

PEOPLE'S TRIBUNE

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Representatives from the AFL-CIO, NAACP, Interfaith Worker Justice, Jobs with Justice and the more than 1,400 delegates from the 2010 UAW Convention march to Detroit's banking district to tell big banks and corporations that the assault on the middle class must end now.

PHOTO/DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM

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THE FUTURE: HAPPINESS OR DESPAIR?

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Lesson Of The BP Oil Spill: We, The People, Must Defend Our Interests!

EDITORIAL

Americans watched in horror as five million barrels of sludge spewed into the Gulf of Mexico. BP poured thousands of gallons of toxic chemical dispersants into the ocean — against the pleas of environmentalists — to minimize the shore damage, saving millions in potential federal fines, but, according to Richard Chater, a marine biology expert, “perhaps more seriously damaging the ecosystem offshore.” Experts contend that the oil is now working its way into the bottom of the ocean and is entering the food chain. The impact could take years to unfold.

We have to ask why the government failed to take any action independent of the oil industry? The rational step, when the catastrophe occurred, would have been to take over BP and run it in the interest of the public. Then, clean up efforts could have been guided by scientists who have no stake in the drive for corporate profits. This did not occur because the interests of the government and the corporations are so intertwined they make independent action on the part of the government impossible. Today, the government and the corporations have merged to where their roles and functions are indistinguishable from one another.

Background To The Spill

In the 1990s, rising oil prices, new technology, and lowered federal royalty fees set off what the New York Times called a “deep-water version of a gold rush.” The end result was that government got oil and royalty fees; Gulf states got jobs; and, the oil companies got billions in profit. Government officials helped corporate profits soar by arguing for drilling to proceed unhampered by stiff regulations. For example, according to the New York Times, Senator J. Bennett Johnston, a Louisiana Democrat, said on the Senate floor



that, “We have 20,000 oil wells off the coast of Louisiana...The so called danger from oil spills has simply not been proved...it has been disproved, and we need to get on with that drilling.”

Today some Americans are questioning the wisdom of the clarion call, “Drill baby drill.” People wonder why we can’t have a society where safe, renewable sources of energy are utilized. This cannot happen on the scale that is needed under the profit-driven capitalist system. The energy conglomerates invested too much money in an oil/fossil fuel infrastructure to let it go. Today oil profits are the highest ever. This explosion of profit is paced by the destruction of the ecology.

The Gulf oil spill reflects the overall irresolvable capitalist economic crisis and the unprecedented polarization of wealth and poverty. The way things are going, the corporations will end up with all the wealth, and we, the people, will continue scrambling to survive as jobs, communities and the environment are destroyed. We have to ask what will be done to guarantee the necessities of modern life for the people? Modern

methods of production mean that it is now possible to have a communal society organized around meeting people’s needs in a safe, clean environment, where what we produce is distributed according to need, and not according to how much money you have.

As a step in that direction, we need to demand that certain industries be nationalized in the interests of the public. The rulers of this country nationalize (i.e. transfer industries to government control or ownership) when doing so protects the interests of the capitalist system. For example, today, the energy industry is too big and potentially dangerous to the functioning of the capitalist system to be in private hands. Hence, there is already an effort underway to nationalize the industry. We, the people, need to grab hold of this process and guarantee that nationalization is in our interests. Nationalization of the giant corporations in the interests of the public — and the related fight to get our government out of corporate hands — is the next step along the path to a new society.

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.

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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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The Future: Happiness or Despair?

Threats of Deflation and Economic Depression

COVER STORY

This Labor Day, digital production creates an abundance that makes the construction of a new society possible in a practical sense. Instead however, it's creating unimaginable destruction of society and untold misery for millions of Americans. The only obstacles standing in the way of constructing a new society to meet people's needs are the laws of private property. The only solution is making private property — public property.

Increasing digital production of goods and services in the U.S. continues to rapidly replace North American workers, much less allowing any rehiring of the tens of millions who have lost full time jobs over the last 3 years. In the first quarter of 2010, North American manufacturing companies increased dollars spent buying industrial robots by 45% over the preceding last quarter of 2009. More continues to be produced with fewer workers, resulting in fewer workers to buy the increased production.

Nearly 15 million people in the U.S. are "officially" counted as unemployed, with another 6 million that have stopped looking for work and are no longer counted. Add another 8.5 million working part time, who want and



Various groups and 1,400 delegates from the 2010 UAW Convention march to Detroit's banking district to tell big banks and corporations that the assault on the middle class must end now.

PHOTO/DAYMON J. HARTLEY

need full time jobs and we have at least 30 million people in the U.S. that are unemployed/under-employed. Combine it with forecasts that another 500,000 local and state government jobs will be cut over the next 15 months, the result of shrinking property, income and sales tax revenues caused by "you guessed it," increased joblessness!

TOO MANY HOUSES, NOT ENOUGH BUYERS

So far, more than four million homes in the U.S. have been foreclosed on since mid-2006 and currently there are seven million households one to three months in arrears in making their mortgage payments. Last year saw nearly one million foreclosures — the highest annual rate on record and HUD and the National Association of Mortgage Lenders predict 1 to 1.3 million foreclosures for 2010.

Today there are 2.5 million vacant homes in the country, despite the sharp drop in value and prices. Consumer spending is at an all time low. Increasing numbers of the American people

haven't enough money to consume and those that do are afraid to buy. They have lost confidence in the U.S. economy.

THREATS OF DEFLATION AND ECONOMIC DEPRESSION

The U.S. economy suffers from a crisis of stagnation, bordering on contraction — high unemployment, a severe decline in the housing and real estate market, tight credit, dwindling tax bases of local and state governments and lack of consumer confidence and spending. These combined economic characteristics point toward a freefall decline in wages and the price of goods and services, which in turn will shut down industries, creating catastrophic job loss. This combination is called deflation and deflation will bring about panic and an outright economic depression.

A VISION OF WHERE WE GO FROM HERE

We are living in the final stage of a growing antagonism between the capi-

alist production process and its laws of private property versus its laws of distribution and exchange. Digital production is replacing human labor on a macro scale and along with it the earned income of tens of millions of workers, while at the same time it is beginning to produce an abundance never seen before. Production of abundance is incompatible with a process of distribution and exchange that require the sale of that increased production for money.

The next big step for the American people is to demand and create a government to nationalize the corporations *in the interests of its people*. We must make their private property our public property. Then we can unleash our fullest human potential to create a new society and new world, based on human needs and human progress, synchronizing the marvels of the digitally produced abundance with a compatible process of distribution and exchange. The future is truly up to us!

Sister/Brother, can you spare \$20?

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

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

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Lethal Injections Business as Usual in Texas . . . Corruption

By **Jeremy L. Busby**

The recent move by Texas Governor Rick Perry to oust the appointees from the Texas Forensic Commission on the day that the commission was set to examine a flawed arson investigation that condemned an innocent man to Texas's Death Row, may shock some throughout the world, but to those of us who are in Texas or who have had experiences with the Texas Criminal Justice system, we know that this is business as usual in Texas...corruption.

Cameron Todd Willingham was accused of setting a house fire in 1991 that killed his three young daughters in a small Texas town. After a highly incompetent fire investigator manufactured a bogus investigative report that suggested that Willingham intentionally set the blaze, Willingham was convicted and condemned to Texas Death Row.

Shortly before the execution, an acclaimed fire investigator and scientist, Dr. Gerald Hurst, independently investigated the findings and concluded that the fire was accidentally caused, likely by a space heater or faulty wiring. The Chicago Tribune asked three additional

fire experts to evaluate the findings and they all reached conclusions similar to that of Dr. Hurst. Each of these experts wrote letters to Gov. Perry requesting that Willingham's execution be postponed. Gov. Perry refused.

Maintaining his innocence, Willingham told the AP the day of his scheduled execution, "The most disturbing thing is the State of Texas will kill an innocent man and doesn't care that they're making a mistake." Willingham was brutally executed hours later.

After much community pressure, the State of Texas created the Forensic Science Commission to investigate all claims of scientific misconduct and errors. This commission ignited an investigation of Willingham's case by enlisting a nationally recognized fire expert, Craig Beyler, to review the case.

On August 25, 2009, Beyler wrote, "Willingham's fire did not meet the prevailing scientific standards of the time, much less current ones. The investigator of Willingham's case had poor understanding of fire science and their methodologies ...the investigator's main opinions were nothing more than a collection of personal beliefs that have

nothing to do with science-based fire investigations." In other words, the State of Texas executed an innocent man on someone's personal beliefs?

The Texas Forensic Commission was set to hear Beyler's report. Gov. Perry ousted all three members of the Commission and abruptly cancelled the

How many more innocent people must die at the hands of this unjust, barbaric and senseless practice of lethal injection,

hearing on Mr. Beyler's findings.

What the world is witnessing exemplifies the corrupt culture of the State of Texas. Instead of permitting the Commission the space to carry out its duties in the hopes that Texas could possibly

avoid making another dreadful mistake by executing an innocent person, Gov. Perry derails the commission's agenda in a hoodlum-like attempt to cover up a senseless murder that occurred under his supervision, despite having ample opportunities to halt it.

Willingham is officially the first innocent victim of lethal injection in Texas that we have credible evidence that's irrefutable. But there have been others brutally executed by Texas' heartless killing machine. All these cases possessed the same amount of disturbing facts at the time of their wrongful execution. However, as Willingham attested the day of his murder, "Texas doesn't care they're making a mistake. It's business as usual in Texas...corruption!!!"

How many more innocent people must die at the hands of this unjust, barbaric and senseless practice of lethal injection, before we come together to stop this madness? In the spirit of Willingham, let's allow these discoveries to serve as a catalyst to speak up and fight in unity against judicial murder, Rick Perry and his colleagues.

The author is a prisoner in Abilene, Texas.

Save The Internet— No Slow Lane For Us

By **Robin Yeamans**

Google and Verizon have teamed up to try to get the FCC let them create a two-tier internet—a fast lane for high-paying corporations and a slow lane for the rest of us. The internet, the greatest tool for democracy besides taking to the streets, was created by US taxpayers. We should own it, not be excluded from it.

Aug. 13, 2010 almost 200 protesters, including the Raging Grannies, went to Google's sprawling campus of gleaming high-rise buildings in Mt. View, California, and presented Google with a petition signed by 300,000 people demanding "net neutrality." People used to demonstrate at government buildings, but now that government and the corporations have merged, we may as well go to the location of our corporate overlords to protest.

Google/Verizon propose that the FCC not require "neutrality" for wireless (new, high tech industry) but only for wired (old, low tech). Eventually, nobody will be using the old wired technology, certainly not for carrying rapidly transmitted data, so these corporations don't care about them. But for the upcoming wireless technology of the future, they insist the FCC let them create a two-tier system.

Who had the huge resources needed



Protesters at Google's in Mt. View, California present the company with a petition signed by 300,000 people demanding "net neutrality."

PHOTO/E. MORAN

to create the internet?---the US War Machine, also known as the Defense Department. Without doubt the US taxpayer pays the costs of that. According to wikipedia: "ARPANET (Advanced Research Projects Agency Network), created by a small research team at the

head of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) of the United States Department of Defense, [created] ... the predecessor of the contemporary global Internet." The first e-mail transmission was sent between

government scientists in 1971, long before the internet mushroomed into what it is today.

We paid for the internet, and the FCC should not give the rights to our internet to private corporations. The risk and expense of inventing were socialized, and there is no valid reason why the profit should be privatized. Worse, Google/Verizon are demanding the right to exclude from the high-speed internet all those who cannot pay the kinds of fees that global corporations pay. This harms all small businesses whose websites now compete on the same level as huge capitalist enterprises. But, more importantly, the internet has a huge role to play in the struggles for democracy and for information. We have had a glimpse of the role technology can play, for example, in that publicizing the attempted coup against Hugo Chavez in Venezuela, he had to be freed instead of imprisoned or executed. In the present situation where, due to job destruction the capitalists cannot continue to govern in the old way, we must fight for net neutrality. Otherwise, the main voice coming out of the internet will end up being capitalist, just like the voices played at us on TV and in the movies.

The internet, like the airwaves, should belong to us all. Fight for net neutrality.

Pelican Bay State Prison

LESSONS FROM "THE WORST OF THE WORST"

By Elizabeth Colon-Nelson
and Gabriel McKinney

In October of 2009, we began a collaborative effort to create a piece of theater with inmates at one of the nation's most notorious and tightly controlled prisons, the supermax Pelican Bay State Prison (PBSP) in Crescent City, CA. The program was a community-based arts requirement for graduate studies at Dell'Arte International School of Physical Theatre, 80 miles south of PBSP. This project was only possible through a relationship with a DJ at local NPR affiliate KHSU, DJ Sista Soul. "Sista's Place's" rotation of soul and R&B classics has long been popular with the men at PBSP. We would issue writing prompts over the air of "Sista's Place." The men would write pieces and mail them to us. From hundreds of submissions, we created a play called "Pelican Bay Speaks" performed by actors and broadcast live on KHSU.

Two points of fact separate PBSP from nearly every other prison in the nation. 1.) PBSP is home to the SHU, also known as Secured Housing Unit, a long-term solitary confinement unit that houses roughly 1500 men. SHU cells are roughly the size of an average home bathroom. Inmates spend 22-24 hours a day alone in their cells. SHU sentences are "indefinite." It is not uncommon for SHU terms to last 20 or 30 years. 2.) According to the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, PBSP

is home to "the worst of the worst" of offenders in California. It is reasoned then, that fact two necessitates the existence fact one.

We would like to share what we learned from the "worst of the worst."

The American Body is hemorrhaging its humanity. Crime and punishment have become indistinguishable. The gun's report and the cell door's slam no longer contradict, but declare the same grim message: the nation's collective lowered expectations that allow us to heap upon one another treatment we would not show a dog.

One fact became immediately clear the moment we began this project. The human need to speak, to cry out, to sing, to rage is insurmountable. One's need to be heard and have one's words regarded with value can drive a person to the most base or most noble of human action.

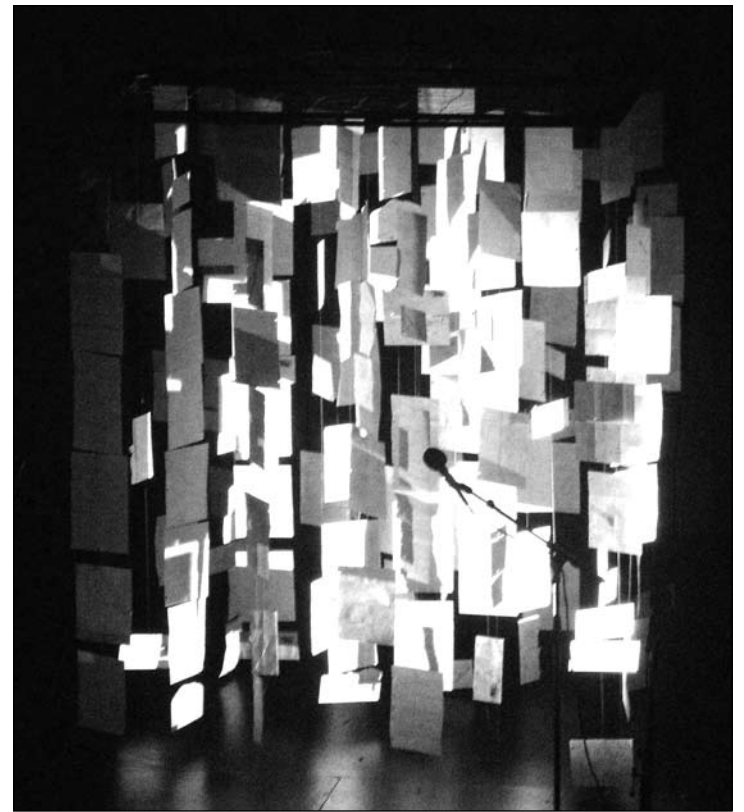
The men in SHU stand in a symbolic representation of a larger national crisis. When people assume they have nothing to offer, they offer nothing. Fearing nobody will like what they have to say, people struggle against natural inclinations and remain silent. This silence, though collective, is born from a profound sense of isolation and loneliness.

Yet, if we refuse to speak, to cry out, to sing, to rage about the worst in us and the best in us, our horrors and triumphs, our shames and glories, the grief victimizing us and the dreams we aspire to, both as individuals and as a nation, we

will remain in this prison of isolation and loneliness.

Through these men we learned about America. They embody the great paradox of this country: our simultaneous capacity for extreme destruction carried alongside an unknown potential for moral and personal renaissance. They daily live out our collective ever-tended-to hope that despite the past, despite the bleak fact of the present, the future holds a redemption unimaginable.

The March 14, 2010 performance of "Pelican Bay Speaks" can be heard in its entirety by going online to <http://khsu.streamguys.net/10030.mp3>.



This is a replica of a Secured Housing Unit (SHU), created with prisoner letters. A Secured Housing Unit, is a long-term solitary confinement unit that houses roughly 1500 men. SHU cells are roughly the size of a home bathroom. Inmates spend 22-24 hours a day alone in their cells. From hundreds of submissions, a play was created called "Pelican Bay Speaks" and broadcast live on Radio Station KHSU.

PHOTO/DONATED

The Town Of Pleasant View, And State of Tennessee Needs Government Helps and Jobs

By Lenette Evans

Here in Pleasant View, TN, where the population is about 3, 838 people, there is not much to this small country town. If you blink you have just about gone through it. You have to travel 10 miles just to go to town for anything. I have seen contractors, other trades people, and businesses go under and banks taking back the properties in a subdivision where homes have sat for one to four years in elite neighborhoods.

A contractor I recently ran into, who has a business and who now has very little work and had to work at Wendy's this past winter for minimum wage just to pay bills. And here in this small country town men especially depend on work building homes, home additions, sun-

rooms, landscaping, bush hogging, yard installations, etc. But when the economy shot down many people's workload slowed and jobs were not as plentiful.

I am seeing all over that even restaurants and stores do not have the shoppers and people buying like they used to because people cannot afford to put food on their table or gas in their cars. A lady I know has her daughter and grandson living with her. She takes them both to their jobs which pay minimum wage and she picks them up from work in the only family truck they have and the grandmother lives on a prayer everyday because this truck is very old and is in bad shape and can barely get her to church on Sunday. She has a \$10,000 mortgage that is due and is getting ready to get thrown out on the street because

she cannot pay it.

When will our government have some backbone and stand up and help the people here in America get back on their feet? If our government would stop sucking up the taxpayers money to fill their own filthy deceptive pockets and work with the people we could get America back.

Here in Nashville we have veterans that are on street corners and homeless people living in dumpsters and under bridges because they have no place to go. Musicians of every genre are playing on the street corners to get themselves known in the industry but.... just trying to make a living.

People and especially the rich and wealthy do not understand this but... WE ARE ALL ONE PAYCHECK AWAY

FROM BEING HOMELESS.

So where is people's compassion for others and to help their brother or sister in need? We are ALL children of God and if God can feed the 5,000 there is something we can all give up to help the poor and homeless or a neighbor in need. But our lame spineless government needs to get off its butt and start helping people. But until that happens people will need to get creative and create jobs and help one another.



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Detroit Closures of City Parks and Senior Centers Get Stay of Execution

By John Williams

Detroit citizens stormed into the streets protesting the proposed closing of city parks and senior centers. The closures were put forth by Mayor Bing as a result of the City Council lowering his proposed inadequate budget. A last minute compromise allowed for a certain amount money to be used to keep the centers and parks open for now.

What is the underlying cause of the closures and/or removal of public services?

First, banks and corporations need to cut costs in order to make profits in the down economy. The propaganda line is that they must make profits in order for jobs to be created. The city administration is beholden to the corporate structure by granting them privileges at the expense of the public sector. It is within this framework that huge tax breaks are granted for corporations while public sectors such as senior centers and parks are closed. At this time, Ford and General Motors are reporting quarterly profits. However, the city of Detroit and the state of Michigan have one of the highest unemployment rates in the nation. In addition to that disturbing figure, the rise in homelessness, home foreclosures,



UAW retirees convention protest for single payer health insurance outside of the UAW Convention in Detroit.

PHOTO /DAMONJHARTLEY.COM

water and utility shutoffs, makes it clear that cutting costs to make profits is not benefiting the people.

Services are an adjunct to production. When production and sales of goods soar and profits rise, parks and centers flourish. When profits rise, but at a falling rate, services are curtailed.

Three methods are used to cut costs

to develop a rise in profits.

First, privatization, which is the privatizing of public property for the sake of private control and use. Hence, the closing of schools and taking over of others, contracting out services formerly public, and removing parks, centers and YMCAs.

Second, deregulation which by-

passes the law in order to institute their plan. Sending in a manager of a city or town or designating a person to run the schools, therefore cancelling out the citizens' right to choose.

Third, tax breaks for the wealthy. The city has granted millions of dollars in tax breaks to the banking corporate elite and to the Michigan Economic Growth Authority. (This body makes grants to businesses in and out of the state.)

We are witnessing the beginning of a political struggle between private ownership of resources versus public control. This is a battle for the survival of the masses against the enormous exploitation and oppression by the Wall Street/Corporation and its lieutenants at the city and state level.

In order to save our parks, centers, schools, while ridding ourselves of homelessness, a lack of health insurance, foreclosures, etc., we must take the fight to the government. Demand that it provides for its citizens the way they did for the banks and corporations.

The battle is in its infant stage but as it rises and develops to a level of have versus have nots, the question becomes whose side are you on?

Guestworker Exposes Forced Labor Racket In Tennessee

The following article was put together from various reports, most of which were published by the Alliance of Guestworkers for Dignity in New Orleans.

NASHVILLE, TN, On Aug. 12, a Mexican guestworker, Hilario Razura Jimenez blew the whistle on a Tennessee company running a forced labor racket while receiving millions in state contracts and federal stimulus loans. Jimenez, after his escape, told the Tennessee Voices, "I spoke out because I wanted to be recognized as a human being...I wanted to escape not only to be free but also to stop these bosses. I know people here also need jobs, but instead of hiring them, these bosses brought us all the way from Mexico so that they could treat us worse than animals."

Jimenez said the employers carried pistols on the worksite and illegally seized workers' passports. Jimenez, a member of the Alliance of Guestworkers for Dignity, the organization that helped him escape, also described the filthy, overcrowded housing, brutal workplace conditions, threats, and constant surveillance that the employers are subjecting guestworkers to. Guestworkers say their movements were monitored by security cameras and they were prevented from talking on the phone without supervi-

sion.

The company recruited 12 workers from the poorest parts of Mexico and brought them to Tennessee on H-2B visas. The company obtained the visas by claiming to the U.S. Department of Labor that it could not find a single American to fill the jobs — at a time when Tennessee suffers a 10.1% unemployment rate.

Vanderbilt Landscaping threatened retaliation against Jimenez and publicly retaliated against another worker, Jose Manual Guerrero Gomez, for communicating with the Alliance of Guestworkers for Dignity about the company's illegal actions. After learning of the communications, owners of the company interrogated Gomez, threatened to burn his passport, and ultimately forced him to return to Mexico. This public action communicated the severe consequences to the rest of their workforce of challenging Vanderbilt Landscaping.

The guestworkers were further constrained in seeking protection because their H-2B visas are tied to Vanderbilt Landscaping, and because they face immediate arrest and detention by local police under the 287(g) program if they escape the labor camp without their passports. Also, Vanderbilt Landscaping supervisors systematically under report



Hilario Jimenez, a guest worker, had his passport confiscated by his employer and armed guards patrolled the work place. He broke out of the workers' sleeping quarters and shares his experience at a press conference.

PHOTO /WWW.JOONPOWELL.COM

hours worked by guestworkers, pressuring them to falsify records in violation of the law. Worksite conditions are dangerously hot and unsafe. In one case a worker suffered heat stroke and began vomiting uncontrollably but was not given medical treatment, instead he was forced to sit in an un-air-conditioned van.

Labor rights and civil rights leaders are demanding that Vanderbilt Landscaping cooperate fully in federal investigations on charges of forced labor, involuntary servitude, and human trafficking.

Illinois and Michigan Poor Join Hands

By **Cathy Talbott**

I attended the August 10th rally in Benton Harbor, Michigan to protest the theft of public land and resources by the Whirlpool Corporation for the development of a Jack Nicklaus golf course and resort for the rich. I have followed with interest the trials and tribulations of the people of Benton Harbor and the Reverend Pinkney as told through the pages of the People's Tribune.

My town, Herrin, IL, is located in the lower part of the state. We had a factory where washers and dryers were made. It was built after WWII, and was partly funded by the residents themselves. They cared about the returning veterans and how they would make a living. Civic leaders went door to door and residents gave what they could afford. It opened as "Norge" and it went through different owners until Maytag bought it. For almost 60 years this plant was a key part of our community and a livelihood for many.

Then, Whirlpool bought the Maytag plant. State and local officials bent over backwards to keep the plant running. Tax credits, road improvements, land, and more were offered as incentives. It was an offer "no one could refuse."



Cathy Talbott, speaking at the rally against Whirlpool's theft of public lands in Benton Harbor, MI and the commonality of the struggle against poverty in Southern Illinois.

PHOTO/BRETT JELINEK

But Whirlpool did. They abruptly and unceremoniously shut the plant down. A thousand workers lost their livelihood and a \$35,000,000 annual payroll was

just gone. All of Herrin's industries are gone now.

Most job loss in Herrin is due, directly or indirectly, to advances in technology. And a few fast food jobs here and there are not an alternative. Like everywhere else, it's getting almost impossible to make a decent living. As a result, we're seeing more homelessness, alcohol and drug abuse, divorce, domestic violence, all the social effects of a deteriorating social fabric.

This same story is being played out all across the region. The coal fields are long gone. Light industry is either going or gone. Jobs are being lost to technology — General Tire in Mt. Vernon is a good example. The future is not bright.

So I went to Benton Harbor to see how that \$35,000,000 annual pay roll was being used. What I saw was a community devastated by job loss and homelessness. I saw a community in dire need, even bordering on becoming "history" as officials decide how to sell off and give away even more community assets.

No, Whirlpool didn't invest that \$35,000,000 a year in Benton Harbor to create jobs so people could feed their families or even keep their homes. They enriched their stockholders. They've

bought land for next to nothing (\$1 for some homes) and built a beautiful golf course and resort for the wealthy. As the people of Southern Illinois are losing, the people of Benton Harbor are losing too, and losing big.

So what is the answer to our common problems? We're being "downsized, displaced, replaced, and dispossessed." It's time to come together as one and take control of our future. It's time corporations are run to benefit all the people. We need a government that truly acts in our collective interests and guarantees our right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. We need a government that guarantees universal health care, a government that guarantees decent affordable housing, free public education, a livable wage, a government that guarantees the distribution of life's necessities regardless of the ability to pay. We need healthy foods that actually nourishes, and a safe, clean environment that will allow our children and grandchildren to flourish and reach their human potential.

All of this is possible. We can have a better world. We can build a better society. It's time we take back our future. Time to build that better society. Let's get moving! The future is up to us!

Jobs for the Homeless

The Shortest Journey Begins With The First Step

By **Eric Sheptock**

It's been said that the longest journey begins with the first step. Oddly enough, the same is true about the shortest journey. It never ceases to amaze me that the U.S. Dept. of Labor has failed to reach out to the homeless community even though one of the largest shelters in the country -- which houses 1,350 people -- is located right across the road from DOL headquarters. Even more ironically, it took an offensive e-mail by a DOL employee for them to come to the table with DC Government's Dept. of Human Services and several homeless advocates to develop a job-training program for DC's homeless community.

The story began on March 5th, 2009 when First Lady Michelle Obama visited the homeless at Miriam's Kitchen. As she served food, a homeless man with a camera phone photographed her. And someone else photographed him. This picture of a homeless man with a camera phone has been floating around the web. People have been making remarks such as, "If this man can afford a camera phone (+/- \$50/month), he should be

able to pay rent(\$1,400/month avg.)."

One person who sent the photo with an offensive caption from his work e-mail was a DOL employee. Steve (Stephen) Thomas whom I work with at STREATS.TV (Striving To Reach, Educate And Transform Society) received the e-mail. He sent it to the man's higher-up at DOL but told them that he didn't want the man fired. He wanted to foster a relationship with DOL and work on creating a job-training program for DC's homeless community. They obliged.

Steve asked DOL Under-secretary Jane Oates who is also the director of DOL's Employment Training Administration if the jobs that the homeless would be trained for would pay a living wage. She said,"\$12/hour". He asked what jobs she was prepared to train the homeless for. She said,"Truck driver and auto mechanic."

As it stands, a homeless person who goes through this program won't have many career choices that promise to pay at least half of what it takes to live in DC. This speaks volumes to the systemic failures of our federal government and the economic realities of the present



Eric Sheptock, organizer of the homeless in Washington, D.C. Eric is himself homeless.

PHOTO/DONATED

time. Nonetheless, DOL has come to the table with the homeless advocates and the local government to see what can be done to employ DC's homeless. This is a major milestone insomuch as DOL headquarters has been located across the road from a homeless shelter for some years now and has failed to cross the

street to help its residents. As a matter of fact, as recently as 2009, DOL security was forbidding the homeless to sit on the foot and a half high wall that surrounds the D Street side of its property. They've since changed the policy.

But, the fact remains that we are in an economic downturn. Many jobs are gone for good. As I said on CNN recently, DC Government's 10-year plan to end homelessness (which was adopted in December 2004) had nothing in it about getting jobs for the homeless. With the economy having gone south (and more than five of the ten years gone), they lost a four-year window for employing the homeless. All in all, it may just be too little, too late. But one must wonder how it is that those who are too lazy to even cross the street to engage a large gathering of clientele can ever hope to keep the nation working -- even during good economic times.

Eric Jonathan Sheptock can be reached at (240) 305-5255 or on the web at ericshoptock.com

WAYSIDE'S "WELCOMING"

Groups From Across Virginia Celebrate The New Center For Popular Education

By Josh Diamond

Conceived of by a core of activists from across Virginia, the Wayside Center for Popular Education, located outside Charlottesville and convenient to the upper South, held its inaugural "welcoming" weekend in mid-July.

More than 150 organizers, activists, and community members turned out for the event, coming from North Carolina, West Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia, as well as from Virginia itself.

I have been working as a board member for the Wayside Center for the past year, involved in organizing, fundraising, and the hard work of refurbishing the 25-acre farm and its 19th-century farmhouse.

But that Saturday, as I helped to get ready, I had yet to feel the power of the communities and people who are now becoming Wayside, who are coming together to create something big and powerful and connected.

As an organizer, I often get caught up in the daily work and violence of an unjust world. Seldom do I step back to feel, see, and reflect on the state of the movement and on the political work that so many are doing across Virginia and the South.

Getting ready for Wayside's opening event, I found myself in such a space. But that changed as Madre Tierra, a woman's collective from Fredericks-



Organizers of Virginia's new Wayside Center for Popular Education demonstrated at the U.S. Social Forum.

PHOTO/AARON SAMSEL

burg, began to arrive, along with an immigrant-rights network in western North Carolina.

I began to feel the energy that comes with being among caring people and sharing the radical love of a group with a mutual understanding: We are here to create the fundamental change required to build a just world.

Located 25 minutes south of Charlottesville, in Faber, Va., Wayside sits at the base of the Blue Ridge Mountains at the bend of Cove Creek. It provides a comfortable and relaxing rural retreat space that focuses on justice and fosters reflection.

Both the space and the staff assist groups and individuals in thinking stra-

tegically about growing and sustaining political movements and making long-term change.

Throughout the weekend, a wide variety of people and groups came together in this spirit -- cultural workers, labor and immigrant-rights organizers, faith leaders, environmental activists, GLBTQ-rights proponents, and community members.

For those of us who had worked many months getting Wayside ready, the stress quickly melted away. It was replaced by affirmation that, when people working for justice come together with intention, they begin to make connections across the issues they are working on, collectively creating a broad political movement for social and economic justice.

As part of the welcoming, this communication was made possible by prioritizing the interpreting of English and Spanish as an issue of justice.

Currently the Wayside Center is inviting rentals from justice-seeking community groups and non-profits. Sierra Club youth and Virginia Organizing (the new name of the statewide Virginia Organizing Project) have already used the center.

For more information on upcoming programs, as well as how to be involved in the project or how you can use the space, visit: www.waysidecenter.org or email info@waysidecenter.org

Oil Spill, Kalamazoo River Hidden Dangers Beneath Us

By Rev. Mary Gault

There are many dangers lurking unseen around us. On July 26 one such danger reared its ugly head due to a broken pipeline that spewed one million gallons of extremely toxic oil into a tributary of the Kalamazoo River near Marshall, Michigan. Along the way to the city of Kalamazoo wildlife became oil coated, fish and other wildlife died, a ban on water use on wells near the river was enacted, 200 homes along the river were evacuated, 26 people were hospitalized, many people that lived and worked near the river experienced nausea and headaches, the plant life is contaminated as well as the soil in and around the river. Enbridge, the company responsible, says they will have it all cleaned up by the end of September.

Enbridge says a lot of things. They would have you believe that they are the most responsible company when it comes to handling oil as quoted on their



Sign along Kalamazoo River.

PHOTO/DONATED

website -- "Enbridge has configured and implemented a sophisticated, reliable and accurate real-time, software-based leak detection system." So why did they first deny that the spill started

on July 26? It was because they didn't report the spill until the 27th, claiming they didn't pay attention to the 6 a.m. alarm and spikes in readings between 4 a.m. and 8 a.m. due to a planned shut down. Why did they play with words trying to indicate that this wasn't tar sands oil? Why is it that the Polaris Institute, an Ottawa-based advocacy group says the spill is the largest for Enbridge in the United States by volume? Why is it that Polaris reports that there

have been 610 spills by Enbridge between 1999 and 2008 that released more than 5.5 million gallons of oil? It is because corporations look at profit and not consequences when 40 year-old pipe-

lines are inadequately maintained and when they are sending the most toxic type of oil (tar sand) through this pipeline. Enbridge, in their plan, said the clean up will probably cost \$400 million dollars with the insurance company paying all but \$35 to \$40 million dollars.

All of us need to pay attention, for our drinking water is in danger. Enbridge has plans to expand as well as continue with what lines they already have. Another potential spill is under the St. Clair River at Detroit, Michigan where there is a dent in the pipeline. Hold our governmental agencies and Enbridge accountable as well as support methods of transportation that weans us from our addiction to oil.

Check out the map of their pipelines to see how close they are to you. Map of oil pipelines for tar sand oil. <http://oilsandstruth.org/2009-proposed-pipelines?size=large>

Race to the Top? It's a Marathon, not a Sprint!

By **Todd Alan Price**

Milwaukee Public School (MPS) teachers, students and supporters gathered at the Milwaukee French Immersion School, weathering sprinkles of rain on July 30th. Their mission was to fight against lay offs.



School protests outside of University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee.

PHOTO /JACOB FLOM

Simulation Public Education

Students performed a skit, depicting the impact of budget cuts on teacher layoffs and the resultant overcrowding of classrooms.

The point made at this SOS Million Teacher March was that too many students with too few teachers would result in students getting less attention, fewer books and deadening curriculum.

Beyond the immediate concern of teacher layoffs and budget cuts is the stark reality that our country is offering only a substandard simulation of what public education could be.

Consider the words of one of the teachers and one of the school board members. They know that public education is being made the fall guy for the thievery of Wall Street, how the working peoples are being made to pinch pennies by the state, while the corporations post record profits, after being bailed out by the state.

Tina Owen, an English teacher: "I've been to budget decision gatherings where we've gone line through line to figure out what can be cut and there was nothing there. What it really comes

down to is this: The funding formula is broken. We're getting less money from the state. We're getting less money from the federal government . . . And we're not putting money into schools, where it really needs to be!"

Terry Falk, an MPS School Board Director: "Our school board didn't like the cuts they made, but I want you to understand we were cut funding by the state of Wisconsin. And we're limited by law how much we can raise taxes. We see people saying 'we're leaving our children a huge debt' and calling it 'immoral'. But what is 'moral' about cutting classes and putting kids in [overcrowded schools]? We need to get a conversation in this country about what it means to have educated children, and how we're going to sustain that education, for the long haul."

The Inevitable Revolution

The woeful state of funding for public education has collapsed. What is known as the school funding formula, is the shame of the nation. Based on the property tax and given the bursting of the real estate bubble, the system is be-

yond broken. Property taxes alone have not provided much sense of equity or adequacy for schools across the social and economic divide today of an America where a handful of fabulously wealthy have, and a deplorably large and growing-ever-larger class of have-nots share unequal access to everything.

What if the Pentagon had to throw a bake sale to pay for its bombs and for its civilian killing drones? What if on the other hand public education was seen as a right, not a race? And what if public education were funded to a greater fraction of the defense department budget and all of the secret off-the-book agencies that continue to spend tax payer monies, had to go through line by line and make adjustments before the public?

While Congress saved some of the teacher jobs, there will be the same problem next year until we get serious and have a real conversation on public education reform

So, as School Board Director Falk urges, "Run the race, run the marathon, it's not a sprint."

THE LATEST IN AUTOMATION AND ROBOTICS

Tony Zaragoza

This column will periodically cover examples of the latest in automation and robotics around the world — from nano-robotics to large-scale industrial automation focusing primarily on the impacts these technologies have on the economy and society, including labor replacement, war, and impacts on how society operates.

Drones, otherwise known as Unmanned Aerial Combat Vehicles (UACVs), are playing a growing part in the US war on Iraq and Afghanistan. These include the Predator and the Reaper. Both the US and UK are developing new stealth drones (US: Avenger & UK: Taranis) are more difficult to be detected by radar and have the capability to fly higher, quicker and longer with a bigger payload. The US government is using drones to patrol the US-Mexico border, and South Korea has recently deployed remote control robots armed with machine guns to patrol the border between it and North Korea.

In the US, fully automated warehouses are becoming a reality as the industry is looking to reduce labor costs and improve productivity and accuracy. Some even see this as a green solution as automated warehouses would not need lighting, heating or cooling. According to the Wall Street Journal's Real Time Economics blog, structural unemployment, that fact that there are fewer jobs as more people look for work, has been going on for 30 years while over the



Warehouse robot. In the US, fully automated warehouses are becoming a reality as the industry is looking to reduce labor costs and improve productivity and accuracy.

PHOTO /FOTOSEARCH.COM

last 10-15 there has been an decrease in higher paid, and often union, manufacturing jobs while low pay, low skill service jobs have been growing. Though many are experiencing the jobless recovery with full force, many robotics and automation companies have seen the economy turn around in their favor as profits are up and sales have begun to increase again as various parts of the economy look to add new technologies to their arsenal.

In India's Detroit, Chennai, one plant has recently installed ninety-two robots to do nearly one third of the work of

the plant. In Kenya, the Chemelil Sugar Company is moving forward with automation of some key sugar processing operations to cut costs in order to compete with other sugar producers. Other labor replacing technologies may follow in Kenya resulting in fewer jobs in the country. Calgary Canada's Parking Authority will lay off over 30 workers who are being replaced by a computerized system.

Many of these new computerized machines could be used to make life easier for all the people of the planet, but instead they are used to make war and make money for corporations. For links to the news stories covered here go to PeoplesTribune.org.

Links for Website:

Deploying Drones in U.S. Skies http://www.robotictrends.com/service_robotics/article/deploying_drones_in_us_skies/

Killer Drones Get Stealthy — <http://www.wired.com/dangerroom/2010/07/killer-drones-get-stealthy/>

BAE reveals UK's first combat robot aircraft — <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/d0150558-8de4-11df-9153-00144feab49a.html/>

Why Warehouses are Adopting Automation — <http://www.supply-chaindigital.com/industry-focus/warehousing-and-storage/why-warehouses-are-adopting-automation/>

Should We Replace Workers With Robots to Save Energy? — <http://www.fastcompany.com/1553957/should-we-replace-workers-with-robots-to-save-energy/>

replace-workers-with-robots-to-save-energy/

Secondary Sources: Basel III, Structural Unemployment, Securitization — <http://blogs.wsj.com/economics/2010/07/27/secondary-sources-basel-iii-structural-unemployment-securitization/>

Rockwell Automation 3Q Profit More Than Triples — <http://www.businessweek.com/ap/financialnews/D9H-83KC02.htm/>

Siemens Returns To Growth As Order Intake Surges — <http://online.wsj.com/article/BT-CO-20100729-707061.html/>

Honeywell 2Q Profit Up 4% Amid Improving Sales; View Raised — <http://www.automatedtrader.net/real-time-dow-jones/7204/honeywell-2q-profit-up-4-amid-improving-sales-view-raised/>

ParkPlus automation will cause 33 city job losses — <http://www.calgaryherald.com/business/ParkPlus+automation+will+cause+city+losses/3253924/story.html>

Ford Motor India Hires Robots — <http://blogs.wsj.com/indiar-ealtime/2010/07/09/ford-motor-india-hires-robots/?KEYWORDS=ROBOT/>

Chemelil eyes automation in bid to boost efficiency — <http://www.business-dailyafrica.com/Chemelil%20eyes%20automation%20in%20bid%20to%20boost%20efficiency/-/539444/957942/-/70c7xr/-/>

Long Beach Hyatt Protest

By Barry Sacks

More than 100 people, including many local hotel workers and their community supporters protested the unjust and unfair treatment of Hyatt's workers in Long Beach, California, as part of a larger protest directed at Hyatt hotels in 15 cities in North America, on Thursday, July 22.

Outside the hotel, protestors, mostly wearing the red shirts of UNITE-HERE, picketed and shouted chants in English and Spanish.

Benjamin Cuison, who cleans hallways and rooms at the Hyatt, was picketing. Cuison said, "We want a union because they are mistreating us. If we had a union, the union could protect us."

Marcelino Due, who works in the hotel's kitchen, also picketed. Due complained how the hotel harassed the worksite activists by cutting their hours and by giving them extra work.

Music student Menchie Caliboso, who is home for the summer, carried a sign, which read, "Community Members United for Responsible Hotels."

Inside the hotel, 30 protestors, including members of Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice, first listened to Long Beach Area Peace Network member Naida Tushnet speak.



Local hotel workers and their community supporters protest the unjust and unfair treatment of Hyatt's workers in Long Beach, California.

PHOTO /BELLA PEYSER

Tushnet said, "We're here today in solidarity with over a thousand workers and community members across America who are standing up against Hyatt. Hyatt Long Beach treats its workers unfairly. Workers are denied meal breaks, denied rest breaks, and overtime pay These workers are forced to clean up to 30 rooms a day ... twice what most hotels ask their employees to do. Workers have suffered crippling injuries on the job here."

After Tushnet spoke, a brief prayer followed. The 30 protestors left with linked arms and no arrests.

Long Beach Fourth District Councilman Patrick O'Donnell, a member

of the California Teachers Association, told the protestors, "We (the city of Long Beach) have subsidized the construction of these hotels. Long Beach has supported the hotel industry. It is time for the hotel industry to support Long Beach. Tourism is the backbone of Long Beach and the workers are the backbone for tourism."

According to the Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy, Long Beach taxpayers have subsidized the Hyatt with more than \$76 million toward the building and operation costs of the hotel. While no one was arrested in Long Beach, 152 were arrested in San Francisco, 63 in West Hollywood, 41 in Indi-

anapolis, dozens in Honolulu and about 25 in Chicago.

The Pritzker family founded the Hyatt hotels. Penny Pritzker, a leading family member, served as the national finance chair of the Obama presidential campaign and is on the Obama administration's Economic Recovery Advisory Board. Pritzker opposes the Employee Free Choice Act. According to the blog Truthout "Cozying up to Obama was one of a series of calculated moves to repair the family's damaged personal reputation and to cultivate a carefully crafted image of social concern. For example, the Pritzker Foundation recently made a \$10 million, tax-deductible donation to Stanford University 'to create a scholarship fund dedicated to supporting Chicago students with the greatest financial need.' Simultaneously, the Pritzkers continually cut staff and increase workloads at their hotels. As a result, the Hyatt had the highest reported rate of injury in 2009 for housekeepers in an academic study of 50 major hotels."

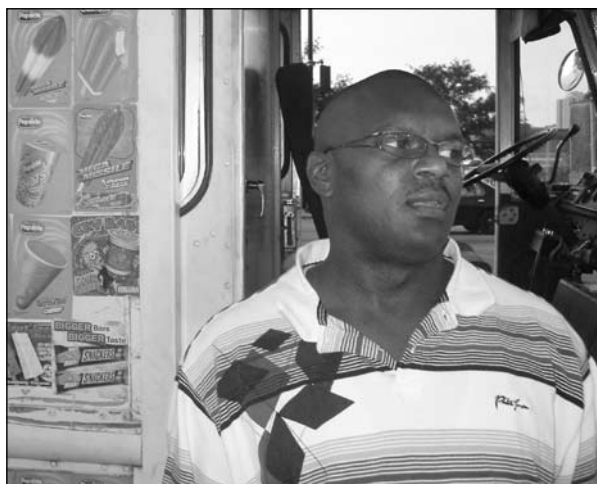
Barry Sacks is on the board of the Long Beach Area Peace Network which is concerned with peace and social justice issues.

Cabrini Green Evictions Continue

By Joe Peery

CHICAGO — As the current economic depression, referred to as the "Great Recession," continues to deepen, so does homelessness increase across the country and here in Chicago. Not only has the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) given 180-day notices to families who still occupy the last three high-rise buildings left standing in Cabrini Green, but they are also proposing to demolish the row houses, including those sections that were recently renovated. If that happens, Cabrini residents who wish to stay in this area will only have the choice of moving into mixed income buildings. At first glance, this is a real treat, in that these apartments are brand new, with amenities like balconies, gardens, dish washers, washers and dryers, etc. However, for some former Cabrini residents, such as Sam Whitaker, moving into mixed income units has proved to be little more than a pit stop on the way to homelessness.

What follows are excerpts from an interview with Sam Whitaker, an ice cream caterer and a local DJ. He has lived in Cabrini Green all of his life and is known throughout the neighborhood. He recently moved to the new mixed in-



Sam Whitaker, standing in front of his ice cream truck.

PHOTO /JOE PEERY

come building. The interview describes his eviction from that building.

PT: Why were you evicted?

San Whitaker: I had words with the property managers in my building. I lived down the hall from one of them, Ms Pittman. She came to me wrong on our very first meeting. She said, "Mr. Whitaker, I'm not here to be your friend. I'm not here for you. I work for Peter Holsten, " (the management company.)

PT: Did you feel they didn't want you there?

SW: Yeah, from day one. I'm a single Black man. My family came to see me everyday. They said my kids couldn't stay with me and I was fine with that. They were picked up and dropped off everyday. Mind you, these are my kids, so I don't see the problem with that.

PT: When did you first realize they wanted you out?

SW: Right after I first moved in. Don't get me wrong. They did me a favor moving me in, but I didn't know it was going to be Hell after that... I sent my daughter downstairs to do my laundry. They wrote me up for that. You put the card in, you take the card out, and you put the clothes in the machine. They wrote me up because I sent my daughter to do my laundry.

PT: Is there a rule against that?

SW: I have no idea. I just realized

they never gave me a copy of my lease.

PT: What does it mean that they "wrote you up?"

SW: They wrote me a warning. With this warning you get one strike. This is not baseball ladies and gentleman. One strike and you're out of here. These people have the power to say, "We don't want you here any more." And that's what my lease consisted of. I thought it was the loud music, I thought it was the travel...

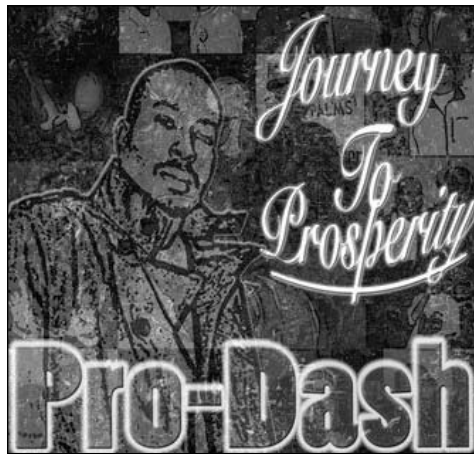
PT: Did they warn you about loud music?

SW: They wrote me up for loud music. I had surround sound system speakers on. You can hear my neighbor's toilet flush. You can hear my neighbor's blender go off. I had my music on level two. How loud can that be? Let me describe the scenery for you... thin walls. This is the situation. This was a plan built to get you in and get you out. Plain and simple as that.

Part two will appear in the next issue of the People's Tribune. It will describe Sam's effort to get help to prevent his eviction.

Hip Hop Congress Review Pro-Dash: "Journey to Pro-sperity"

By Shamako Noble



Davey D.

Out of the lights, glitter and glam that are the slick veneer of America's premier public playground, Las Vegas, comes the one-man media conglomerate, Pro-Dash aka Brandon Greene. With his second release "Journey to Pro-Sperity," Pro-Dash takes us on a journey; he takes us on a journey through his life, psyche, career, struggles and through the streets and politics of Las Vegas. Crafted and produced by Pro-Dash, "Journey to Pro-Sperity" is a landmark moment for independent Las Vegas Hip Hop, and one can only hope that the world take notice.

Boldly, Pro-Dash's "The Pro-Clamation" lays out his perspective on his origins quite clearly: "I'm from the 702 where they being trying to juice/The Mississippi of the West/where they be flying the noose." Clearly, Pro-Dash addresses the forgotten nature of Las Vegas as a city, and Nevada as a state in the West Coast Hip Hop equation, and honors the Black migration from Mississippi to Nevada where Blacks found the very thing they'd left.

The banger "Fresh Up out the West" featuring James Flye and C-Lown the

King of Spades drives home deeply the first point. The tracks deep-voiced chorus, catchy West Coast anthem approach, and funky head nod beat leave no questions that Pro Dash is from the West, "Like he never took a step." Pursuing the second point in the cut, "Rock On," Pro-Dash sneaks into his true depth, reflecting on his desire to rock on as a reflection of a people who came to the West to escape the racist oppression of the South, "Just to find the west is still racist."

Of course, Pro-Dash stays diverse with tracks like "Ms. Senorita" and "Get That Cash." His insight into the nature of a duality that pervades Sin City shines bright in the track "Night and Day." He big ups the world of emcee's and makes clear his place in it in the clever track "MC Squared."

He does a great job of keeping his eyes on the prize in tracks like "Poe Manz Ambition" and "Dreams" featuring the soul voice of Temphest Blue. All in all, this is a very well-thought-out, consistent, lyrically-strong, and catchy album. Pro-Dash keeps his level through and through, and that is — perhaps — the album's greatest strength; that level could also be the album's biggest weakness.

Again, Pro-Dash is responsible for 100% of the production on this album. I'll give him credit. At least he makes sure that it's done. But the thing is, a versatility of thought and approach is clearly displayed on this album. In the future, I would love

to see what Pro-Dash could do with a Traximillion or Rob Flow track. I would be interested to see how Pro-Dash could get down with a sound directly from Mississippi, or on some tracks with a Chicago or Detroit flavor.

The great thing is though, that this is his sophomore effort. I am eager to what his continued development and expansion in music will bring. I recommend checking out the album. You're guaranteed to dig a few if not most. Pro-Dash has taken a great step for himself on the "Journey to Pro-Sperity," and might be taking Vegas with him.



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

WHEN

Teacher used to wonder
Upon teaching math
To elementary school children

Will they use math to figure out
How many joints to sell
How much profits from the
Growing, selling, and
Paying for weed
To feed and protect their families
Of bricks
Used not to build houses
But to distribute
On campus
In the streets
From ghettos to barrios to
Upper income suburbs

Now same person wonders
Will that math be used
To figure out
How many bricks
How much concrete,
Wood, metal, glass
Will be measured
And needed
To remove the projects
And build integrated
Apartment neighborhoods
Free of gunshots
Lofty ideals
Only question remaining

For whom?

Who will have the money
To afford them
In this foreclosure economy
With undocumented immigrants
Dying in the desert
In a land that was
Once theirs
Searching for
The pot of gold
The land of milk and honey
The land of broken promises
For the few, the proud,
The reserves
Who are themselves homeless
But ready to go
And
Fight for the American nightmare
In the name of democracy

Article announced 1,300 to be evicted
From San Francisco projects
For not paying back rent
And who knows how many more
Across America
The Housing Urban Development de-
creed
Sounds more like Homelessness,
Unemployment, Destitution

Sounds more like gentrification
And ousting of the poor
Sounds more

Like emptying the cities
Of people power

When will we
Stop listening to the capitalist class
Who constantly
Through commerce,
Work, school, community
Accuse the left
Of crimes not committed

Can we risk it
For a growing number
Not today
But soon
It will be us
Or the capitalist class
Who will rule

— Yolanda Catzalco

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VOICES FROM BENTON HARBOR, MI

PROTEST AT JACK NICKLAUS GOLF COURSE

The following is excerpted from a statement by Elizabeth Hunter.

On August 10, about 100 people from Benton Harbor and throughout the state and country gathered to protest Whirlpool's theft of Benton Harbor's land. This was the day Whirlpool opened it's Jack Nicklaus Signature golf course, despite two court cases pending. Marchers

works in "community development" for Whirlpool.) Afterwards a rally was held with speakers from Benton Harbor and elsewhere. Their insightful words made evident their understanding of the era of corporate control we now live under. Government and corporations as one (fascism). And, how corporations prey on the poor. □



stopped at the golf course entry where they were met by at least four sheriff's deputies, six Benton Harbor Township police, and four Benton Harbor police. The chanting was loud, especially when Julie Swidwa of the local Herald Palladium, attempted to interview Rev. Edward Pinkney, organizer of the demonstration and local NAACP president. Pinkney shouted, "Jack Nicklaus and Julie go home. Julie is one-sided and Whirlpool pays your bills!!" This was chanted over and over — the people let Swidwa hear what is thought of her "reporting," especially the hit jobs she's done on Pinkney over a decade. There was no interview. Police escorted her away. Other chants included, "Jack Nicklaus Go Home!," "Marcus Robinson Go Home!," and "Jean Klock Park was deeded to the people!" (Robinson

Excerpts From Speeches At the Rally

"I want to see unity. We must have unity. Black, white, red, brown, yellow. You must link the issues. It's all about divide and conquer. We will not be divided and Lord knows we will not be conquered. The power of the people is stronger than the man's technology. The struggle in Benton Harbor is being carried out throughout this nation. These apartheid dogs are taking land from the people. We are the people. Today we start with 200, 300. Tomorrow it will be thousands." — *Larry Pinkney, MN*

"What is the worst part to me is the way the courts have acted to facilitate this entire thing. ... that they would set aside the most basic process of democracy, and set aside a recall election so

they could make a few more dollars. The people of Berrien County have to remove these people. And I mean Jennifer Granholm too. The Democrats are just as bad as the Republicans." — *John Mann, Kalamazoo*

"We are still dealing with the same issues — police terrorism, political prisoners ... they are taking this land, the occupying army ... a lot of people might say Jack Nicklaus is this famous superstar, let him get this little piece of land, no big deal ... but go check history, the system is never satisfied. We have to send a loud and clear message. Whirlpool is symbolic to BP; Whirlpool is the BP of Benton Harbor. We have to draw the connection from them making this move on this land here to the police terrorism in Oakland California. Power to the people." — *Chairman Fred Hampton, Jr., Chicago*

"This week in downtown Detroit they are talking about taking the land right on the water. They are talking about taking the land in every major city in this country. They are talking about not just the land, but your heart, your soul, stealing everything and then rolling your bones over. We are standing on the bones of Native Americans that were on this land before we even got here. We will not allow our bones to be rooted down without a fight. This is the fight we know that we will win. Rev. Pinkney has fought a valiant battle. We stand with Rev. Pinkney. He epitomizes what it means to be a true warrior in this battle." — *Ron Scott, Detroit*

"I came up here not only to support this struggle but to stand shoulder to shoulder with you. You've got friends

in Southern Illinois. Whirlpool closed down our plant and threw 1000 people out of work. It took \$35 million out of the coffers and people are hurting bad. We don't have any industry coming in, its all closing down and leaving. These corporations are planning on privatizing everything, all of our land, all of our resources, taking our water, our air. The only people they are depriving are the poor. They can't take from the rich. They're taking it from us poor people. We have to stop it now. We have to make this a movement not just from Benton Harbor or the U.S. We have to gather our forces and make this an international movement." — *Cathy Talbott, Southern IL*

"All is not well here in Benton Harbor. Look at our educational system. Whirlpool started this 40 years ago. They came in with a plan to make all the people illiterate. They corrupted our

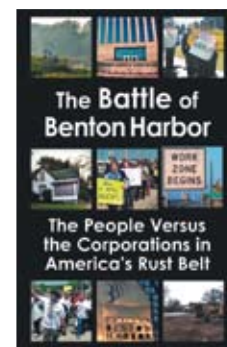
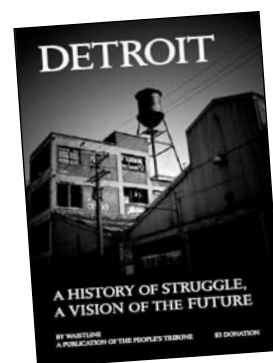


school system, took away our hospital, you have to go to St. Joseph to see the doctor. I want the people here in Benton Harbor to wake up. We have to come together. We can't fight this giant alone. We have to unite. Whirlpool is the devil; people are tired, people are broken and broke. It's time to rise up, its going to take doing what we're doing here today."

— *Belinda Brown, formerly of Benton Harbor*

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