



A homeless man sleeps under an American flag blanket on a park bench in New York City. He is among the tens of thousands of homeless men, women and children in one of the wealthiest cities in the world.

PHOTO/SPENCER PLATT, GETTY IMAGES

THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WANT AN END TO HOMELESSNESS

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The people want a world of peace, justice and equality*

Public Education: The fight for our future

EDITORIAL

We are living in times of immense change, where the world we thought we knew is transforming into something else completely. Technological advances have moved humanity from an era of scarcity to a new era of abundance. As technology races ahead, society and our institutions have to change accordingly. Public education is just one such institution. The question is: will change be in the interests of the public or the corporations?

In Oklahoma, Senate Bill 1187 strips teachers and support staff of any wage increases, bargaining rights, and benefits. Detroit schools, run by an unelected Emergency Manager, are literally crumbling around the students as the district faces billions of dollars of debt. Lead contaminates the water fountains of numerous Chicago schools. New college graduates are burdened with monstrous debts and few job prospects, forced to live with family or on the street. The examples are endless.

The education system where most children attend public schools, gain a certain level of literacy and competency in various skills, came about during the industrial revolution. Large factories needed masses of workers that were literate in order to operate the machines of industry. Yet today, industry is in decline with automation pushing wages down and an ever-increasing number of people out of work. Every sector of work, blue collar and white collar, is threatened by automation and robotics. The ruling class no longer needs to educate a large section of society, so they have unleashed an all-out war against public education. They seek to profit from the \$70 bil-



The dismantling of Detroit's public school system, which includes the closing of massive numbers of schools, is overseen by an unelected Emergency Manager who serves corporate and financial interests.

PHOTO/DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM

lion K-12 education market.

It's clear that the ruling class has a plan for what to do with those who will not be educated. Over thirty years, 23 states have doubled the amount spent on incarceration compared to primary education spending, with seven states seeing increases of over 500 percent. Nation-wide, spending on prisons increased 1100 percent compared to spending for public colleges and universities. They are replacing education with a police state.

It is dangerous to educate people that the economy no longer needs. The rulers cannot easily control a society where the majority of people are literate, creative, critical thinkers—the

kind of people that will recognize the problems in society and organize to change it. The attack on education is an attack on our democracy and an expansion of a corporate dictatorship.

To combat a complete corporate takeover, we need to fight for a new cooperative society. With a cooperative economy where the people—not corporations—own and control everything we need to live, human needs, not profits, would be the driving force of society. Using the new technology to feed and house everyone, we could eliminate poverty. In a cooperative society, we could give every child a well rounded, nurturing education in state-of-the-art schools. Young people could

fully explore their interests and passions, reaching their fullest potential.

To achieve this new era of education, we the people must take over the education system or the corporations will complete their takeover of it. The first step toward achieving this new era of education is to nationalize education in the interests of the people. If we nationalize education, all the schools could be funded equitably by the government. This demand to nationalize education should be brought into the elections. United, we can take back our education from the corporations. Together, we will build the new education system and the new world that we need.

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.

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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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The American people want an end to homelessness

COVER STORY

Recently, the homeless Beal family with its four young children occupied the Mayor's office at Oakland City Hall, demanding the government do something to help them. They had been through the nightmare of a slumlord eviction from their sewage-flooded apartment, forced to sleep in their car and in vacant buildings, in rapidly-gentrifying Oakland, CA. "We are at the end of our rope," they explained. "We can't live like this. We shouldn't have to. Our children deserve better. Desperate times call for desperate measures."

Indeed we are in desperate times. The mass replacement of jobs by automation is throwing millions out of work forever. As labor is eliminated from the workplace, the value of human life, as evidenced by the sheer number of people living in the streets, is driven to zero. Formerly stable workers suddenly find themselves on the wrong end of a job loss, an illness, a foreclosure or an eviction, living on a couch, in a vehicle or in the streets. Homeless kids move from town to town, depending on each other for safety and company.

The American people want to see homelessness ended and people taken care of. The ruling class has another remedy, harassment and jail for the 'crimes' of poverty. Sitting and lying on the sidewalk has been made illegal in cities and towns across the country, as well as asking for help by 'flying' a sign. People are arrested for sharing free food.

Homelessness is the Achilles heel of the capitalist system, where what we need is held as private property for profit, and withheld if we can't pay for it.

This can't be defended morally or practically, since there is more than enough of everything



CARTOON/ANDY WILLIS

to fully satisfy everyone's needs. The powers that be attack and criminalize people for pitching tents and sleeping in doorways, along the curbs under gleaming new condo towers in cities like San Francisco, or in the burned-out houses of Detroit. The ruling class has no remedy but terror. A government which can only mount fascist attacks against those in desperate need, while withholding the abundance it controls, is not fit to rule.

The homeless themselves are organizing in their own interest. Residents of self-governing tent cities across the US are demanding the right to this basic form of shelter, while organizing to demand housing as a right. City halls and capitol buildings

are occupied, the homeless and their supporters demanding that government respond to human needs. The corporate-controlled government's abject failure to do this calls its very existence into question.

The demands of the homeless and the whole of our class for the absolute right to housing and all

else we need, not just to survive but to thrive, is in reality a cry for the overturning of the profit-driven system of private ownership, and for a society of sharing controlled by the people. This is the ultimate demand of the struggle for homeless rights, and everyone's basic rights, and its logical outcome.

Readers speak

"The People's Tribune should be a must read for everyone who fights for the poor and injustices forced on us by the capitalist system. Thank you for speaking the truth."

— Hy Thurman

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Defend the homeless

From the Editors

The body of a homeless man in San Diego, CA, was set on fire—after he was murdered. This was one of a series of attacks on the city's homeless that left two people dead.

What accounts for this hatred? The homeless, the victims of a collapsing economic system, are scapegoated by the powers that be and blamed for its failures. This sows division and hatred. This hatred can't be thoroughly understood unless examined in light of the conditions that gave it birth.

A section of American history is rooted in the horrors of African slavery and genocide against the natives. The government's assault on civil liberties, coupled with the whipping up of racist terror, is fueled by this history.

But there is another root to our history. It is exemplified by the vision in the Declaration of Independence that inspired revolutionaries throughout the world. It is in the songs and battles of those who died to make people free.

This is a new era. New technology is making millions homeless. The rulers have no solution except fascism. There is plenty of housing. We must bring the demand that the government guarantee everyone the basic necessities of life, including housing, into the electoral process at every level. We must unite around a vision of the free and prosperous America that could be.

Homelessness: Baltimore tragedies and the way out

By Abel Tewelde

BALTIMORE, MD — Thousands of people are homeless in Baltimore, Maryland. Thousands are suffering from drug, sexual and physical abuses. Thousands are suffering from social inequality and lack of skills and education. Thousands are suffering from a lack of hope, health issues and police violence. On the other side, banks and other companies are making billions of dollars each year in downtown Baltimore. That is the sad reality of Baltimore.

A very important question is how homeless people can unify in order to fight against the social inequality and give themselves a voice. This article is to give the homeless people a voice to express their ideas on solving the problem. The first question I ask is how can we end homelessness? The majority of people said find out what skills homeless people have, provide job training for those skills and employment for all. The vacant housing in Baltimore could be repaired and used to house anyone who



Abel Tewelde and Jim Fite in Project Place housing office. Baltimore's homeless population is increasing due to failure of government to rebuild vacant housing for those in need. The city once had good jobs but factory and steel mill closings have flooded the streets with those who lost jobs and homes.

PHOTO/DONATED

needs a home.

The second question was, 'What is the worst thing about homelessness?' Many people said the worst thing is that your health conditions get worse. People on the streets always have the fear that the conditions on the streets will harm them physically and mentally. Having no place to rest makes you lose hope and no hope can lead to drugs, depression and crime.

Open letter to Mayor Schaaf from a homeless Oakland family

OAKLAND, CA —

Dear Mayor Libby Schaaf,

Like thousands of other families in Oakland, CA, we are sick and tired of being homeless. Everywhere we go, it's barriers. Everyone has a different story of how they became homeless, but every homeless person has experienced the things we've experienced: Discrimination. Inadequate protection from bad landlords. Nowhere to turn for help. Constant fear & threats to safety. We are at the end of our rope. We can't live like this. We shouldn't have to. Our children deserve better.

Mayor Libby Schaaf, you need to start prioritizing our needs over the interests of people who are profiting from our suffering:

We need immediate emergency relief for all homeless families in Oakland. No child under the age of 18 should be without shelter on your watch.

Protect Oakland Renters. Prevent other people from going through the hell we've been going through for the past two years. Put the #ProtectOaklandRenters initiative on the 2016 ballot immediately, and extend the moratorium on no-fault evictions & rent increases until permanent tenant protections are passed, funded, implemented, and enforced.

Redistribute at least 25% of Oakland Police Department's budget to fund programs and services to prevent and address displacement, poverty and violence in our city. You campaigned on the idea of "a holistic approach to



The Beal family moves into City Hall to protest homelessness.

PHOTO/WWW.CRC4SD.ORG

public safety." How can you justify spending over 60% of Oakland's general fund (we may be homeless, but we pay taxes too) to pay cops to stalk our families by night (when they're not out committing statutory rape, breaking into people's houses and God knows what else!)? We need a place for our babies to sleep. The police can't help us with that. We need food and healthcare for our children. The police can't help us with that. We need jobs that pay enough for us to be able to afford the cost of living in Oakland. The police can't help us with that, and we are not safe. Holistic public safety means applying for the youth jobs grant on time and using public land for public good.

Today at noon, we are moving into Oakland City Hall. We're bringing an inflatable mattress, bedding, and our four children.

Desperate times call for desperate measures. We have nowhere else to go. If you don't want us at City Hall, give us a safe place to stay. Your house looks like it might have a few extra rooms in it.

We invite all long-time Oaklanders (especially families with children) who have been experiencing homelessness to join us today. If you're hungry, come to City Hall. We have organized meals to be served for all who show up. We ask for all people of conscience to come out and support our family and all the homeless families in Oakland.

Thank you for standing with us. #StopStayExpand
The Beal Family

Excerpts from an article at www.crc4sd.org/blog/2016/6/30/open-letter-to-libby-schaaf-from-a-homeless-oakland-family

My third question was, 'What prevents unity for the homeless?' The main barrier to unity is no hope for the future. Many homeless see their situation is only getting worse. Many have no vision of how they could enhance their situation. Many people stated that there used to be community structures that gave a lot of people hope, identity and a kind of security. Many homeless said in the past it was easier on the streets because people were looking after each other.

Today the homeless feel no one is caring about them. They are disappointed in people generally and this prevents them from uniting.

The solution is more people who actually care about the homeless as people, more people with a vision of a society without homelessness and the desire to have such a society. What is needed is more people who understand that any of us could be homeless. People are needed who want to end homelessness,

not just get free bread.

All in all, the circumstances in Baltimore are not getting better. The city of Baltimore has to invest more in education, affordable housing, job training and conversion of all vacant buildings into useful homes, schools and health clinics. The situation is not hopeless. There is still a chance for change, but we have to act now before it gets too late,

Homeless protest for the right to sleep and survive

By Mike Zint

BERKELEY CA — They say a picture is worth a thousand words, but I can only come up with one. And that word is torture. When a life sustaining activity like sleep is not permitted, torture is the result. Suffering is increased. Hopelessness overwhelms. And when we stand against it?

Enter Liberty City 2, weekend vigil for equal rights and protections for the homeless. Starting July 2, 'First They Came for the Homeless' called a vigil to seek justice for the participants of Liberty City last November, when the city of Berkeley illegally destroyed four truckloads of gear confiscated from our protest. Instead of allowing this latest vigil, the city spent thousands trying to prevent it.

We show up to a completely fenced-off City Hall. The city's raid on July 2 confiscated our pop up tent and info table, saying City Hall was private property. We are not allowed to protest. The assistant city manager was on hand supervising this unconstitutional act.

We were informed by police that if we slept we would be arrested. Sleep deprivation is torture. Two of our homeless protest-

ers were arrested at midnight and taken to jail for sleeping ['lodging'], others given citations.

We continued, sitting on cardboard for the entire time. We still had music and art. We chalked the sidewalks. We had community. We had sharing. And we had fun.

We never had a large group. Our numbers dwindled after the arrests and citations. But we were not going to quit. By Sunday, we had a small group of homeless coming to talk. They came for food and they came for hope. We had plenty of food. But we could not offer them hope. There is none.

There will be no hope until the people in charge recognize that people in need will not disappear because we are inconvenient. The problem is only getting worse. Cities are doing nothing but giving money to groups who rely on homelessness to stay in business. They will not solve homelessness if they are profiting from it. This is the same as all encampments. Shelter, stability, and storage are the attraction. These are what the homeless are looking for. Some of them use drugs. And drug use and crime are used by the city as an excuse to torture ALL homeless. These



Two young homeless men are arrested for sleeping ("lodging") at the Liberty City2 homeless rights protest at Berkeley City Hall. PHOTO/SARAH MENEFFEE

encampments form out of desperation. And they will continue to develop in nooks everywhere. The city is wasting money and effort fighting a losing battle. The

truth is the homeless in this country are people who can't go away. They have no place to go.

But it is not over. It will never be over until there are equal

rights, justice, and compassion for those in need. By cooperating and taking care of each other, the homeless show the housed what humanity is all about.

Homeless family works to create a cooperative society

By Indigo Kelly

"My name is Indigo Kelly; my wife is Pacha; my daughters are Nadia Theresa and Samantha Keona.

About two years ago my family became homeless. Our blood family turned their backs on us and abandoned us. We were no longer living up to their standards.

It was painful, but from that experience we began to find our soul family and Red Road Revival was born. Red Road Revival is my family's attempt to give back, to be of service and to heal ourselves and others.

We have been traveling the country living out of our vehicle, pulling a trailer around, feeding

people for free or for donations at every stop. This movement runs completely off of donations.

It's been two years since we were able to be comfortable, to rest or just be. But that's OK 'cause truly being of service is not easy. We suffer so others do not have to. We go without so others do not have to.

When this journey first started Pacha and I had a vision of traveling the country in a veggie oil powered bus with solar panels and a kitchen, enough room that we never had to turn someone down for a ride.

We wanted to create a mobile community, a caravan that would help raise awareness to issues each community we stopped at were facing. We wanted to

be able to help combat those issues and truly make a difference through the collective power of this tribe. We wanted to hold sacred space where people felt safe to open up and share their hearts or release their pain. We never want people to feel alone or useless again.

We were gifted a bus in California that is everything we have ever dreamed of. The bus needs some repairs to get it roadworthy. It will give others hope and help propel this movement to the next level: it will also give us a home. Something we have been longing for.

When people ask why we do this and why we put ourselves through this, I say we are healing ourselves, healing issues of aban-

donment, healing issues of not feeling worthy of love because of the people that look down on us.

Each soul we help, each mouth we feed, each structure we build, every garden we plant, every tear that is shed on our shoulders is a step toward healing.

We cannot do this alone: we need people to stand up with us, reach inside and pull their light out and let it shine.

We will do everything we can to get to this bus in California and back on the road but, we need donations to cover gas, repairs, insurance on our current vehicle, food and supplies for those we come across on this journey." Donate at www.gofundme.com/yuz0gk.



The youngest daughter of a homeless family who is organizing a caravan to help the homeless and create a cooperative world. PHOTO/GOFUNDME.COM/YUZ0GK

very poor
written small

on a scrap
of poor cardboard

— Sarah Menefee

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The need to sharpen our analysis

By Gonzalo, G1 of Rebel Diaz

CHICAGO, IL — The state killed Malcolm X when his OAAU group began building beyond the black community... Martin was killed after he started talking anti-capitalism building with the white anti-war movement and the Chicano farmworkers struggle... Chairman Fred Hampton was assassinated as his Rainbow Coalition was beginning to make multiracial solidarity in Chicago a reality... I bring this up for a few reasons...

I don't have many #alllives-matter folks on my timeline, but a lot of my friends have been vocal about having to draw the line with friends of theirs that can't bring themselves to accept #blacklivesmatter... Most of the people they're unfriending are white folks who refuse to come to terms with their privilege... or misinformed Latinx that are in denial of their blackness...

Question is tho, do we dismiss 'em with "intersectional" talk of white fragility/white tears/colonized self-haters, etc., or do we actually attempt to build solidarity across different commu-

nities, as those revolutionaries before us?

I get that it ain't worth it sometimes to argue with a hard-core racist, and that we should begin by organizing and educating the communities we are a part of, but I also think most would agree we need multiracial solidarity to defeat capitalism... So how do we uphold and not erase #blacklivesmatter, while building important solidarity for the mass struggle that is needed?

I've had more than a few encounters with some ignorant gringos, assimilated Latinos, and even some bougie Black folks that I've wanted to write off, dispose of them cuz their understanding of race in America is colonized and conditioned by the violent "post-racial" rhetoric of the Obama era... but there's something about how the quickness to discard and dismiss people is reproducing capitalist values of efficiency and disposability... And yeah, this country was founded on a "race war" that is ongoing but Obama Condoleezza Lynch Powell Booker Clarence Insert Sellout Latino BEEN made it clear all our skin folk ain't our kinfolk so on what

basis are we choosing our sides in this war?

The burden of reconciliation shouldn't be on the historically oppressed, and maybe settler colonial America is just violently coming to terms with its genocidal ways, but something about how the media is manipulating the message, (media that has historically served the interests of the 1%) makes me feel they are exacerbating racial divisions to cover up for a dead economy that cannot be revived, that they are bent on creating chaos to restore police state order to their liking...

The ruling class ain't never gave a fuck about black people, or immigrants, or working class white people, unless it served their interests as tokens, cheap labor, scapegoats, or buffers to serve their power...

I ain't got the answers but I will say our young generation of leaders need to sharpen our analysis of race, class, and power if we are to win this war... I ain't looking for no kumbaya circle, but if we don't organize organize, organize to unite, unite, unite, we've already lost the war...

Stop the Killings: The people want a world of peace, justice and equality

From the Editors of the *People's Tribune*

The killings of Alton Sterling and Philando Castille by the police and the killings of eight police officers are having a major impact on American politics. On the one hand, the killings have made millions of people angry, fearful and open to extreme solutions. On the other hand, the killings have caused millions to call for unity across the color line, and an end to all the killing. To stop the violence, we must look at the conditions that give rise to it.

The capitalist economy is based on a handful of wealthy people owning the means of producing what we need to live, and the rest of us being employed by them. That kind of economy can't work if there aren't enough jobs. The computer and the robot have been eliminating jobs for more than 40 years.

People whose labor is no longer needed are a threat to the ruling class, because these workers' needs can only be met by a new society based on public ownership of the means of producing

our food, housing, healthcare, education, water and other necessities. In such a cooperative society, we would simply produce what we need and distribute it. Our rulers have to suppress that threat to keep their property and power. They do this by aggravating historical divisions, keeping the people fighting one another.

Because of the history of slavery in this country, any time the ruling class needs to attack the working class it always falls first and heaviest on the Blacks. This is why the Black poor are under siege today. When, for example, the ruling class needed to destroy the public welfare system, ending the right of millions to survive, they started their assault by blaming the Black poor. Once the rights of this section of workers are eliminated, the attack falls on the rest of the class.

What we are witnessing today is the rise of fascism in our country, and if we don't stop it, it will strip everyone of their rights, regardless of color or nationality. This drive toward fascism is happening now because of the irresolvable economic crisis. The targeting

of the poor, especially poor people of color, is part of an effort to get people to accept a police state that will be imposed on everyone.

We, the people, have a common enemy in the system of private ownership. We have a common interest in building a new, cooperative society where everyone's needs are guaranteed and where there is no need for violence against anyone. Those who are destitute and becoming destitute are of every color and nationality, and are already united by their common poverty. They need to unite around a common program.

Imagine if millions were united around a program that says every human being in this country has the right to food, clothing, housing, education, healthcare and other necessities, and the government is obligated to guarantee that right. This would be a force that could lead the fight for a new society free of poverty, racism, violence and repression. It would be a force for class unity, for peace, and for a government that is of, by and for the people. The future of humanity lies in creating this new society.



Non-violent protesters of the police killing of Alton Sterling are met by heavily armed police response in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. ABOVE AND BOTTOM-RIGHT PHOTOS/JULIE DERMANSKY



A protest in Chicago prompted by the recent police killings in Minnesota and Louisiana. PHOTO/BOB SIMPSON

Voices in the struggle for a just society

FALCON HEIGHTS, MN —

"The police just shot my boyfriend for no apparent reason... They shot him. He shot him three times because we had a busted tail light. He asked him for his license and registration. He told that man that it was in his wallet, but he had a pistol on him because he's licensed to carry, and the officer told him don't move... as he was putting his hands back up, the officer shot him in his arm about four or five times... If you see that video that went viral, everyone will see that this was a very detrimental situation not only to me, not only to her [referring to her daughter], but to everybody in this community, everybody in this world... this affected everyone... every single life out here matters, no matter the color, the race, the nationality, we all deserve to be heard. No one deserves to be taken away."

— From transcripts of Diamond Reynolds, the girlfriend of Philando Castile who was killed by police in July, 2016

BATON ROUGE, LA —

"Since the police killing of Alton Sterling [by Baton Rouge] police, thousands in Baton Rouge have been non-violently protesting day and night all over the city. There has been no arson, no looting, no burning cars, no windows broken, and no people beaten. Despite these non-violent protests, around 200 people have been arrested and the police have shown a militarized and aggressive response... police are caught on camera pointing their guns at non-violent protestors... these officers are not disciplined or suspended by the government but defended... Military vehicles with LRADs (long range acoustic devices) atop them have been used to break up non-violent gatherings... Police advanced against protestors dressed in military gear, with gas masks, shin guards, face shields, brandishing assault weapons alongside heavy military vehicles... videos show dozens of police surging onto private property and arresting people wholesale while standing on the sidewalk... People have been pepper sprayed in jail. People in jail were denied their medicines. People hurt during arrests who asked for medical help in jail were denied. People are caged in places that could not possibly accommodate the numbers of people inside. People are not being allowed to make calls from jail to attorneys or families. Strip searches of women prisoners are occurring."

— From an article by Bill Quigley, who teaches law at Loyola University New Orleans

FRESNO, CA —

"The case of Dylan Noble, an unarmed white 19-year-old fatally shot four times within two minutes time by Fresno Police officers in June, 2016 had a very different response by the Fresno Chief of Police. Latino activists who have made demands of the Chief for 20 to 30 years about the police killings in the community were puzzled by the Chief's quick and cooperative response in this case. Could the visible signs of impulses toward unity in the Fresno community over yet another young life snuffed out by police be driving the Chief's response? Meanwhile, government entities continue to hire more police/sheriffs/law enforcement officers while not giving any priority to youth or community services the communities are demanding. One of the main divisions that exist today is that some have what they need and are living the American Dream, while others — estimated at 50 million — have no jobs, go to bed hungry and have no homes or a roof over their heads. The people who care about the 1,000 deaths at the hands of police per year must all move to stop all killings by police by defending every victim of police violence. The people of Fresno are proposing a simple "Don't shoot policy." If not now, when?"

— Gloria Sandoval, a community activist in the San Joaquin Valley, and member of the *Tribuna del Pueblo* editorial board

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— The Editors

50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION OF THE WELFARE RIGHTS MOVEMENT 1966-2016

Editor's note: On June 24-25, in Detroit, the Welfare Rights movement celebrated its 50th anniversary in the fight to eliminate poverty. Activists shared stories of the courageous battles of the past—and the challenges faced today in a new era where automation is destroying jobs, and at the same time creating the possibility of a new

society that ends poverty forever. The People's Tribune, and its sister publication, the Tribuno del Pueblo, have covered this historic struggle for decades. Below are quotes from participants. More voices will be in future editions.



“Listen to your children. Young people are ready,” says Rev. Annie Chambers, a long-time welfare rights fighter from Baltimore.

“I’ve been in Welfare Rights for 31 years. Its about the importance of an organized voice, its about low income people being mistreated. It’s like a tale of two cities. When a city is poisoned and two years later the poisoned water is still coming through the pipes, it’s clear a decision was made to say ‘that’s OK.’ With the number of schools closed, when police shootings of people of color are right next to people that are blonde and blue eyed getting shot; when women, and 17-year olds get shot and police are saying ‘we’re not at fault’—if we allow someone else to decide our outcome, it will turn out just like this. All this stuff happening today is tied to the new technology. You put that ATM card in that slot and get your money out. There was a time when I knew all those tellers working in the bank. They all went away because I had that card and they didn’t need employees anymore. Go to Home Depot, CVS, to the self-serve lines. They don’t need you anymore. Capitalism is collapsing. It’s time to get together. When we talk about one call, one class, organize not on the basis of what you look like, but on the basis of who is tired of not being educated and tired of homelessness. Now is the time. The enemy is in flux. They can’t make money the way they used to. We need to get on the offensive. Open those houses and put people in them. Take the churches, hospitals, schools. The time for change is now. This is the 50th anniversary. Welfare Rights is extremely important. Over the next two years, we are going to make them holler!”

— *Maureen Taylor, State Chair, Michigan Welfare Rights Organization*

“Listen to your children. Our young people are ready. The whole world knows what happened in Baltimore. I’m a grandmother and a great-grandmother and a great great-grandmother. I had grandchildren in the middle of it. I had a grandson that helped organize it. We old people were sitting talking about how we was going to respond, and my grandson came up and said, ‘Grandma, can you get all of the elders out here?’ I said, why? He said, ‘We can take care of this. Please, Grandma.’ Well, we in Baltimore never seen like what we seen that day. When we woke up, the children had already planned what they was going to do I asked them where did y’all get them rocks? They said, ‘Hell they all over the city.’ They beat the Baltimore city police back so bad—I mean, police was saying, ‘Where is these children coming from?’ The children started organizing in elementary school for the day they was going to stand up and fight. My grandson was the young man they said tore up the police car. Let me tell y’all, the children tore up a lot of police cars and they had the police on the run. They called me up from downtown at City Hall and said, ‘Can you come out and speak to the children?’ I said Hell no. I’m not one of those people. They beaten y’all ass. They is fighting like Joshua out there. They tore it down. So talk to your children. Tell them your history and they will fight. I seen girls, boys. It’s us that’s talking about what we going to do. The children are ready.”

— *Rev. Annie Chambers welfare rights activist, Black Panther, and President, Big Mama House*



Maureen D. Taylor, chair, Michigan Welfare Rights Organization, has been in the welfare rights movement for 31 years.

“We taught each other in the past and still are. We use the People’s Tribune to educate because it’s a movement paper. We don’t just want to be part of coalitions; we want people to get an education about the type of system we need. My goal is not to become an entrepreneur. My goal is to create another system. Young people out in the streets are under attack for protecting the community, doing what this government should be doing. We may differ on some things but we are together because we are all under attack. As long as they keep us divided we won’t get anywhere. They already took everything from us. You’re not needed to work, so you don’t need healthcare or education. We need the government to move over or get the kind of system we need. We need to be educators to those on the front lines to make this happen.”

— *Marian Kramer, Co Chair, National Welfare Rights Union*

“We know the system stinks. We know democracy or socialism, whatever it is we need, means we have to be working together. We are so far from where we need to be. We should not be working in our own silo. Let’s reach out to the people. Let’s keep up the good work.”

— *Selma Goode (95 years old), Westside Mothers*



(Left to right) Marguerite Kowaleski, Chair, Oakland County Welfare Rights Organization; Selma Goode (95), Chair, Westside Mothers; and Nida Donar, Chair, The Friends of Welfare Rights. All are original organizers in the Welfare Rights Movement over 40 years ago.

ALL PHOTOS ON THIS PAGE BY MARY KAY YARAK



Two Years Too Long commemoration in Flint, MI, in April, 2016, marking two years since the water was switched to the filthy Flint River, poisoning an entire city. PHOTO/MEGAN E. KREGER

Flint water disaster is still alive and dangerous

Editor's note: This is from a Facebook post at FlintH2Ojustice.

FLINT, MI — A FEDERAL EMERGENCY for Flint, Michigan was declared on January 16, 2016. That declaration expires on August 14, 2016. The federal emergency did NOT solve the problem that Flint residents face everyday. After President Obama's visit to Flint, MI in May, the nation was led to believe that the water was safe to drink and donations declined.

Many are still sick and suffering with various issues due to

the **Flint toxic water**.

Experts agree that our water quality still fails the lead and copper rule test!! Furthermore, when the Environmental Protection Agency recently declared Flint water safe with the use of sink filters, the County Medical Society warned that children under 6, pregnant women and those with a compromised immune system should continue using bottled water!!

THEREFORE we DEMAND:

(1) Declare FLINT a **FEDERAL DISASTER AREA** which would allow, for example, the Army

Corp of Engineers to replace the infrastructure.

(2) Make **full** Medicare available for every FLINT resident immediately.

(3) Abolish Michigan Emergency Law (P.A.436) to protect DEMOCRACY in Michigan.

Congress failed to take up the "Families of Flint Act" before recessing early on a seven-week summer break. Meanwhile, Flint families do not have the privilege of recessing and taking a break from **toxic water!!!**

Judge sentences Flint activist - Likens her actions to Dallas killings



By a Flint reader

Editor's note: This article illustrates the dangerous political climate activists, in this case, activists fighting for clean water, face in Michigan.

FLINT, MI — Gertrude Marshall was arrested in October, 2015, while protesting the water situation at the Flint Farmers Market. When one of the "security guards" snatched the

bull horn out of Ms. Marshall's hand, an altercation ensued. Another "security guard" joined in and witnesses, along with Ms. Marshall, say that she was defending herself against physical brutality by the so called guards. When the dust was cleared, she was charged with a misdemeanor, assault and battery, and attempted assault and battery. Gertrude Marshall has maintained her innocence throughout this whole

ordeal.

With "Sliced and diced" video evidence, the jury found her guilty. At the sentencing on July 8, Judge Cathy Doud shocked the courtroom when she accused Ms. Marshall of "making a fool of yourself" at the protest. She went on to compare her role in the incident to "what happened

in Dallas," where five Dallas police officers were killed. Judge Doud threw the book at defendant Marshall (just shy of jail time.) She got two years strict probation, community service, anger management classes, and hundreds of dollars in fines. She is appealing her conviction.

Judge compares the role of defendant Gertrude Marshall (left) arrested in an altercation with security guards at a water protest as comparable to "what happened in Dallas" where five police officers were killed.



Some immigration programs in the U.S. have recently been blocked. One program would have helped 4-5 million parents of U.S. citizens or legal residents. Although other parts of the program are still in place and people can apply, denying human rights to immigrant workers sets the basis for the government to deny rights to all workers. "Not one more deportation, not one more family separated," is the call we all need to take up.

PHOTO/PUNTE HUMAN RIGHTS MOVEMENT

Punish the Murderers

Without water there is no life.

Last night a thirteen year old
Told how she started her day, preparing for school,
She pours bottled water into a pot
Sets it on the stove to heat up,
Uses some to make her oatmeal for breakfast,
Then brings it to the bathroom
Where she brushes her teeth and
Washes her face.
When she comes home, she carries more
Bottled water to take a bath.
She does not want any more painful skin rashes.

Without water there is no life.

Then two young siblings said
The school told them not to use the water
A month after they started school.
Their older sister said her school
Told her not to use the water
Two weeks ago. This is not a joke.

Without water there is no life.
Taking away life is murder.

A friend tells me there will be no fish
In the ocean after 2048. None.
The thing is, the trend is reversible.
Food is money, and the moneygrubbers
Are killing the thing making them rich.

But taking away life is murder.

I can't forget this story. The woman
Who drank the water and miscarried her child.
Or the mother who described how
Her child was now having seizures,
While another has been acting out at school,
And both have lead poisoning
From the water coming from the Flint River.

The governor knew about the poison.
He appointed the emergency manager of the city and
He OK'd the city saving money by using the tainted water.
But taking away life is murder.
Without water there is no life.

Punish the murderers.
Water must be clean and free for all.

— Lew Rosenbaum

Illinois budget impasse: We Need Federally Funded Education

By Lew Rosenbaum

CHICAGO, IL — Budget uncertainties continue to engulf Chicago Public Schools (CPS), as school opening approaches this fall. After a full year squabbling about funding, the Illinois legislature passed a partial spending plan to carry the state through the November elections. Part of the plan is to provide some help to CPS, including pension relief. Finally in mid July CPS released inadequate budgets to the individual schools. With all this uncertainty, we can't know what programs will be chopped and what learning and working conditions will be like. We can't even know how many teachers will lose their jobs. Over 50 principals have resigned, many citing the budget cuts and chaos forced by CPS.

The city and the state have been pointing the finger of blame at each other. Thereby each eludes its responsibilities. The Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) pointed out what Springfield could do to relieve the pressure (e.g. fund Chicago equally with other school districts, change the law to initiate a progressive income tax on the wealthy), the union also increased the heat on the city. The CTU showed that CPS could raise hundreds of mil-

lions of dollars without going to Springfield. In CTU's words, the city is "broke on purpose." A July 2 rally in Chicago called on legislators to tax the rich to resolve the problems the schools and other public services face.

Chicago mayor Rahm Emanuel has long been known for robbing from school coffers by using Tax Increment Financing dollars to support corporate development. He has recently offered city legislation to tax Airbnb. This would have the effect of increasing rents, gentrifying neighborhoods, and forcing out the homeless (e.g. from a tent city viaduct in rapidly gentrifying Uptown). Emanuel promoted a bond to fund the Lucas Star Wars "Museum" (the failed bid to house a billionaire's collection of exotica) in contrast to his borrowing for city services at usurious rates, which placed city communities deeply in hock to the banks.

CTU continues to gear up for a possible strike in September. Step by step the union finds itself in a potentially no-win situation that stems from limitations in public funding as well as turning public funds over to private corporations. The CTU endorsed the Bernie Sanders campaign in part because he argued for free public education through the University level (the national AFT



Chicago students rally for fully funded public schools.

PHOTO/BOB SIMPSON

endorsed Hillary Clinton in October, 2015).

The federal government could actually guarantee public education for all. Unlike "common core," which is a boondoggle for private capital, the government could make public the private property that produces our "public" education: for example, the testing companies, publishing companies, janitorial corporations, food preparation, technological industries and private consultants that all steal from our public schools. The battle around education is proving to be a "school" for moving from scattered economic struggles toward a single political struggle.

Come meet distributors of

"Good morning, Beloved Detroit. We are ending one chapter and beginning a new one today. Stay with us. These are our schools. Our children. This is our city. We will not be moved."

Editor's note: Elena Herrada wrote the above on Facebook. She is a member of Detroit's elected school board, now exiled by the governor-appointed Emergency Manager who is ushering in the destruction of the public school system so corporations can profit from privatizing them.

the People's Tribune August 13, who will be on hand again this year at the picnic in Washington Park following the 87th back to school Bud Billiken Parade. The theme of the parade is, "Uniting the Community Through Education for 87 years."

Amazon exemplifies replacement of humans with robots

By Dave Ransom

SANTA ROSA, CA — By pushing people out of production and distribution, robotic high-tech is creating a new, proletarian class of jobless human beings.

This stark reality—strongly felt, but imperfectly understood by the 99 percent—is what underlies the radical candidacies on the left and the right: Sanders and Trump.

The rapidly growing retail giant, Amazon, shows clearly how the shift is happening.

The web-based retailer—operating out of warehouses as big as 60 football fields—is not only digging the graves of bricks-and-mortar stores like Macy's and Walmart, but the graves of the workers themselves.

That's not simply because

Amazon is replacing human stock pickers in its massive warehouses—at last count, it has 30,000 Kiva robots on the ground in 13 "fulfillment centers," twice the number it used just a year ago.

Working three shifts, these robots replace at least 90,000 human beings. Amazon owns the company that produces the Kivas and has plans to employ them in every one of its many more warehouses in the U.S. and Canada.

That's more than 400,000 jobs gone—already—in the warehouses alone. And, of course, all the on-line retailers are attempting to follow Amazon's example.

But Amazon's robots are also replacing the hundreds of thousands of workers in malls and big-box stores, where whole chains are throwing up their hands and closing, having lost out to on-line

shopping.

"Macy's just signaled the end of the American department store as we know it," Business Insider headlined on February 2, as Macy's closed 40 stores. "Store closings are the hottest trend in retail," headlined CNN Money, February 25.

Kohl's has announced it was closing 18 stores in 2016 alone. Sears is closing 50 stores. JC Penney has closed 74 stores in the past two years. In early January, Walmart announced it was closing 154 stores in the U.S. with 10,000 workers affected.

But the chains that are closing outlets are not just big-box stores like Walmart or mall anchors like Macy's.

Last year, Gap closed 25 percent of its stores. In early March of this year, Sports Authority

filed for bankruptcy and began closing its 140 stores. In April, Sport Chalet started going-out-of-business sales at its 47 stores.

It isn't for lack of trying. In recent years, most of these brick-and-mortar retailers have hired more and more part-timers and pressured their workers to sell more and more merchandise—classic wage-cutting and speed-up to compete with new technology. They are failing.

This is what is creating a "new class" of increasingly dispossessed workers. And it is happening very quickly. Economists expect half our existing jobs to be gone within 20 years—and that's conservative. Through family and friends, everybody will be affected.

A new day is dawning. Wake up, America!



Robot stacks boxes.

PHOTO/ATLAS ROBOT IMAGE COURTESY OF BOSTON DYNAMICS

Revolutionary poets: Now is our time!

By Adam Gottlieb

CHICAGO, IL — If you flip through the pages of a *People's Tribune* newspaper, you will find the people's poems—true gems of revolutionary imagination and artistic reporting from the front lines of the class war. You will also find stories from the cultural renaissance that is sweeping the country as a creative expression of the profound changes society is going through.

As the Mission Statement of the San Francisco Revolutionary Poets Brigade says, “poetry has always been and continues to be not only the way the poet listens to his or her innermost being, but a way the spirit of the times, in its most forward-looking incarnation, is expressed and heard.”

Following in the footsteps of the San Francisco Revolutionary Poets Brigade and other cities

around the globe, a few justice-focused poets started a Chicago Revolutionary Poets Brigade in 2014 (#RPBchi). We facilitate our own political education and collective organizing of cultural events and programs to connect artists to the existing movements around State violence, education, water, war, the environment, and other life-or-death issues.

One of our primary focuses is on the education fight that is once again heating up in Chicago. Seeing the possibility of another teacher's strike, we decided to form a project called “ODE: Operation Defend Education.” ODE is an effort to uplift youth voices in the struggle for decent education in Chicago through poetry, writing, and the arts. We are helping to organize spoken word, hip hop, and other forms of artistic expression at rallies, actions, and other events in

defense of public education, with a focus on youth. We are facilitating free writing workshops on education in schools and community groups, and putting together a blog for youth expression in the form of writing, audio, video, or artwork. Check out the blog at projectode.org.

A recent event we put on was around the Flint Water Crisis. It was called “The Last Fish: Water Is A Human Right.” (The title refers to a recent study that estimated that the oceans might be dead by the year 2048.) The program, hosted by RPBchi members Lew Rosenbaum and Eric Allen Yankee, brought together a diverse group of artists and activists to speak on the Flint Water Crisis from different angles. Chicago distributors of the *People's Tribune* produced a poetry insert for Flint for the April (national poetry month) edition. At the



A gathering for the Revolutionary Poet's Brigade Chicago event, “Not The Only One” in solidarity with the World Poetry Movement's call for poets to protest war in 2014.

PHOTO/RPBchi

event, Lew read his poem, “It's Not The Same River” from the insert, which says “No one can make the babies come back/But we can have clean, free water for all/By ending the rule of private property/that protects golf courses and/Preys upon the lives of our people./We are all related.”

Revolutionary poets, now is our time to organize and sharpen our weapon. As Jack Hirschman, co-founder of the original Rev-

olutionary Poets Brigade, has said, “poetry can be the greatest weapon in revolutionary struggle.” And in the words of the great revolutionary poet Roque Dalton: “Poetry, like bread, is for everyone.”

To get involved in the #RPBchi and/or submit to the ODE blog, email revolutionarypoetsbrigadechi@gmail.com

I went to Gregory 10 years of my life
That was 5 years of teachers not getting their rights
Teachers that showed me a different level or altitude
That told me once you in that system
 you screwed my dude
Leave em out to dry like a camel
Don't believe me let me give you an example
On a beautiful hump day teachers went on strike
Came back found out they told Ms. O to take a hike
Now she was my A1, my favorite teacher
Now Imma cleanse your soul like Imma preacher
End of the summer I was walkin down
 the street during the heat
I saw her laid out in front of my feet
It sound like I'm rappin but let me tell
 you what led this to happen
Once she was fired
She was never rehired
So she ain't get no check so she
 couldn't provide for the fam
What the heck
Kids got took, got kicked out now she's here
Take a look
Now tell me what do you see when you lookin at me
Look at what I'm destined to be
Got dreams of NBA that's why I'm in
 school grindin every day
This comin straight from wizzle so give me my education
I'm trynna make it rain not drizzle

— Cantrell, 9th grade

Shorter College: Another underground railroad, Part II

By Raymond L. Smith

LITTLE ROCK, AK — Shorter College was founded in 1886 to offer a glimmer of light and a path out of despair to descendants of former slaves. Leaders of the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church were very much aware of ancient history and the slavery institution in America. Wise and spiritually-guided denomination stewards decided to make a difference. They were profoundly cognitive that education (knowledge) was a component of freedom, independence and prosperity.

From the earliest time of recorded history, mankind has searched for ways to improve themselves and their living conditions. Since the beginning there have been inequities and class distinctions leading to unfair practices which target certain groups.

Human beings of all races and cultures have certain things

in common whether we realize it or not. These are experiences that we encounter although from different perspectives. Oppression, intimidation and discrimination are a few of the conditions that can be mentioned regarding the unjust and offensive predicaments. When we are the victim of seemingly hopeless and life-threatening conditions our souls seek relief. Many individuals in this situation pray to their God for deliverance. Another remedy or antidote to dreadful social injustices is education. Remember—*Knowledge is Power*.

Following the example of Richard Allen who established the African Methodist Episcopal Church in 1787, plans for Bethel University were formulated in 1885 when Bishop T.M.D. Ward was Chairman of the Board.

A struggling Bethel University originally held classes in the basement of Bethel AME Church which was then located at Ninth

and Broadway Streets in Little Rock, Arkansas. Searching for its proper place and identity, the college moved to Arkadelphia, Arkansas in 1888. A few years later, board members changed the name to Shorter University. Bishop James Alexander Shorter, was the organizer of the A.M.E. Church in Arkansas. In May of 1894, the institution was chartered. A year later the university obtained facilities in North Little Rock and both campuses were maintained by the Arkansas AME Conference for several years.

Eventually both campuses were consolidated in North Little Rock and the name was changed to Shorter College. From 1886 until early 1955, the school operated as a four-year college. In May of 1955, it started operating as a two-year institution.

Editor's note: See the July, 2016 edition of the *People's Tribune* for Part I.

Fighting the corporate dictatorship in Benton Harbor, MI

By Rev. Edward Pinkney

MARQUETTE, MI — Terrance “T-Shirt” Shurn is murdered by police in 2003 in Benton Harbor, MI. Then police violently break up a peaceful vigil, creating an uprising. The Army is brought in to patrol the streets. Michigan Gov. Jennifer Granholm forms a taskforce that she says will help residents. She has no intentions of helping residents of this impoverished former industrial city. This is the beginning of the takeover by the corporations, the merger of Whirlpool and the city of Benton Harbor government—which is known as fascism.

In 2004, led by Whirlpool backed Commissioner Glen Yarbrough, beachfront city property is given away for a proposed Jack Nicholas Signature Golf Course. In 2005, the citizens get enough votes to recall Yarbrough, but the judge sets aside the election to keep Yarbrough’s seat. I am falsely charged with voter fraud. The trial ends in a hung jury. A new trial with an all white jury convicts me. I am placed on probation and then sent to prison on a probation violation for quoting the Bible. After nearly a year of incarceration, the court of appeals orders my release.

In 2008-10, Gov. Granholm

brings in an unelected Financial Manager under Public Act 72 to run Benton Harbor. The residents take control of the city commission away from Whirlpool. Young Black men in Benton Harbor are increasingly found dead under questionable circumstances. Sheriff Paul Bailey says there is no foul play. This continues.

In 2011, Whirlpool’s puppet James Hightower becomes mayor. Gov. Rick Snyder puts Public Act 4 in place to change Emergency Financial Managers to Emergency Managers, giving them absolute power over all aspects of government. The Emergency Manager continues to give away public land to Whirlpool.

In 2012, Michigan citizens vote to repeal Public Act 4. Then Gov. Snyder signs into law Public Act 436. It is almost identical to the original law, but stronger against the residents. In 2013, a recall of the corrupt mayor James Hightower begins. The petitions are turned in with the required number of signatures. Sheriff Bailey investigates the petitions at the request of the mayor, prosecutor and judge who stop the recall election. The sheriff’s department begins intimidating residents who signed the petitions.



Free Rev. Pinkney billboard in Benton Harbor, MI.

PHOTO/MARY KAY YARAK

In 2014, swat teams surround my home. I am charged with voter fraud, five felonies, with no direct or indirect evidence. I am convicted by an all white jury that is motivated by something other than the truth, and jailed. We must confront corporate power, this racist system, and fight together.

Donate to the Pinkney defense at bhbanco.org/

Condolences to the families of Joe Zangaro and Ron Kienzle

By Rev. Edward Pinkney

MARQUETTE, MI — I want to express my condolences to the families of Joe Zangaro and Ron Kienzle. These were good men who, while serving as bailiffs in the Berrien County Courthouse, were mercilessly gunned down. Joe and Ron were great guys and were supportive of me. I will never forget their goodness. They were both in their early sixties—too young to be taken from their families and friends. I pray that God will give them strength and solace in this time of tragedy.

We can turn the tide on corporations making people homeless

By Joseph Peery

CHICAGO, IL — According to the latest analysis done yearly by the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless, there are an estimated 125,848 homeless people living in the city of Chicago. This statistic has been steadily going up each year since the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless began doing the analysis about four years ago. Over that same approximate period of time, the Chicago Housing Authority emptied out a majority of the Cabrini Green row houses with the false promise that they would renovate and move families back in.

Windows were improperly boarded up and glass was removed, allowing snow and rain to seep in and cause water damage, mold infestation and blight. Many residents say this was done purposely in order to avoid renovation and force demolition followed by the construction of mixed income housing.

This translates into more contracts for private corporations and little to no housing for the poor who are ending up homeless. Residents took the CHA to court in September of last year. The settlement states that 40% of the mixed-income units that the CHA intends to construct on the site must be for public housing. Let’s not forget that the CHA has broken almost all its agreements with residents in the past as well as court orders from judges and has not been punished.

To add insult to injury, it was reported as far back as September, 2011 in the Chicago Reporter that HUD has been paying public housing agencies as if the large number of vacant apartments they manage are occupied. Vacant apartments do not require maintenance in the same way occupied apartments do. This provides a minimum amount of effort and maximum profit for whoever is managing those empty apartments.

All public housing in the city of Chicago is now managed by private corporations. This is precisely what HUD intended to happen. Sean Donovan, who was the head of HUD in 2010, told public housing resident leadership from New York, Chicago and New Orleans that he intended to save public housing by making it private.

This privatization of public housing is not only causing homelessness but is profiting by it. So, homeless bodies pile up each winter unable to survive the cold winter nights while life-saving apartments remain empty lining corporate pockets with millions. Government responsibility for it’s citizens well-being, or lack thereof, is a battleground that the corporations have been winning. We can turn the tide if we, the oppressed and exploited of this land, take advantage of our large numbers and enter that battle fighting in our own interests.

Voices of Benton Harbor

I had to leave Benton Harbor for injustice to single women with children. Water bills went up. The more I paid, the more they cut the water off. Rev. Pinkney helped me with college students who were driving someone else’s vehicle that had a rearview mirror missing. They were pulled over and taken to jail. Rev. Pinkney was inside City Hall giving instructions of what to do.

— Jenise Blue

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