

PEOPLE'S TRIBUNE

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West Coast Marchers say homelessness ends with a home.

PHOTO/SANDY PERRY

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GROWING HOMELESSNESS SHOWS NEED FOR A NEW SOCIETY

AMERICAN JOBS AND THE NEW DIGITAL ECONOMY

EDITORIAL

The new digital-based corporations of today are impoverishing the peoples of the earth. They are running rampant through every corner of the economy, stealing the created wealth of society to enrich the few. The biggest thieves amongst them are the corporations in the United States.

Today, the gap between the richest one percent and the bottom 99 percent of the US population has grown to a record high. The economic top one percent of the population now owns 70 percent of all financial assets. The new digitalized economy is ripping through society with accelerated speed. And the capitalist class is guiding the process, extracting untold wealth out of the destruction they are creating. The old industrial economy is being replaced by the new electronic economy and only because the corporations – and not the people – control this new digitalized productive power, society as we know it is being destroyed in its wake.

The jobs from the past industrial era, which continue to be eliminated, are gone forever. Once replaced by digitalized production, the mechanical forms of industrial organization are gone, just as the jobs of the local telephone operator, milkman, blacksmith, plowman and muleskinner were eliminated and replaced during centuries of human progress before.

According to the most recent Gallup poll, real unemployment in the US is now 19.9 percent – 30 million people – when those with no job are counted along with those seeking full-time work who can only find work at low-paying part-time and temporary jobs. Beginning in the 1970's, the Department of Labor simply stopped counting these underemployed workers in the “official” unemployment totals.

The real wages of the constantly diminishing number of employed workers

continue to fall and full-time jobs continue to be eliminated on a mass scale. New digital technology is rapidly replacing workers around the globe.

These human-made advancements are not the underlying and fundamental cause of the pain and suffering of hundreds of millions of workers worldwide. Human progress is a magnificent thing to behold. The abundance produced by this advanced technology needs to be distributed on the basis of need. The capitalist economy – the private ownership of all social production – is the problem. It stands as the sole obstacle in advancing the interests of human life and progress, in this new age of electronic production.

This current crisis is not just another cyclical economic crisis of capitalist overproduction. This is the beginning stage of a general economic crisis – a systemic crisis of capitalism itself. Robots do not consume, and unemployed workers do not consume either, in a society whose economy requires money to exchange (buy and sell) in the marketplace.

In just two years, millions of people in the US have lost their jobs and homes. Millions more have fallen into poverty. A majority of those who put money away for retirement or who saved for their children's education lost virtually everything. Globally, tens of millions lost their jobs – 20 million in China alone – and



tens of millions more fell into poverty.

The “safety net” is fraying and the social fabric of US society is being torn apart. The human pain, the human suffering and the human torment is real. The American people are confused and angry. Populist hatred, racial prejudices and immigrant bashing are on the rise. Meanwhile, the corporations continue enriching themselves at our expense, as they loot the public treasury of the revenue needed to increase spending on human needs.

Either the future will belong to us or it will belong to the corporations. If we don't take over the corporations to construct society to guarantee human needs are met, be certain the corporations will take over us. Be further certain they will construct a society that has no regard for human needs. To take a step toward society taking over the corporations, we should start by nationalizing certain industries, such as the banks, in the interest of the people. Then we can use the resources of those industries to begin guaranteeing the basic needs of the people are met.

PEOPLE'S TRIBUNE

The People's Tribune is devoted to the proposition that an economic system that can't or won't feed, clothe and house its people ought to be and will be changed. To that end, this paper is a tribune of the people. It is the voice of millions struggling for survival. It strives to educate politically those millions on the basis of their own experience. It is a tribune to bring them together, to create a vision of a better world, and a strategy to achieve it.

We find ourselves at a historic moment as labor-replacing technology leads us on a path toward the decisive reconstruction of society. Who will win – the capitalists or the growing mass of poor – will depend on winning the hearts and minds of the people to create a society whose fruits benefit all.

We offer our pages as a vehicle for the new ideas rooted in our reality, and to be the voice of those who seek to raise the consciousness of society. Let us gather our collective experience, intelligence and commitment to bring forth a vision that changes America into a society “by the people, of the people, for the people.”

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

Deadlines for articles and art: The deadline for articles, photographs and other art is the first of each month for the issue that comes out at the beginning of the following month. For example, the deadline for the June issue is May 1. Articles should be as short as possible, and no longer than 600 words. We reserve the right to edit articles to conform to space limitations.

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Why Revolutionaries Need A Press

From the Editors

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

Visit us on the web at www.peopletribune.org

Growing Homelessness Shows Need for a New Society

COVER STORY

Every day we are getting frightening reports about the growth of poverty in America. The powers that be wouldn't be paying much attention to this question if it were restricted to that part of the population that has always carried the burden of poverty. All of a sudden we are seeing an explosion of poverty in the areas that up to now have been relatively secure. There is political danger in the growing feeling that everybody except the very rich could be cast into poverty with the next stumble in the economy.

Homelessness – not having a place to lay your head – is the major aspect of poverty today. The fastest growing section of homelessness is single parents and their children. People are beginning to raise the question, "What is wrong with a society that cannot provide the fundamentals – food, clothing, and shelter?" And what is the meaning of these new sectors of society being hit that have not been hit before? What is going on?

Two things are underway in the economy today: One is that there is a cyclical crisis of overproduction. Under capitalism cyclical crises occur every 10 years or so. Warehouses pile up with unsold commodities; retailers start cutting orders. This compels manufacturers to cut back on production, which means



People march against homelessness in San Francisco in January, 2010.

PHOTO/SANDY PERRY

laying off workers. This cycle continues until the surplus is eaten up or destroyed. Slowly the wheel begins to turn again. That is one aspect of what is going on today. But everybody knows that there is something more to today's crisis.

While the cyclical crisis is resolvable, the "something more," the other aspect of the crisis, is irreconcilable. It comes about as a result of fundamental changes in the way things are produced. Today, more and more is being produced with less and less labor power because of electronics. When commodities, including labor power, are sold and bought with money, the producer consumes and the consumer produces. But if you have a productive process that goes on with-

out purchasing labor power, then distribution has to change to conform to the production process. Distribution must be carried on without money. That hasn't happened. An irreconcilable contradiction develops that necessarily results in a vast array of unsold commodities.

We have two crises operating – one inside of the other. One is a cyclical crisis and the other is a crisis between the way we make and the way we distribute things. Since the new producers do not consume there is a growing glut of food shelter and clothing, while more and more consumers who no longer produce are denied access to food, shelter and clothing. The worst expression of this crisis is the denial of hous-

ing. We have a society of 300 million people and officially there are 3 million homeless. Add the couch people, children moving back in with parents, parents moving in with children, people temporarily staying with relatives, and you're talking about 14 million people.

Since we can't make the new economy fit into the old society, we must visualize a new society that fits the new economy. We can't just demand revolution. Revolution comes about as a fight for reform and not the other way around. As this irresolvable crisis intensifies, it is imperative that the revolutionaries make this vision of a new society a part of the fight for the necessities of life.

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Demand single payer health care, says doctor

By Joe Peery

Editor's note: Below are excerpts from an interview with Dr. Claudia Fegan, a former president and current spokesperson for PNHP (Physicians for a National Health Plan).

The interview is the fourth of five that will appear in the People's Tribune conducted at an event in support of the "Mad as Hell Doctors" while on their Chicago stop of a nationwide tour several months ago to promote single payer universal health care.

enrollees, not the uninsured. In 3200 they give subsidies to the insurance companies, the employers and the uninsured. Public option was supposed to be able to enroll all non-elderly. In other words, everybody not enrolled in Medicare should be able to enroll in public option. HR 3200 allows only those people who are currently uninsured. And the fifth thing, which is the only thing they have in HR 3200, was to require that private insurance companies would have to offer the same number of benefits as the public option so they could compete.



People's Tribune: What should we do after the "Mad As Hell Doctors" leave?

Claudia Fegan: I was in Washington, D.C., yesterday [last September – ed.] with the Congressional Black Caucus and the Leadership Conference, and what it looks like is everyone saying, "Yeah, yeah we're in favor of single payer, but we're gonna take public option as the first step toward single payer," and we need people to understand that public option is not going to get us to single payer. Public option would also frustrate a lot of people, and then it will be another 10 years before we can talk about single payer again.

The Lewin Group did an analysis about whether public option would save money, and said there were five criteria that would have to be met in order for it to work, and one would be pre-enrollment. It's just like Medicare. When Medicare went into effect, everybody over 65 was automatically pre-enrolled. The public option in HR 3200 does not have automatic pre-enrollment. So as a result you have to spend money signing people up for the program. Two, they had to be allowed to reimburse at Medicare's rates, and currently Medicare pays anywhere between 17% and 23% less than the private insurance industry. The public option as in HR 3200 does not guarantee Medicare rates. It allows them to negotiate for rates 5% to 10% above Medicare, automatically increasing your overhead. The public option was supposed to give subsidies only to the

So with only one of those five criteria being met, you're talking about a shadow of its former self. We're talking about a public option that would enroll only 10 million people, where as it was originally conceived, it would enroll between 130 and 150 million. So if you had the best case scenario for the public option, it would save us \$130 to \$137 million. If we went to a single payer system it would save us \$400 billion.

We need people to contact their legislator and say we have elected you to represent us, stop representing big pharma and the insurance industry.

PT: Can you talk more about the profit motive?

CF: The big problem in terms of profits is that the insurance companies, especially those who are trading on the New York Stock Exchange, have a fiduciary responsibility to make as much money as they can, and they profit by not giving care. They consider every time they deliver services for health care to be a financial loss for them. The more premium dollars they get to keep, the more profitable they are. So insurance adds nothing to the value of health care. So why do we insert them between the provider of health care and the patient of health care? There's no value there.

Veterans Need Their Benefits and Government Needs to Help Them

By Lenette Evans

Here in America about one third of the adult homeless population have served their country in the Armed Services. Our current population estimates that about 131,000 veterans (male and female) are homeless on any given night and perhaps twice as many experience homelessness at some point in their life during the course of a year.

Many other veterans are considered homeless or at risk because of their property, lack of support from family and friends and dismal living conditions in cheap hotels or in overcrowded or substandard housing.

Although many homeless veterans served in combat in Vietnam and suffer from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD,) at this time, epidemic logic studies do not suggest that there is a causal connection between military service, service in Vietnam, or exposure to combat and homelessness among veterans. According to the military, family background, access to support from family and friends, and various personal characteristics (rather than military service) seem to be the stronger indicators of risk of homelessness.

Almost ALL homeless veterans are male and three percent are women. The vast majority are single, and most come from poor, disadvantaged backgrounds, homeless veterans tend to be older and more educated than homeless non-veterans. But similar to the general population of homeless, veterans suffer from mental illness and 70% suffer from alcohol and drug addiction abuse problems.

Regardless of their circumstances and disabilities, our government needs to get off its rear end and stop talking about things they are going to do for the people in this country and start putting it into action and start helping the veterans who are desperately in need of help and to give them the benefits that they rightfully deserve.

It's really sad when a veteran has served his country well and especially in combat and then gets his arm or legs amputated and then finds out he cannot get any of his veteran benefits to help him with medical care, money for food and compensation to help pay for just basic needs and going to college to get educated.

Our government is robbing the veterans of their benefits while politicians sit in a glass house, drive around in BMW's and have anything they want while we have so many who are suffering and in pain that are in great need and veterans who are homeless because they cannot get any help.

This should not be about the rich get richer and the poor getting poorer. It's about our government doing something for its veterans and being accountable in helping them with their benefits they deserve for serving and going to war for our freedom!



PHOTO /
BRETT JELINEK

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The year 2010 promises to be a crucial year. The changing economy is bringing about greater poverty and despair, and, along with it, many new leaders who seek a vision of a new America. The People's Tribune disseminates that vision and a strategy for achieving it to the leaders who are stepping forward. We need to get the People's Tribune into their hands. One important step in this direction is to maintain and expand our web presence. Please contact us if you have the skills and can work with the People's Tribune on this important effort. We don't have money to pay. But you will be part of making history! Call us at 800-691-6888 or email info@peoplestribune.org.

— The PT Editorial Board

Milwaukee Public Schools – Race to Nowhere Part II: The Enemy Strikes Back!

By Todd Price

In the February edition of the People's Tribune, I reported on the successful setback to the forces of privatization of education and disenfranchisement of the citizen voter. I described the scenario: a literal soap opera, where the Democrat Party and its officials have switched sides on the struggle to save public education. Literally, on the one hand is the lame duck, Governor Jim Doyle. Doyle as Wisconsin's Attorney General several years past, had fought vouchers, the Milwaukee Parental Choice Plan to be specific, in court and largely won, only to turn around and raise the caps on these public, taxpayer-sponsored private schools and Charter schools to boot, as Governor.

On the other hand, there is the enigmatic State Representative Annette "Polly" Williams, who was for many years the literal darling of the free market loving, public education hating crowd. Williams was the key figure advancing the "School Choice" vouchers

program in Milwaukee . . . and beyond, but now has largely disavowed herself from that history, opting to oppose Governor and Mayor who sought to take over the Milwaukee Public School District with a hostile and unpopular Mayoral Takeover.

So one needs to keep a scorecard, what with the Democrats shifting principles and loyalties like free agents switching teams in professional baseball. Governor Doyle gives the green light for Mayoral Takeover after meeting with U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan and then opts to pull out of the Governor's race entirely. The Mayor of Milwaukee, Tom Barrett opts for Mayoral Takeover, only to affirm (not in so many words of course) that any such takeover would likely happen on someone else's watch as he aims to be . . . the new governor!

But there is more.

Despite the Governor and Mayor's efforts in securing the needed legislation for Mayoral Takeover, and despite the lobbying by a hedge fund-sponsored,

Charter school advocate-organization, Education Reform Now, members of the Democratic Party, just like those taking up the proposed health care bill(s), are split from the beginning. Mayoral takeover is thus dead for now.

But the attack on public education, and the attack on Milwaukee Public Schools continues in the form of a threat from the highest education office in the state.

Since the defeat of the Mayoral Takeover initiative, the Superintendent of the Department of Public Instruction has issued a statement threatening to withhold funding from the Milwaukee Public School District in order to force compliance to the No Child Left Behind Law.

In response, the city Superintendent fired back that "you do not specifically say why you have made the decision, nor do you state what it is that Milwaukee Public Schools should be doing differently to comply with its DIFI (District Identified for Improvement) plan. . ."

Furthermore, the City Superinten-

dent, William G. Andrekopoulos, argues that the district is indeed meeting the goals. The Milwaukee School Board of Directors have also insisted that they have followed the letter of the law, and that the Department of Public Instruction has already acknowledged as such.

Given that the Governor and Mayor failed to get the desired Mayoral Takeover legislation even to the floor of the House and Senate (read: they didn't have the votes), the victory of the community, the Coalition to Stop MPS Takeover, and the MPS school board against the Mayoral Takeover bid seems short lived.

A hearing and protest of the latest attack on the Milwaukee Public School District looms. But the game is the same; the Democrats as well as the Republicans take their marching orders from Wall Street. A rallying cry for many remains relevant to today's corporate, privatizing, real politic: "Public education under attack, what do we do? Act up! Fight back!"

Chicago Parents, Teachers and Students Wage A Fight For Education As A Right

By Lew Rosenbaum

When Jitu Brown of the Kenwood Oakland Community Organization (KOCO) called the education summit to order on that frigid January 9 morning, the crowd at Malcolm X college responded with these demands: stop privatizing Chicago public schools; education is a right, not a privilege! More than 400 teachers, students, parents and other community activists greeted the opening panel with encouragement and enthusiasm. Also at this meeting, the Caucus Of Rank-and-file Educators (CORE) introduced their slate of candidates running for office in the Chicago Teachers Union. CORE has been at the center of the teachers' battle to prevent school closings, to fight discriminatory firing of minority teachers, and to stop the extension of charter schools into the CPS. Other organizations, part of the Grassroots Education Movement (GEM), gave concrete examples of the ways in which communities and teachers are fighting to overturn CPS efforts to dismantle Chicago public education. Last year CORE and Peabody School parents, with other GEM member organizations, stopped the CPS from closing their school. This fall, Altgeld Gardens parents have organized to open a school in their neighborhood, to guarantee children a safe place to be educated, in a quality school. And in perhaps the most spirited and pointed comments, the Chicago Youth Initiating Change spokesperson spoke to the audience about how



Protest of Chicago school closures.

PHOTO/SOUTHWEST YOUTH COLLABORATIVE

students themselves were involved in creating their own curriculum.

Five breakout sessions followed the opening meeting. Participants discussed strategies to deal with the high stakes testing program; how to build a fighting teachers' union; how to increase student voice in education; how to oppose school closures with positive plans; and how to strengthen and empower elected Local School Councils.

The Board of Education and the Chicago Teachers Union have recognized that the organizations in GEM threaten their control. Last year the CTU president came to the summit meeting. This year she did not even make an appearance. More significantly, the school board was scheduled on Jan. 8 to release this year's list of school closures. In-

stead, perhaps to prevent a coordinated response, they delayed the release until after the summit. Eleven days later, on January 20, the *Chicago Tribune* reported, "Chicago Public Schools will close, consolidate or overhaul 14 schools this year because of low achievement, underenrollment or outdated facilities." This Chicago model for school destruction is the prototype for the national education plan.

Since January 9, the school board has refused Altgeld parents' demands for a safe, quality neighborhood school. Parents are going ahead, therefore, with a plan to develop a "freedom school." CPS granted a charter school the right to open a school in Altgeld next September, but the parents want a public school there and rejected CPS offers of interim

transfers to schools that will not offer their children safety or a quality education.

Privatization in education and whites moving to the suburbs have transformed CPS: more than 90 percent of students are African American and Latino. Busing now moves children from one underfunded, inadequate school to another. Also, parents are beginning to question the basis on which education is evaluated. They are seeing how "high stakes" testing limits their children's success. "Teaching is a privilege and learning is a right," Karen Lewis, CORE's candidate for CTU president, said at the education summit, "and these guys [Mayor Daley and the Chicago Board of Education that he controls] are taking away our privileges and our rights." (*Substance*, Jan. 11).

Since Jan. 9, the school board has held hearings on the schools scheduled to be closed. In those hearings CORE and other organizations in GEM have taken the lead in the battle to stop the closings. Financial crises provide excuses to cut back education, but government bailouts and corporate bonuses show we have the resources to build top-notch schools or provide first rate education everywhere. Ending school closings is a battle for the privilege to teach and the right to learn in a world-class school in each neighborhood.

Editor's note: See next month's issue of the People's Tribune for more on the struggle around the Chicago Public Schools.

"MARCH TO FULFILL THE DREAM" WILL UNITE NORTH AND SOUTH TO CLAIM THE RIGHTS TO HEALTH AND HOUSING

By Mary Bricker-Jenkins

In mid-January, representatives from several grass-roots groups met in New Orleans to plan the next steps in the March to Fulfill the Dream. Set to begin on April 4th, the anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King's assassination, the march and caravans will travel from the Mississippi Delta to Detroit, mobilizing people all along the route to unite in the fight to claim their rights to the basic necessities of life. The march will end in Detroit on June 22nd, the opening day of the 2010 US Social Forum, where tens of thousands will converge under the banner, "Another World Is Possible; Another US is Necessary!"

The route links the Gulf Coast, where "Katrina Recovery" has meant primarily the appropriation of funds and land to benefit investors and the abandonment of the poor; Mississippi, where memories of the collective actions inspired by MLK's call for the Poor People's Campaign continue to inspire; Appalachia, where undocumented workers, recruited aggressively for factory work only a few years ago, are now scattered through the hills, hiding from ICE, desperate to keep their families together; Tennessee "boom towns," where huge increases in unemployment, homelessness, and denial of health care among the new poor starkly contrast with the still-lavish lifestyles of the new rich; Kentucky, epicenter of the fight to resist the removal of children

from their families; and finally Ohio, symbol and reality of the transformation from the USA's Manufacturing Belt to its Rust Belt, where hundreds of thousands of workers have lost their homes and their jobs forever and now struggle in the face of privatization to maintain even their access to water. Standing together in the toxic fallout of global capital's pursuit of cheap labor, buffeted by the US government's complicity in casting them off, thousands of people from these different regions—people who have seldom if ever been united in common cause—are preparing to march together to claim the economic human rights for all that the Electronic Age makes possible and necessary.

Marchers will spotlight two of the most pressing issues: health care and housing. Marchers will continue to press for the only solution that makes sense: universal, single-payer health care.

On the housing front, millions have already lost their homes to foreclosure. Many families, unable to find affordable rentals, are already swelling the ranks of the homeless. Marchers will call for "Zero Foreclosures/Zero Evictions!"

Organizers and endorsers of the March are aware that the world has changed since MLK called for the 1968 Poor People's Campaign. Those changes have meant devastation for millions in the USA and, inevitably, for billions around the world. But the changes also inspire hope. The millions of workers

"Power to the poor people, power to the folks!"

By John Slaughter

The Georgia State Capitol is being inundated every day by growing numbers of people and groups demanding that something be done. Teachers, bus drivers, cafeteria workers and other educational support personnel come demanding the end of furloughs and the slashing of jobs, wages and funding for education. Health care workers and advocates come demanding an end to the cuts that literally are killing people. The homeless and the foreclosed upon come to demand that something be done to

provide homes for those that are being shut out. And all are demanding jobs that pay living wages so that they may be liberated from the shackles of poverty that grip so many.

At a public hearing held on February 11 under the gold dome on jobs or income, people came from across Georgia to tell their stories. A young woman from Americus told of having to live on the streets with her two children. She wants to work and provide for her family. There are no jobs. I just want to work, she says. A homeless man tells of how most of the homeless are the working



Hundreds come from across the state of Georgia to caravan and rally for a public hearing on 'Jobs or Income Now' at the state capitol on February 11.

PHOTO/JOHN SLAUGHTER



who are no longer needed in the age of electronically-based production are increasingly aware of the nature of their plight and their collective power to demand that the basic necessities of life, so readily produced today, be made available to all. They may not all agree on what to call a new system, but they would agree with MLK's 1965 statement to the Negro American Labor Council that, whatever you call it, "there must be a better distribution of wealth within this country for all God's children."

The March to Fulfill the Dream began as a project of the Poor People's

Economic Human Rights Campaign (PPEHRC) and is now a key part of the program of the USSF Poverty Working Group. Its growing list of organizational endorsers includes Healthcare Now! (www.healthcare-now.org) For further information about the march, see www.economichumanrights.org. For further information about the US Social Forum, see www.ussf2010.org.

Next month: The International Community Joins the "March to Fulfill the Dream."

poor, who don't earn enough in wages to afford to pay the rent for a place to stay. Women on TANF, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, tell of having to try to survive with their children on \$280 a month, with no childcare or transportation assistance. They must work a forty-hour week, which translates to \$1.75 an hour! Meanwhile the state legislature and the governor move to eliminate 100 food stamp case workers. It seems that the state exists to block people receiving what they need, rather than providing for the needs of the people. Next month the entire public transportation system of metro Clayton County will shut down, depriving two million riders in need of transportation, unless something is done.

Millions of dollars are available from the federal government for more help for TANF recipients, for jobs to renovate affordable housing, for funding for health care, to keep public workers in their jobs, and to construct mass transit for the people, yet the state and local governments in Georgia continue to block access to these funds. Billions are slashed in tax breaks for the corporations and the rich, while the burden is shifted to the backs of the poor.

Ex-offenders also told of how the laws block their being able to get a job because of their records. We heard of the practice of the courts turning over the collection of routine traffic fines to private probation companies that increase a \$200 fine to \$800, shackling the poor in a debt cycle from which there is no relief.

The public hearing was conducted on behalf of the Poor People's Up & Out of Poverty Campaign. As their caravan wound its way through some of Atlanta's poorest neighborhoods on the way to the capitol, the slogan that was shouted loudest and most often was "Power to the Poor People." The Poor People's Campaign has been coming to the Georgia state capitol for 30 years, but this year there was a growing recognition of what Martin Luther King understood when he formed the first Poor People's campaign, that the question of poverty is really a political question. It is a question of power. So poor people in Georgia came this year not just to speak truth to power but to make their demands known loud and clear to the state: we must have living wage jobs, healthcare, education and housing now.

Cabrini Green Evictions Continue

By Joseph Peery

It's 2:00 Thursday February 25, 2010 at Chicago's Daley Center 13th floor housing court. The head of a family stands before a judge and an attorney representing HJ Russell & Company, who now manages units in Cabrini Green for the CHA (Chicago Housing Authority). The tenant stands alone, without legal representation, and she asks for a continuance.

The corporate lawyer, with all the confidence of someone who has authority over the courtroom says, "If you agree to move out today..." and then her voice lowers to an inaudible level. The woman refuses the offer and after a new court date is set, leaves the courtroom

in tears.

When asked what happened, she conveys the following story. "One day while I was at work, someone came to my home to visit and the police rushed in and arrested her for possession of drugs. When that person went to court, she was given a choice of one year probation if she pled guilty, or time in jail if she lost the case after fighting it. So she pled guilty. Now they are using that as part of the 'One Strike' policy, to put me out. I didn't do anything wrong and can't find a lawyer."

"When I got here, the lawyer had lots of files and called out people's names. When she called my name, I went with her into a room and she asked me what happened. I told her and when I asked

her for help, she said she couldn't advise me because she worked for HJ Russell. When we went before the judge, she said if I moved out today I wouldn't have to pay back rent owed. When I asked the judge if this would still be considered an eviction, he turned to her and asked her, and she said she didn't know."

That afternoon, as many as a dozen families went before the court. Most did not have a lawyer present to advise them. Most were pressured to move out that day. And all were from Cabrini Green, with many telling a similar story.

Facing evictions is scary. It's so scary that while people were eager to tell their story, no one who was spoken to wanted their name mentioned in this article. However, it's even more terri-

fying to face eviction and homelessness without putting up a fight.

For the past few months, residents have been trying to organize themselves with strategy sessions and town hall meetings. They plan to form classes where residents can learn their rights. But just as their rights were taken away in the court room, they have been denied space to hold meetings and prevented from passing out flyers door to door in buildings, in clear violation of HUD guidelines and previous agreements.

As residents pull themselves together, sometimes moving forward and other times being pushed back, only time will tell whether they can stop the tidal wave of evictions roaring through their community or merely slow it down.

Chicago: Cabrini is Changing

By Doreen Ambrose

On a brisk Saturday afternoon I set out with photographers Ryan Flynn and Melissa Hayes to document the demolition, or as some would say who see the glass as being half full instead of being half empty, we set out to preserve memories of Cabrini Green. As a former resident of Cabrini Green I needed to see Cabrini Green one more time before its name is changed.

The building my family lived in for 13 years of my life, which is 365 W. Oak, a seven-story red brick building with security inside, is one of the last buildings that is still standing. The other one that is standing is directly across from it is 354 W. Oak. Our first subject was 1230 Burling because I have relatives who live in the building. As we made our first stop into 1230 Burling, which is one of the "white" projects left

standing, we were greeted by guards and plain clothes police who informed us there had been a shooting and stabbing the night before. They told us that the 10th floor was on lock down and that we could not go up there. Nevertheless, undaunted the three of us were on a mission and nothing could stop us, plus our destination was on the 7th floor. We submitted our ID and gained entry into the building.

In bone chilling temperatures on our way up we met a man who shared with us his memories of days gone by in Cabrini. Ryan's face was beet red as he listened intently to the man's life story. Melissa's hands shivered as she tried desperately to hold her camera steady and capture the moment. Afterwords we entered the welcoming and the warmth of my cousin Roberta Rendles apartment. Ryan, who is a resident of the newly built homes in the Cabrini and

has lived in the area since the late 90's, recognized some of my family members who also live in the new housing a few doors down from him. My cousin Jame-setta Dixon remembered him from the block party the year before.

As we reminisced and the camera lights flashed and everyone was laughing and smiling, I must admit that I was sad inside after seeing so much of Cabrini gone. Yes, I knew that it was coming but to see it up close is something else. No one will ever understand the way I feel. 365 W. Oak is the address that is written on my original birth certificate. Cabrini was there for me when I fell in love with poetry. Though I love my memories I am honest about them and I don't sugar coat them. I remember the day in 1982 when I went to my mother and told her I wish we could move because something inside me had broke. Two classmates were killed in previous years and I felt gloomy. My mother looked at me and said, "we are going to move soon." Sometimes when I think about the casualties of Cabrini like Derrick Savage, Glenn Hairston, Dantrell Davis and Curtis Cooper, I say good riddance Cabrini. But when I think about my mother holding my hand every morning and taking me to St. Mathews preschool, I say, thank God Cabrini. So I guess you can say that I have dueling memories.

But one thing's for sure, if there are a thousand more Ryan's and Melissa's inhabiting the neighborhood then I will continue to say thank God. To view the photos that were taken by Melissa Hayes please visit her site at <http://melissahayesphoto.blogspot.com/2010/01/cabrini-green.html>. To view Ryan Flynn's website where I am a frequent guest please visit [cabrinigreen.webs.com](http://www.cabrinigreen.webs.com) see ya in the hood! Visit <http://www.cabrinigreen.webs.com> see ya in da hood!



Families cope as they face the possibility of 1230 N. Burling being demolished.

PHOTO/MELISSA HAYES

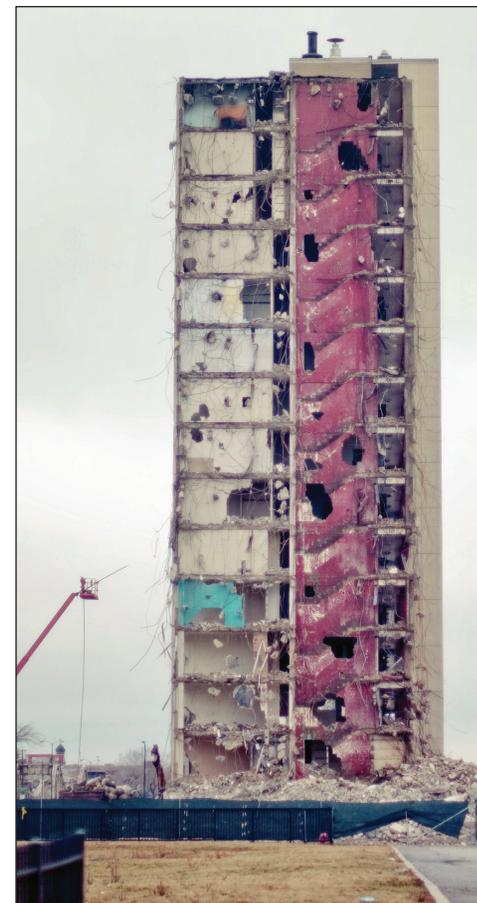


Photo of 660 W. Division before being completely demolished.

PHOTO/MELISSA HAYES



Oakland rapper DLabrie connects w Minister of Information for Prisoners of Consciousness Committee (P.O.C.C)/Journalist for S.F. Bayview/voice of Block Report Radio, "JR", after a relief trip to Haiti and year long battle in Oakland courts based on false charges.

By DLabrie

DLabrie: Charges were dropped in your trial in Oakland? Tell us about that.

JR: Charges were dismissed due to lack of evidence. I was charged with felony arson, while I was reporting on the Oakland Rebellions, January 7, 2009. I have been organizing against police terrorism in Oakland and around the country with P.O.C.C for years. We believe the police were paying me back years of community service.



JR in Downtown Port-Au-Prince.

DL: Tell us about your recent trip to Haiti.

JR: P.O.C.C, Haiti Emergency Relief Fund (H.E.R.F)/SF BayView combined to send a medical and media delegation to Haiti, a few weeks ago Ankh Marketing and MosDef. We saw people starving/thirsting to death, children malnourished, people living in tent cities, crushed buildings. We smelled remains of dead people in rubble. Armies from (U.S, Italy, Brazil, Canada, France) patrolling streets, not giving out food, water, shelter, but trying to intimidate people. For the most part the people's donated money is not getting to the people on the ground. It might be going to bank accounts of non-profit executives. I didn't see Wyclef, Obama's troops, Clinton/Bush aid. All of that fundraising seems to be for the cameras. Our medical crew provided free healthcare in 2 clinics to over a hundred Haitians, in Delmas and Cite Soleil districts of Port-Au-Prince. We helped H.E.R.F pass out water.

DL: You've been working with Haiti for awhile. Talk about Haiti pre and post quake.

JR: Haiti is one of the poorest coun-

tries in the world. First time I went was 2003, with Haiti Action Committee, 6 months before the US/France/Canada backed a coup that overthrew democratically elected President Aristide. I saw extreme poverty, chattel slavery and people who had to choose whether to feed or cloth their children, naked children played outside. It was a desperate situation then, but at least people had shelter. Everybody now is being forced, by the Haitian government to live outside in mud. There are a few paved roads in Port-Au-Prince and in the rest of the country. Government is using force to keep people outside because "they're scared of people being killed in an after-shock." People believe it is because they are trying to make people move so the land can be taken and used by foreign, corporate entities, to build a "new Haiti".

DL: Is the Media covering the Haiti tragedy properly?

JR: Media is talking about looting and the need for security. We didn't experience that. People in desperate situations were sharing and had common courtesy. Media coverage in the U.S/International news is aimed at justifying why the aid that Haiti deserves is not reaching people. "No one can work in an unsafe environment" is what media is trying to make people of the world think. We've seen this before; Hurricane America (Katrina) was only 5 years ago. It's NewOrleans/Mississippi again, neglecting and criminalizing victims. Venezuela's President HugoChavez said the earthquake was the result of a U.S. government weather weapon. Russian news has reported the same thing. This has not been reported in the U.S.

DL: What could have been done to prevent the death count?

JR: U.S/ France should give Haiti its 20 billion dollars that it was forced to give France, after the Haitians beat the French for independence. Enslaved Africans were forced by the U.S. to pay France for lost property — if Haiti wanted to be recognized by the international community. In 2003, Aristide put out a call, before being overthrown, for that money to be returned, and put into infrastructure/agricultural/economic/environmental/educational develop-

ment. This is one thing that could have been done.

DL: What do you suggest everyday people/artists/activists do to help?

JR: Give money/support to organizations on the ground, that are doing real work, like the H.E.R.F. Go to see for themselves, the conditions. Haiti needs professional people to donate time/expertise to building a Haiti, that serves the masses of everyday Haitians.

DL: What do you see as the future of Haiti?

JR: It's what Haitians and their allies make it. Haitian Independence from French slavery is a source of pride to Africans all over the globe for the last two centuries. Haitians helped Simon Bolivar in his quest to unite so-called Latin America against foreign invaders. The oppressed of the world owe Haiti, now its time to pay up. P.O.C.C is organizing another delegation to go back to Haiti as we speak, before summer.



JR with supporters after being acquitted.

PHOTO/SIRAJ FOWLER

Part II of Interview

DL: What's up with Mumia and Oscar Grant cases?

JR: The Third Circuit Court is trying to figure out whether to kill Mumia or give him life. Both choices are unacceptable. We are fighting to free him and many others. Aaron Patterson, Ruchell Magee, Hugo Pinell, Imam Jamil Al-Amin, Angola3, MOVE9 Johannes Meherle, the cop who pulled the trigger killing Oscar Grant, goes to trial for murder in L.A 6/7/10. We have been at the first two court hearings in LA after Judge Morris in Oakland allowed the trial's venue to be moved to LA. Resistance outside courthouse is getting stronger. More people in LA are becoming aware of the facts. We want the other officers who were at the murder scene to be charged with murder also.

DL: What projects do you have coming up?

JR: We're releasing our Documentary on the police killings of Oscar Grant and Lovelle Mixon, as well as my bogus arson case called "Operation Small Axe". We also have a Haiti film called "Haiti: Rising From the Ashes" documenting what we saw. I am working on a book of my favorite articles that I have written called "Block Reportin'" and helping Angela Carroll book showings for her new film "Angela Y. Davis Radical Pedagogy". We're doing report-backs to tell people about Haiti. I hooked up with Rob Redding and I have a weekly Block Report segment on XM Power 169 weekly

For More Info:
www.blockreportradio.com
www.sfbayview.com
www.haitiaction.net/About/HERF/HERF.html
<http://vimeo.com/9820288>

Hip Hop Congress (HHC) has partnered with the People's Tribune to connect Hip Hop and other cultural movements to practical struggles all over the U.S. For more information on how you can get involved, please visit www.hiphopcongress.com. — DLabrie, Page Editor, Email: dlabrozia2005@yahoo.com

VOICES FROM THE RUSTBELT

The crisis in the once heavily industrialized Rust Belt is a harbinger of the future. The struggles unfolding here hold lessons for everyone. Send your story to People's Tribune, PO Box 3524, Chicago, IL 60654-3524.

WHIRLPOOL TO SHUTTER PLANT IN EVANSVILLE, INDIANA

Interview with Union Local President

By Sandy Reid/People's Tribune

The People's Tribune interviewed Darrell Collins, President IUE-CWA Local 808, in Evansville, Indiana about the closure of the Whirlpool refrigerator plant and the layoff of 1100 workers. The plant is moving to Mexico. Collins has worked at the plant for 40 years.

People's Tribune: Tell our readers about the plant closure and what it is going to mean for the community.

Darrell Collins: There will be 1100 layoffs, with 400 starting on March 26. The last layoff will be in late June. That's only a part of what's going to happen.

You got probably another 6-7,000 people that will be affected by this. I know the community doesn't realize what is going to happen when all these people get laid off and stop paying taxes because they don't have a job. There's only so many places to work. Somewhere along the line, some of these politicians are going to have to figure out what's going on here.

PT: We understand that Whirlpool has gotten stimulus money.

DC: They got \$19 million stimulus money, but not only that. Over the years, they have gotten several tax incentives to invest money into the prop-



1500 workers protest Whirlpool plant closure, Evansville, Indiana.

PHOTO /LOCAL 808

erty. They just continued on and on to where they are not keeping people in the plant like they are supposed to. Here's my problem. We made this company what it is. The workers did. Now they want to move to Mexico. And all these other companies want to move, go here and there. This is just the very start of what's happening. We are going to carry this fight on to the very end. We are not going to have any jobs here or anywhere. They want to create these new jobs. These new jobs don't pay enough money to support a family on. We've got anywhere from 30-50 husbands and wives working in this plant. So two people are going to lose their income. Everyone keeps promising that they are going to do something about it. But nobody is doing anything. We are going to the streets. We're going to do something about it. We're expecting anywhere from 500-1500 people this Friday. We're going to line up along highway 41. And then we will do a march back to the hall. We got 10 speakers, and Richard Trumka, President of the AFL-CIO,



1500 workers protest Whirlpool plant closure, Evansville, Indiana. Whirlpool warned workers not to attend, saying "these negative activities will only hamper employees when they look for future jobs."

PHOTO /LOCAL 808

The People's Tribune Needs Your Help

We want to inform you regarding the serious need to raise funds for the People's Tribune. There is both danger and opportunity facing the People's Tribune at this critical moment. Given the rapidly changing situation in our country, there is an unprecedented opportunity for the People's Tribune to grow and truly emerge as the paper of the developing working class movement in America. At the moment, however, the paper is facing the very real danger that this year, lack of money will force us to cut back on the number of pages or the number of issues we publish, or both. This would be a terrible setback at a time when a paper like the People's Tribune is more necessary than ever to the movement. We are asking for your help at this critical time.

The People's Tribune is unique among papers of its kind in America. On the one hand, we open the pages of the paper to the movement, to allow revolutionaries to report on their struggles and communicate with one another. On the other hand we offer the revolutionaries a strategic perspective on the struggle, and in the process politicize the struggle and point it toward a new, cooperative society. The People's Tribune is significant because, through speaking to the revolutionaries, it helps set the stage for the further development and organization of the movement and helps it progress toward its ultimate goal. To our knowledge, no other paper in America offers exactly what the People's Tribune has to offer. Both the movement

as a whole and the revolutionaries within it need what we have.

This is a critical time in our country's history. The government's efforts to intervene in the economy on behalf of the corporations are provoking a response. There is an impulse among many to demand that the government guarantee the wellbeing of the people. At the same time, a huge section of formerly economically stable workers is being pushed out of the system and into the new class of structurally unemployed and underemployed being created by electronics. The social and economic "middle" of American society is being destroyed, setting the stage for political polarization. Revolutionaries are stepping forward. If we don't reach and politicize them and give them direction, they could be won to fascism. We believe a paper like the People's Tribune is critical to the effort to politicize these revolutionaries and win them to a vision of the new cooperative society that is possible. But the fascists are also attempting to politicize them. We dare not allow the paper to suffer a setback at this time.

We are asking that People's Tribune supporters in every city hold a fundraiser for the paper sometime this year. We are happy to help in whatever way we can. You can contact us at 800-691-6888 or via email at info@peopletribune.org

Bob Lee, Editor,
for the People's Tribune
Editorial Board

Musical Chairs:

“You are moving today,
just one room away—
and now you cannot
win damage awards in court,
secure your rights as a tenant
on my ship;
in this chaos
your voice will leave
in this circle of
the home-less weave”

I felt like a butterfly
with one short-life migration:
twenty-eight days.

I'll go back
to my hotel to pack,
where the showers
are oddly safe,
on this day when
I have to move—
again.

I feel like a bad machine
in a factory for
the criminals
and the insane.

I'll unravel all that
I have woven
when I move.
I am in the insanity of
“Keep them spun”
in the circle of undone,
never good enough
to have a home.

Sweaty-palmed,
the administrator's face,
jaw angled in angst,
is set differently today;
a jarring force, this threat,
from his simple, chipped front desk.
His hand shakes and trembles
in his reach for my unwanted
and unfamiliar new key.

Today, every item in my home
will change—again.

I am sure,
as he leans over me,
rushing me in some imagined haste,
that I will lose at least ONE
of my FAVORITE pens,

and whatever else his sticky fingers
decide to pluck;
I'll be too slow
(this is a given)
as he calls his gang of hands,
his “hired men”.

Today he doesn't just take money;
today he has changed:
he is a blurred form.
He wields a whip.

He knows I cannot stay
beyond the twenty-eighth day
in this disaster prone ghetto
with tenants of time,
like numbers,
turning the clock
of uncertainty.
This would mean I had earned my stripe:
a dream for a home
that I would wear
like a long blonde braid
down my back;
that I had earned my tenancy:
San Francisco born and bred,
no longer charged
the tourist price.

As my door opens,
so does one more
for the new poor;
the rent is readdressed
in the interest
of business;
we—those kept homeless—
cannot win.

Revolving rooms
around a simple front desk:
the reinstated
constant threat
of that last step.

Musical chairs:
shake,
rattle
flow
drumbeats of fear,
removing our only bargaining chip:

We can be evicted,
within the space of
one to five seconds.

—Chrissy Moore

CRIMES OF HABIT

It is unlawful to SIT
On statues
On hydrants
On curbs
On stone fences
Near fountains
City government declares public property.

It is illegal to LIE
Down on stairs
On sidewalks
On park lawns
On bus stop benches
In doorways after business hours
City government considers such public acts
blight.

But where else can a world-weary
Body searching for a warm spot
Free from harassment go to
Liberate their feet? Momentarily
Liberate their shoulders & back
From the bearing weight of
Only possessions? What else can
They do when even
Prison-like shelters won't let them
Inside?

New police chief
Wants natural reflexes, habits
To be punitive crimes.

SIT & LIE?
NO-----SIT & SPIN-----

—Dee Allen, 2/21/10

Editor's Note: San Francisco is attempting to pass an anti-homeless 'sit/lie' law that would criminalize sitting or lying on a public sidewalk in certain parts of the City; further criminalizing and harassing people who have nowhere else to be, a violation of constitutional, civic and human rights. San Francisco had a similar law from 1968-1979, which was found unconstitutional and repealed in 1979. (The city of Berkeley put a similar law on its books, but the 'sit' portion of that law was overturned.) The Civil Rights work group of the San Francisco Coalition on Homelessness, along with other groups, is organizing against this latest attack.

SPEAKERS FOR A NEW AMERICA

ISSUES: Auto; Water; Utilities; Housing; Justice; Healthcare

SPEAKERS SERIES FROM AMERICA'S RUST BELT



Marian Kramer
Leader in the struggle
for water and utilities
in Detroit



Claire McClinton
Autoworker and
community leader
from Flint



Rev. Edward Pinkney
A minister battling the
corporate take-over of
Benton Harbor



Elena M. Herrada
A leader in the struggle
for immigration rights
from Detroit



General Baker
Internationally known
labor leader and
Detroit autoworker



Maureen Taylor
Leader in the struggle
for water and utilities
in Detroit



Pastor Mary Gault
A minister fighting for
utility rights and justice
in Battle Creek



Liz Miller
Producer of
the documentary,
“The Water Front”

Dastardly deeds of DTE Energy

By Sylvia Orduño
and Ann Grimmatt

Every week since mid-December, Michigan Welfare Rights Organization members and local residents have picketed on Thursdays in front of DTE Energy Corporation headquarters. Every week new people have shown up to protest DTE's electricity and gas shutoff policies. And every week we discover that other low-income persons have died trying to keep his or her family warm in the freezing cold winter weather.

The death rate has now reached at least 14 persons. It's important that we not let these beautiful lives be forgotten or remain anonymous. The current list of names are:

Vaughn Reed (under age 15)
Markesha Reed (under age 15)
Demonte' Reed (under age 15)
DeMarco Reed (under age 15)
Jeffrey Garrett (father of 10, all under age 15)
Booker T. James Sr
Lynn Greer
Tyrone Allen
Marvin Allen Sr
Welton Crawford
Davion Grant

As we go to press, three children, Trevion, Fantasia, and Selena Young, ages 3, 4, and 5, died as a result of fire, heating their home with electric stoves after the shut offs.

We may not have known them all personally but they could've been any one of us. Their lives were taken too soon and for no other reason than for greedy corporate profits.

Every winter, it snows in Detroit — we can't change that. Every day, people are losing their jobs in Michigan from the crisis of capitalism — we can change that. Everywhere, people say that if you're poor, it must be because of something you've done wrong — we can change that.

Reasonable people throughout the world know that everyone needs certain essentials for life: water, warmth, shelter, clothes, food, and *human concern* for one another.

Where we differ is how to pay for it. We believe that people should pay according to what they can afford, according to what their families need to survive and thrive. There's a corporate fallacy out there that says poor people want everything free. *That's not true!* What poor and low-income persons want is, dignity, respect and affordability.



Detroit woman protesting gas and electric shutoffs by DTE Energy of 249,000 homes.

PHOTO /DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM

When a company like DTE Energy puts people over profits in its shutoff policies, in its customer relations training, and in its profit margins — there are consequences. In fact, in the short two months of 2010, there are 14 consequences, to date.

The "DTE death watch" continues every Thursday from 12-1pm at Bagley and Third Streets in downtown Detroit, adjacent to another corporate nemesis, the MGM Grand Casino. Please join us in support of policies to prevent utility shutoffs and for affordable rates! Utilities are a human right.

WOMEN ARE KEY TO REVOLUTION FOR A NEW AMERICA AND WORLD

From the Editors

Jean Eisen, 57, once made a good salary. Today she has been unemployed for more than two years and has exhausted her savings and credit cards. Having applied for work everywhere — she says, "There are no bad jobs now. Any job is a good job." (New York Times)

Jane Eisen is one of millions. Today in America a small section of women have "made it." However, the vast majority are becoming poorer by the day. For example, the fastest growing segment of the homeless today is women and children. A process is underway where on the one hand, the revolution in the economy is for the first time in history, making women the majority of the work force. In 1969 women made up only 35.3% of the work force. Today women represent 51% of the work force. On the other hand, automation is throwing more and more women into lower paid jobs, and in many cases, out of the job market permanently. Such statistics illustrate that women's position in society makes them a powerful force for change.

A New Women's Movement

Let us trace the progression of the women's movement to see how inter-

grally connected is their revolution with the revolution for a new cooperative America and world.

Like all processes, the women's struggle for equality develops in stages as a result of changes in the means of production. In early matriarchal societ-



Iraq war veteran and former Army Pvt. Margaret Ortiz, 27, waits to catch a bus to a meeting at the Veterans Affairs hospital near the women's shelter where she lives in Long Beach, Calif. She is one of the new faces of America's homeless veterans population.

PHOTO /CHRIS CARLSON

ies people lived cooperatively. Women played a leading role in early agricultural societies. Once the economy changed, women over a long period of time, became separated from the economic processes, increasing their dependency on the men. There could be no reversing this until a new productive process arose.

The invention of the first labor-saving housework tools arose around 1935. With the development of the vacuum, the dishwasher, and the washing machine, women were more free to enter the job market and hence to fight for their equality. However, the massive women's movement that arose in various countries based on the new conditions was a different movement than we see today. Then, it was a movement for women to become part of the capitalist system.

Women, today, are being forced out of the capitalist society and into the leadership of the struggle for a whole new world. For example, no one has to tell the mother in the street that those abandoned usable apartments the city is tearing down to make way for high-end housing should instead house her family. No one has to tell the single mom that society has a responsibility to

provide health care for all.

The point is that the objective conditions for change are favorable today. But, without women — as one half of humanity and as 51% of the work force — playing a conscious role, a revolutionary movement cannot be consolidated.

Today the only solution for women — and for men — is for those who are becoming part of the dispossessed to join with the already dispossessed to overthrow this dying system. The goal must be to create a new social system based on this principle: to each according to their need, from each according to their individual talents and skills. Herein lies the importance of a powerful women's movement

International Women's Day, 2010 finds our country at a critical juncture. We are facing a rapidly changing world. The woman question is at the very heart of the formation and politicization of the new class of dispossessed workers. Revolutionaries must recognize that the struggle of women today is not to fight their way into the system but to fight for a new society. Revolutionaries, men and women, must guarantee the conditions for women to make their key contribution to this struggle. Now is the time to provide the revolution with the indispensable ingredient of change: new ideas!

VOICES FROM BENTON HARBOR, MI

Hostile Takeover of Benton Harbor by Gov. Granholm, the State of Michigan and the Corporations

By Rev. Edward Pinkney

Governor Jennifer Granholm and her cronies at the state of Michigan are taking desperate measures to carry out a hostile take over of the city of Benton Harbor.

In a letter to Benton Harbor Mayor Wilco Cooke, Governor Granholm stated that there is a financial emergency in the city. Yet no satisfactory plan exists to resolve a serious financial problem that her cronies helped to create.

The new Benton Harbor City Manager, Ron Carter, is more than qualified to resolve the serious financial problem that exists in Benton Harbor. If the governor wants to help the city, she should come with her checkbook in her hand. This Governor is the worst Governor the State of Michigan ever has had. She is nothing but a Republican who is dressed up like a Democrat. She is totally for the corporations. She has proven the point that the Republicans and Democrats are the same.

She came to Benton Harbor and gave the residents a song and a dance. She sang and we danced. When will the residents of Benton Harbor take a stand against corporate power — the Governor, Whirlpool and Harbor Shores? City commissioner Marcus Muhammad compared a possible take over to a coup d'etat. (Herald Paladium) The hostile

takeover is the worst thing the residents can allow to happen. They will sell off all lake front land, including the high school.

The governor's office was responsible for the take over of Jean Klock Park. The Harbor Shores golf course charges annual fees of more than \$3500, far above the means of most residents of Benton Harbor who previously had free access to the 73 acres of park on Lake Michigan. The governor stated her goal is to make the state of Michigan a strong and committed partner to Benton Harbor. Her commitment is only to Whirlpool and Harbor Shores. Let's run her out of the state.

It is Black genocide from the cradle to the grave. Black life is at risk. The blue print for how systematic killing of Blacks is being carried out by Governor Granholm, Whirlpool, Harbor Shores and Berrien County court system is no longer invisible.

It is high time the citizens of Michigan and around the country refuse to let our tax dollars be wasted and given to the rich. It is high time that we take a moral stand in Benton Harbor, a city positioned in Jim Crow laws, juxtaposed with Whirlpool. How can we turn our backs on the oppression and poverty in Benton Harbor and live with ourselves? It is time for the residents to take a stand and stop the take over.

COMMUNITY QUOTES:

"Governor Jennifer Granholm cannot run her own house. How do you expect her to run Benton Harbor? She destroyed Highland Park and Pontiac. It is like asking the hungry wolf, who has not eaten

in weeks not to eat you. It is all about whirlpool stealing lake front land."

— Wilma Williams

"We must recall Dennis Knowles for misconduct and for the misappropriation of tax payer money which is over \$2000 for telephone abuse. He must go also for voting yes for the hostile takeover of Benton Harbor." — Rev D. Smith



Rev. Edward Pinkney

PHOTO /BRETT JELINEK

WHAT STATE TAKEOVERS MEAN FOR OUR COMMUNITIES:

By Marian Kramer

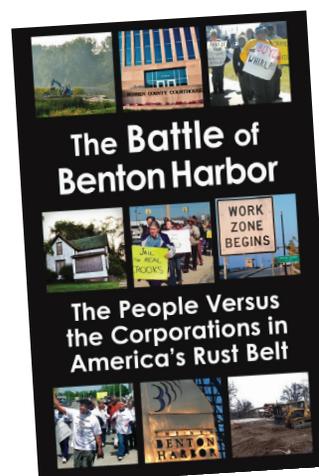
"In Highland Park, Michigan, the state takeover of our city meant taking away the vote for folks to elect their city officials. It meant the selling off of all of our different assets without the people's consent, without the vote of the people. It meant the City Council no longer had a decision making role. All decisions were in the hands of the dictatorship of the 'appointed' Financial Manager. The Financial Manager only adhered to the Governor and whatever board the Governor set up. It meant there were a bunch of layoffs. We operated with a bare minimal. They contracted out a lot of the work. We only had one or two inspectors for the whole city. They said we were

broke, but millions of dollars went out to private contractors. They shut down the only public library in the city. They tried to privatize the water but we won that back. They were going to privatize the management of the water with 80% of profits going to the management company and 20% to the city of Highland Park. It meant that the citizens of Highland Park would be responsible for any financial needs for fixing equipment, etc., not the management, although they were making 80% of the profits. The whole process shows that government and the corporations work hand in hand today and the form of rule in America is not democracy for the people."

Marian Kramer is co-chair of the National Welfare Rights Organization

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