production using robots to build cars. At the same time, kids have moved from col-

lecting empty bottles on Saturday to see a movie, to kids selling bottled water at expressway entrances and exits most days of the week. We are moving from working for a living to asking for charity to stay alive.

It is time we realize that we are not struggling to regain the past. We are struggling to define the future.



People's Tribune Radio podcasts are available at [peopletribune.org](http://peopletribune.org). Hear from people at the forefront of the struggles for a new America.

**The underpinning of the rising police state is the changing economy and the mass poverty it produces. Given American history, it could not be otherwise that the victims of police brutality are overwhelmingly people of color. History also shows that as this brutality becomes accepted by the majority, it is inevitably used against everyone. To stop a complete fascist police takeover of the country, every instance of police violence must be fought.**

# When hunger is a crime

By Diana Berek

CHICAGO, IL — I want to attend Chicago's Moral Monday March, but I cannot because I am going to be in a Cook County courtroom to support two teenagers accused of retail theft. They had no food in their house. Mom's paycheck didn't post to her debit card when it was supposed to. An electronic glitch, they said. The food pantry was closed that week. Hunger and anger awakened the two boys and sent them to a grocery store at 3 a.m. They tried to shoplift cereal and frozen pizzas but they failed and are now in danger of facing convictions. Both are good kids; they're not criminals. Hunger and anger lured them into a place where there was so much food. They forgot that you can't eat if you don't have the money to buy.

I wish every city had a Moral Monday contingent to remind society that hungry children should be fed regardless of money. Moral Monday challenges society's structural oppression and opposes the transfer of wealth from the public to the private. In other words, the corporate ruling class has utilized robotic technology to replace human labor, increasing their profits, but gutting our economy and throwing the workers to the wolves. Today's "wolves" are the growing unemployment, homelessness, and the criminalization of poverty. Incarceration, and police brutality are an immoral justification for society's failure to provide for people's survival in a system that no longer needs them as workers and has no use for them.

My son is in jail in Waupaca, Wisconsin. He's been unemployed for over two years. He paid child support when he had jobs, but couldn't when he was unemployed. In Wisconsin, when you can't pay child support, you may lose your license and be fined. As the fines and the unpaid child support increase, you will wind up in the county jail where the food is disgusting. My son has been served food that was rotten and bug infested. The jail is dirty, he was in a cell that he was sure had feces smeared on the ceiling. Trying to communicate with another inmate by note landed him in solitary for five days where food was even worse and where his small concrete cell was even filthier. Ventilation was inadequate and his only furnishings were a tiny metal toilet, sink

and a metal shelf that became his bed at 10 p.m. when he was issued a blanket that was taken away the next morning at 6 a.m.

This treatment is inhumane for anyone, even a person convicted of extremely horrible, violent crimes. How is it humane treatment for an unemployed man unable to pay child support?

The Moral Monday March reminds us that what we do unto the least of us is what we are doing to the Lord. Ultimately, our failure to be truly moral by recognizing and respecting everyone's humanity is an indictment against our society and calls for us to change this immorality. I wish Waupaca had a Moral Monday movement.



## Letter to the Editor: Police killing of pregnant mother

"Thank you for your story on Jeanetta Riley [pictured above]. I knew Jeanetta. She had a good heart and did not deserve to go out like this. I pray that her family gets justice. Shortly after Jeanetta was shot down by Sandpoint, Idaho police, a dog in the nearby city of Couer d'Alene was also shot by police. The dog's owner received \$80,000 in compensation, while Jeanetta's family has yet to receive so much as an apology. What a wild and unjust world we live in."

— Simone Crooks

# The #LetUsBreathe Collective: One-year later

*People's Tribune correspondent Adam Gottlieb interviews Damon Williams, co-director and founding member of The #LetUsBreathe Collective in Chicago, IL. This is part of a longer interview about the remarkable story of #LetUsBreathe and Lost Voices.*

*Adam Gottlieb: What is the #LetUsBreathe Collective and how was it formed?*

**Damon Williams:** The #LetUsBreathe Collective is an artistic activist organization. It is a hybrid of direct action and service through an artistic lens. It started out of the Ferguson moment... Chicago being the closest major city, my sister Kristiana Colón was really upset and wanted to go right then... but then she thought, 'maybe I shouldn't just go with my anger, but be in service.' We called down... just to see what was needed, what people could bring outside of water. And the initial response was: 'everybody wants gas masks.' And that was a really chilling response to hear.

We started a gofundme to get gas masks, and we were just looking for a few thousand dollars, but... our fundraiser got legs that we did not expect... There's only so many water bottles you can buy, so many fruit snacks and diapers,

and even gas masks... So we went down in two trips, and we met at a church, St. Marks. This was kind of the headquarters of all the outside supporters... [We were told that] there was a group of protestors who had been camping out and who were the most serious [Lost Voices]... We were kind of expecting—and no offense—kind of hippie-ish people, like Occupy-types, cause we were like 'camping outside?'... That didn't align with what we were about to find.

We went there and it was, honestly, those who would be identified as gang-bangers... outside, building a little community with one tent, a few chairs, a card table. And they just really had a ferocity about them and a consciousness that was deeply inspiring and connecting, cause they were speaking the tongue of somebody you would meet on 79<sup>th</sup> street, or somebody you would meet on Madison Ave on the West Side, people I really related to. But the ideas they were talking about from being in this trauma for 12 days were so profound, and such a clear criticism of how violent, exploitive, and negligent the system is to people. And we were just instantly moved. And they were also very vulnerable, because in this time, Ferguson... was such a hot button that people

who would be described as anarchists, and... "outside agitators," were the majority of the people in the street by now. And what they were doing was agitating, and throwing water bottles at the police, trying to inspire conflict. But the people who were most

familiar to the police, who were the easiest target... were sleeping outside, and were visible and were getting arrested regularly... So we wanted to help amplify and let people know that they exist.

For more information, visit [letusbreathecollective.com](http://letusbreathecollective.com)



Members of The #LetUsBreathe Collective (L to R): Kristiana Colón, Damon Williams, and Gregory Geffrard, organizing a book give-away on Juneteenth.

PHOTO/XAVIER PAUL



# Shut down risky oil and gas pipeline



Mariah Amber Ureta at a water conference in Detroit.

PHOTO/DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM

By Mariah Amber Ureta

DETROIT, MI — Last month at the conveniently inaccessible Mackinac Policy Conference, I interrupted Governor Rick Snyder during his opening remarks. The Mackinac Policy Conference charged Michigan residents \$3,000 for one ticket to attend, and the conference was only accessible by ferry.

With that being said, there were primarily corporate representatives and local politicians present. Thankfully, some friends and I from MICATS (Michigan Coalition Against Tar Sands) found some leftover badges and were able to get into the conference, held at the Grand Hotel. We were there the day before for the Oil & Water Don't Mix campaign's rally, in partnership with Food & Water Watch, to

Shut Down Line 5. Deep down, I feel that Governor Snyder does not feel the same sense of urgency that I do for protecting "Pure Michigan". This is why in front of about 1,700 people, I stood and declared:

"To keep Michigan pure, it's time to shut down Line 5. We can actually give people jobs removing the 62-year old pipeline beneath the Straits of Mackinac. Shut down Line 5 please, and stop the Detroit water shut offs, they started today, by the way." My friends stood by me and shouted, "Shut down Line 5!" while we were escorted out of the Grand Hotel.

Line 5 poses too great of risks to the Great Lakes, which provides drinking water for 35 million people, and is home to numerous flora and fauna, essential to life as we know it.

In 2010, Enbridge [the giant energy corporation] allowed toxic tar sands oil to leak into the Kalamazoo River for 17 hours before responding. July 25 marks the 5-year anniversary of this spill; the communities of Marshall, Battle Creek, and Galesburg have yet to recover from this disaster. There was a "Remember the Kalamazoo 5-Year Anniversary" event in Battle Creek, MI. In addition, Enbridge's shaky track record and dirty business practices of manipulating people should be enough of a case to shut down this pipeline.

Enbridge's Line 5 is one pinhole leak away from wreaking havoc on the Great Lakes. To Governor Snyder, we do not need another Kalamazoo River oil spill, shut down Line 5!

## 'We need to build a workers' movement that fills the streets'

This interview is with Emma Denice Milligan on behalf of Women's Economic Agenda Project (WEAP) and Tapestry Ministry.

*People's Tribune:* Who holds power in America and how did they get it?

**Emma Denice Milligan:** The 1%. Mostly they bought it by using their money in ways that made them famous or wealthier.

*PT:* What is the greatest impact of their power on us?

**Emma:** Today they attack unions. They attack democracy. They gentrify our neighborhoods. They want to privatize public schools so the poor can't get a good education. Education is hard to get for people with Disabilities.

You see, when having a Disability, it's not easy for people to see you for who you are. People think you can't do anything—NOT TRUE! I went to school online and people said things like, "she won't go all the way." I went to a religious school and got my Certificate in 2014 and I'm a long-time volunteer of WEAP. I work with all kinds of people. We empower people to let them know they have a voice. I use a head pointer to type with, that's how I do my work.

Some people may think because we have a Disability we aren't human or don't have feel-

ings. We are and we do.

At WEAP, we teach that it's a human right to have what we need, like healthcare for all, not just for the 1%.

I just spent two weeks in the hospital and they tried to send me home when I was still sick. Because this big medical corporation said I was taking up too much space and money, my family has to pretend to be doctors.

The other hat I wear is at Tapestry Ministries, where I'm a Coordinator for people living with Disabilities and I'm on the Ministry team. I talk to people who think that they are worthless and feel like they don't belong anywhere.

*PT:* How do we get power?

**Emma:** By relearning our history and by teaching ourselves what really matters. We are the richest country. The corporations are replacing us with robots as fast as they can, and throwing workers they don't need on the scrap heap.

We need to build a workers' movement that fills the streets. To learn the lessons of our time and movement we need a people's press like the *People's Tribune* that examines all the attacks on workers that mainstream media won't cover. We need to use this tool to help us learn how to get political power.

We need to know about



Drastic budget cuts spark the Moral Monday movement in Illinois: "We are told there is no alternative... that the state just doesn't have any money. But these are lies. The wealthiest Illinois residents pay far less than their fair share, and two-thirds of the corporations doing business in Illinois pay nothing in corporate income taxes to the state," said Toby Chow, leader of Fair Economy Illinois, at a Moral Monday rally in downtown Chicago.

PHOTO/ANDY WILLIS

situations like the attacks on democracy in Michigan, and about fighters like Rev. Edward

Pinkney who sits in jail onphony trumped-up charges because he had the nerve to protest the

way a major corporation is taking over a low-income majority Black town.

# Attack on immigrants aims to cultivate a fascist movement

By the People's Tribune

The billionaire Donald Trump, and his racist rants against the immigrant worker are just the tip of the iceberg. Trump is trying to tap into and stir up a rising fascist movement in America. This fascist movement is poised to attack the poorest workers of every color and nationality in an effort to divide and conquer the struggle for a democratic, cooperative America where everyone's needs are met. We have to ask, why now?

In America today, 80% of the population is in poverty or nearly so. Underlying this poverty is an economy based on the steady introduction by the owning class of labor replacing robots and computers into the workplace. The end result for a growing numbers of workers is poverty wage, dead end jobs, and complete destitution. This same process is occurring throughout the globe and is forcing the migration of workers worldwide.

In a previous period, when the capitalist market was expanding, US borders were opened to immigrants. The capitalists needed an expanding workforce to keep industrial production going. Today, robots and computers are producing an abundance of necessities of life, but with very few workers.

Capitalism, as a system of buying and selling of human labor power, is coming to an end. What kind of society will replace it? Will it be a fascist society where a handful of billionaires wallow in splendor while impoverished workers starve in the streets? Or will it be a new cooperative society where the abundance the robots are producing is distributed to all based on need. In such a society every human being would be free to contribute his or her talents and skills to the creation of a better world. A movement for such a world can be successful today.

To stop this movement, the rulers are forced to implement

a corporate fascist dictatorship. There isn't any other way to control millions of workers who are hungry, homeless, without water, healthcare or utilities, and who are beginning to demand their necessities of life whether they can pay or not.

Thus we see that a militarized police state in the service of the corporations is on the rise. A fascist movement, that billionaires like Donald Trump are cultivating and striving to emerge as the leaders of, is the next step for the billionaire ruling class. History shows that as fascist movements grow, they attract rich and poor, and those in every corner of the government, including the military. Such a movement in America will thrive on the poverty, confusion and cultivated color hatred of a section of workers.

Revolutionaries must go on the offensive. They must show that every attack on any worker, whether they be immigrant, homeless, young or old, Black,



Immigrant leaders and children protest raids and deportations.

PHOTO/TED QUANT

white, brown or red, is an attack on the entire working class. In this way, revolutionaries can gather together all who can be united around their common eco-

nomical interests and a vision of a new cooperative society. This is the path to a new future. Time is of the essence.

## The Revival in Philly – US Social Forum



Hip hop duo Rebel Diaz with Alex Suarez (middle) at the U.S. Social Forum in Philadelphia, PA.

PHOTO/DONATED

By Alex Suarez

TAMPA, FL — Meeting with Immortal Technique, and Rebel Diaz, may have been the highlight of a trip I took from Florida to Philadelphia to be at this summer's US Social Forum, however my encounter with them was brief. When you meet them, you see they are activists just like you. I met many extraordinary people

from all over the world fighting in the same struggle for the same cause as me. These comrades came to the US Social Forum to continue in their activism to bring radical change. I saw the revival of activism come out in Philadelphia, the city of brotherly love, where the Declaration of Independence was written.

Cheri Honkala lives in Philly and helped revive the Poor

Peoples Economic Human Rights Campaign, started by Dr. King. Temple University hosted the forum. Cheri led the march, along with homeless and poor people, especially people of color. Cheri told us the case of the 14-year-old boy dying of cancer who the Emergency Assistance people in downtown Philly refused to house. They and others have not housed a single family in five years, as they continue to hoard tax dollars and corruption continues. That is why from North Philly we marched to their office downtown to protest that families are dying on the street or sent to the church Cheri helps runs in Kensington, PA, where she is overwhelmed.

About 500 of us marched—there would have been more if not for the rain—to Emergency Services. It was like God was testing our resolve, as literally when we arrived, the rain increased. In the front part of the protest were children and people on wheelchairs, both speaking into the loud speaker for us to move on and what we were fighting for, starting various chants, my favorite being, “The People United Will Never Be Defeated!”

While I marched, I thought of all those who died too young, and left behind their legacy for us to fight for. I thought of Anne Frank, of my comrade Marty Droll, and

of my sister Tasha Suarez. I thought how this vanguard, the downtrodden of society, could come together and make the impossible possible.

The theme for the Social Forum was “Another World Is Possible,” which was a common chant in Occupy. I think not only is another world possible or probable but inevitable. We can be the change for the very survival of the human species, so that all

the sacrifices before us are not in vain and our children and grandchildren can live in a better society. They deserve better. I fight for the future of my niece and all the unborn children, as we dream for a new society and make this dream a reality.

*The original, longer version of this article is posted on Facebook.*

### The Coat

I paw through the table of give away coats. One cloth number tempts me to smile. insisting as it does on polished pews and woolen pedigrees. I'm trying to reject fur, a.k.a. dead animal skins, but already in October, it's getting colder. I end up taking a sable—Big and bulky, it smells of camphor and sweat, and promises agony before it's over, but will keep me warm in my cardboard box under the overpass.

— Lyn Coffin

## The life of a temp

(inspired by the folk song *The Old Fashioned Cottage*)

Like shadows that hover between day and night,  
You're sort of employed, but again no, not quite.  
Forget health insurance, from that you're exempt.  
Pray God to stay healthy. That's the life of a temp.

They'll give you the tasks that no other will touch.  
And when there's a paycheck, surprise! It's not much!  
You'll find disappointment wherever you're sent.  
Just thank God you're working. That's the life of a temp.

There's always the thrill of not knowing the score.  
Official procedures and oh, so much more.  
Bosses look at you darkly as if you smoke hemp.  
"You must be a slacker. After all you're a temp."

You come with a screw-up. They say, "Go away."  
And when it's a crisis: "Why didn't you say?!"  
You're the lowest of life forms. You're held in contempt.  
Your dreams are all dying. That's the life of a temp.

You're hoping to prove that you're worthy of hire  
So you work like a dog and you hold in your ire.  
Just as you think you've made it, "Say have you met Bob?"  
He's the boss' grand-nephew and he just took your job."

No matter your background, no matter your skills,  
Unemployment's cut off and you can't pay your bills.  
You're never a Curly. You're always a Shemp.  
You're the stooge of the office. That's the life of a temp.

— Ilze Vitands

## Prayer for May Day/Beltane

I saw a bunch of potted flowers  
bursting by a bank —  
poppies, daisies, carnations,  
reds, blues, whites, golds, violets —  
how constricted there they seemed,  
audacious their delight

I saw a bunch of people gathered  
there at Union Park —  
commies, anarchists, punks, queers,  
black, brown, white, young, old —  
beautiful with joy and rage,  
but still, it seemed, too few...

Lord, let there be more like these —  
flowers, people, gathered —  
Let them sprawl through downtown rampantly,  
and trample over banks!

— Adam Gottlieb (5/1/15)



Protest in Atlanta, GA, where the governor vowed to not accept federal funding for Medicaid expansion; 1200 people died in Georgia last year due to a lack of healthcare. PHOTO/STEVE EBERHARDT

## The human right to healthcare

By Ben Mattson

CHICAGO, IL — Some of us have an intuition that healthcare should be free. Yet what may seem obvious to some may be counterintuitive to others. I argue that healthcare, or whatever system is in place, which plays the role that healthcare currently, does, should be free. The basic argument runs as follows. According to international law, health is a human right. It follows from this, logically and ethically, that healthcare should be a human right, and thus healthcare ought to be provided free of charge.

Even if one denied that health is a human right, they would be hard pressed to deny

that freedom, for example, is not a human right. If freedom is a human right, then healthcare should be a human right. This is because many medical disabilities, from Multiple Sclerosis to Alzheimer's to severe depression and schizophrenia, infringe upon our freedom. Therefore, even under the current capitalist system, if we are to afford human rights their due respect, then we should admit that processes which ameliorate health conditions should not come with a price tag attached.

Why should healthcare as a human right be free of charge? Because we have human rights by virtue of *being human*, not by making any sort of exchange. Do we have to pay for our right to

freedom of speech or assembly? Arguably, our health is at least as important as these capacities. Furthermore, since healthcare should be free, so too, should particular therapies which fall under the umbrella of caring for health. These include therapies for physical and mental ailments such as cancer and depression.

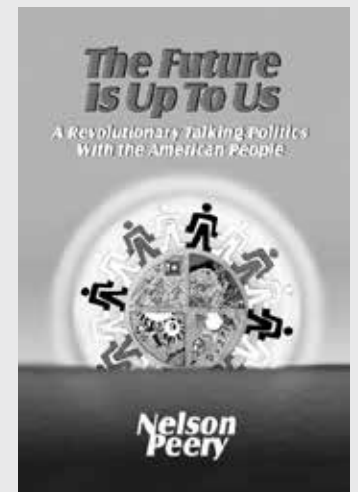
In capitalist societies, it is assumed that goods and services should be exchanged for cash. So there is a tension between capitalism and human rights. Yet if this essay's argument is right, this practice contradicts deeply held intuitions about human rights as well as international law. The answer? Provide healthcare for all, or as I prefer to call it, care of health as a human right.

## The Future is Up to Us 2<sup>nd</sup> printing now Available!

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# We must stand together and demand justice

By Rev. Edward Pinkney

COLDWATER, MI — My name is Rev. Edward Pinkney. I am in prison in Coldwater, Michigan, a victim of racism and corporate power in Berrien County, Michigan. I am an internationally recognized activist who fights for justice for all, and I am president of the Black Autonomy Network Community Organization (BANCO).

I was accused of a crime I did not commit. Because I exercised my democratic right to recall Benton Harbor Mayor James Hightower, who supports the Whirlpool Corporation and not the residents of Benton Harbor, I was charged with five felony counts of changing dates on petitions! I was sentenced to 30 months to ten years. This is a death sentence for a 66-year-old man.

While I was out-of-town celebrating my wife's birthday on April 24, 2014, the Benton Harbor police blocked my street with its military trucks and sent in the Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) team to arrest me on these trumped-up charges.

There was absolutely no evidence against me and none was presented at the trial that would implicate me of any wrongdoing. I am being punished by the criminal Berrien County justice system and local authorities in the service of Whirlpool, a multi-billion dollar global corporation with headquarters in Benton Harbor. As a long time resident of Benton Harbor, I opposed Whirlpool's plan of land takeover to gentrify Benton Harbor and



Protest at St. Joseph, MI courthouse in defense of Rev. Edward Pinkney, a community leader, jailed for standing up for the poor against corporate power. Center: Cheri Honkala; Right: Dr. Jill Stein. PHOTO/DIANE BEREK

turn the area into a multi-million dollar golf resort and playground for the wealthy elites. I have watched the loss of jobs, homes, and dignity for the residents of Benton Harbor as a result of their actions. I have also spoken out against the attack on democracy in the governor's appointment of Emergency Managers in place of democratically elected officials to guarantee corporate profits in Benton Harbor (and other Michigan cities).

For my active outspokenness, I am paying a debt to society, which I do not owe, with my life, my family life, and my community.

A motion for bond pending appeal has been filed with the Michigan Court of Appeals. There were numerous violations of my human rights during my trial. Three witnesses testified that I was not present when petition dates were altered. The prosecutor was allowed to use my community activity as "evidence." This is a serious violation of my First Amendment rights and due process. The judge and prosecutor worked together as a team against me because of their support for Whirlpool. In addition, we have evidence that some of the all white jurists knew each other, but did not

## 'I pray the whole judicial system is investigated,' says Benton Harbor Commissioner-at-Large

By MaryAlice Adams

BENTON HARBOR, MI — I'm trying to get Marcus Muhammad elected as mayor in the August election in Benton Harbor. After examining everything we have gone through over the last five years with democracy under attack here in Michigan, of the three mayoral candidates, he is the best. Democracy is everything that America stands for yet we were thrown a dictator under the Emergency Manager law.

Marcus is the only candidate who stood up against the injustice of stripping elected officials of their decision-making rights in Benton Harbor. The other two candidates, who are pastors, stood against us. They never speak about the poverty and haven't done anything about it.

We've been working on the poverty, working with HUD to bring in more moderate to low-income housing. I am the Vice Chair of the Department of Economic Development. We're

working on ways to recycle items used daily to keep them from going to the landfill, and we're also working on more demolitions of some structures that need to come down through the city's Brownfield redevelopment. We constantly enter into new development agreements to spur more job growth and new businesses. We are trying to align some prominent older gentlemen that already are working with minority men in the community, trying to connect them with the My

Brother's Keepers initiative. We hope that we can keep these men out of the judicial system by getting them some job training. Until we can do that, they can't even work a job. We are also responsible for the \$500 million development going on in Benton Harbor, although the current mayor would love to take the glory for it.

We need to get Rev. Pinkney out of jail. This is America. There's freedom of speech, and no one has the right to take that. Who in America ever heard of a

man thrown in to jail for quoting the scripture? And I saw firsthand at his trial that all of the "reasonable doubt" in the courtroom was rotten. I pray that the whole judicial system is investigated, turned inside out and restructured to work for all, fairly and justly.

MaryAlice Adams is running for re-election for Commissioner-at-Large in Benton Harbor in the November election.

## What is 'class?'

From the Editors of the People's Tribune

The People's Tribune often talks about "class." What is it? Why is it so important for the revolution for a new America?

Class is a division in society based on the method by which the society produces the things people need to survive. Since class society began, there have been owning and working classes—or exploiting and exploited.

Under capitalism, a handful of people own the means of producing our necessities of life while the rest, in order to live, have to sell our ability to work to those who own the factories, mines, and other means of production.

However, with the introduction of vast labor-replacing computerized technologies into production, this relationship is broken. Robots and computers now do many of the jobs once done by human workers, and this process is moving fast. As workers of all colors are forced to compete against robots, which do not require a wage or to eat, workers are increasingly pushed into low-wage, part-time, contingency work, and out of work forever. At the same time, the robots and computers are creating a world of plenty. There is plenty of food, homes, healthcare, water, energy and other necessities to go around.

These marginalized workers are revolutionary because their demands for the necessities of life—for the abundance that the new technology is creating—cannot and will not be provided for under capitalism without money to pay for it. The only way this growing section of workers, and many more soon to join them, will get what they need to survive and thrive is under a cooperative economic system, one based on distribution of the things we need to survive according to need instead of with money. In such a society, the means of producing our necessities would be publicly, not privately owned.

If workers are united around their struggle for these necessities, coupled with a vision of a new cooperative society, they can become a powerful force. They can lead the fight for the power to create a new society. *This is why the People's Tribune places so much emphasis on "class", and why we help the workers see that their struggle is a class struggle.*

reveal their relationships to the court.

It is our duty to hold all elected officials, judges, prosecutors and law-enforcement accountable. All corrupt officials must be tried and imprisoned. We must demand that the news media print the truth. We must stand together and bring down the corrupt crim-

inal justice system, not just in Berrien County, but all across America.

**Editor's note: Please publicize this statement far and wide. Raise funds for Pinkney's appeal. Send donations for the appeal to BANCO, 1940 Union Street, Benton Harbor, MI 49022.**