

PEOPLE'S TRIBUNE

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State employee unions protest in Detroit against proposed cuts to their contracts by the governor.

PHOTO/DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM

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PRISON HUNGER STRIKERS ARE FIGHTING FOR ALL OF US!

EDITORIAL

A hunger strike begun July 1 by prisoners in the notorious maximum-security prison Pelican Bay, on the north coast of California, has spread to at least 11 of California's 33 prisons. At one point over 6,600 inmates were refusing to eat, in solidarity with their fellows' demands, across the racial lines used to divide them and separated by distance and lack of communication. Each day more join this protest against inhumane and torturous conditions. Their demands include: an end to group punishment and administrative abuse, adequate health care, no coerced snitching, better food, warm clothing, exposure to natural light, and one phone call a month.

In Pelican Bay and the maximum security wings of many other California prisons, cells have no windows and are soundproofed so prisoners can't communicate with each other. The prisoners spend over 22 hours a day in these sensory-deprived and cramped conditions, released for an hour a day to walk around in a sort of dog-run, surrounded by concrete walls and sometimes a concrete roof; they never get fresh air, see outside, or a glimpse of natural light or the sky. They are not allowed to touch or embrace family members, and visits and phone calls are severely restricted. Some have spent 30 or 40 years in these solitary-confinement units. As former prisoner and supporter of the strikers Manuel LaFontaine testified at a recent San Francisco rally, "the only time they are touched by another human being is when shackles are put on their ankles".

There are 2.29 million men and women incarcerated in the US, almost half the world's prison population. More young Black males are in the prison system in the US than are enrolled in colleges or universities. More and more, this is the future young people of all colors and national origins face. As capitalism fails and jobs disappear,

entitlements are cut, and more people fall into poverty, all the ruling class has to offer is to openly unleash the police on the poor and young, locking away those they no longer need to exploit. In Wisconsin, where the governor recently stripped public employee unions of their collective bargaining rights, these formerly secure jobs are being replaced by prison labor, and chain gangs are back. The working class—inside prison walls and without—is in a fight for its life against the rising fascism of a ruling class clearly unfit to rule.

In Denmark, where the prison system is based on rehabilitation, sentences are short—6.2 months is the average—and re-offending rates are low. Only two percent of Danish prisoners spend more than two years in jail. In 1930, corporal and capital punishment were abolished, as well as hard prison labor. The priority of the system is to rehabilitate and move people back into society; life inside is made as much as possible like normal life on the out-

side. Married couples live together in their own wing, children live with their parents until age three, and inmates are allowed to form stable relationships with one another. Many of the guards are women, who are able to interact in a positive way with both male and female inmates. There are no bars, even in the maximum security prisons. They provide this, as well as a high standard of living and social services in their society, by taxing the corporations, instead of warehousing people in concentration camps.

The brave hunger strikers in California's overcrowded, punitive prison system—many of them at this writing very weak and near death—are putting their lives on the line as a revolutionary act. Their demands for the basics of life and dignity are objectively demands for a new society, one that values each human life, and organizes itself to do so.



Protest in San Francisco in support of the Pelican Bay prisoner strike. Prisoners spend over 22 hours a day in solitary, sensory-deprived, cramped conditions. These strikers are fighting for all of us.

PHOTO CREDIT/SARAH MENEFFEE

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

An economic system that doesn't feed, clothe and house its people must be and will be overturned and replaced with a system that meets the needs of the people. To that end, this paper is a tribune of those struggling to create such a new economic system. It is a vehicle to bring the movement together, to create a vision of a better world and a strategy to achieve it.

Labor-replacing electronic technology is permanently eliminating jobs and destroying the foundation of the capitalist system. The people's needs can only be met by building a cooperative society where the socially necessary means of production are owned by society, not by the corporations.

We welcome articles and artwork from those who are engaged in the struggle to build a new society that is of, by and for the people. We rely on readers and contributors to fund and distribute this paper.

The People's Tribune, formerly published by the League of Revolutionaries for a New America, is now an independent newspaper with an editorial board based in Chicago.

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

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

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Bipartisanship and the Budget Battles: FIG LEAF FOR CORPORATE CONTROL

COVER STORY

The August 2 federal budget agreement expresses bipartisanship taken to an extreme level. Bipartisanship? What is that? When Americans go to the polls they do not vote for half of one party's program and half of the other party's program. If that were true, why vote? This charade was open for all to see after the 2008 elections. The Democrats—the so-called party of the people—controlled all three branches of the government, yet, without the blessings of the Republicans, they refused to carry out the program that put them in office. Those blessings came after the Democrats accepted the billionaire corporations' program and deserted the one that put them in office.

Today, another bigger and more dangerous charade is going on. It is called the battle for the budget. As in any battle, the first thing is to scare the hell out of friend and foe. Make your friends blindly follow you for fear of the alternative and disarm your foe in fear of your threats. The boogiemaster is that the USA is broke. "It is broke because the poor people are living too high on the hog. Only the rich can save the country if they get more of your money! We have to cut the entitlements! The alternative is worse than 1931."

Who do they think they are kidding? This is not 1931 and we have access to information. We can ask questions like "Who made off with the \$16,000,000,000 in funds for Iraq that the government says is unaccounted for?" Some body got that money.

Here is a tiny glimpse of what the corporate stooges in the government recently gave to their benefactors.

\$1.2 million to study the breeding habits of the woodchuck.

\$150,000 to study the Hatfield-McCoy feud.

\$1 million to study why people don't ride bikes to work.

\$219,000 to teach college students how to watch television.

This was your money. No wonder they are screaming "broke"!

Just a little more:



CARTOON/ANDY WILLIS

The government watchdogs several years ago reported that "There will be unmelted snowballs in Hades before this Congress agrees to cut out the pork in the farm bill headed for a vote within the next week, so President Bush should get his veto pen ready. At an estimated cost of at least \$285 billion over ten years, this will be the most expensive and regressive farm bill ever."

Nothing is new! Been going on for years and they are still crying "Broke!"

Let's take a look at corporate welfare: "The \$150 billion for corporate subsidies and tax benefits eclipses the annual budget deficit of \$130 billion. It's more than the \$145 billion paid out annually for the core programs of the social welfare state" (Boston Globe se-

ries on Corporate Welfare.)

America is still the richest country in the world. The problem is that the richest individuals and corporations have stolen most of that money. They are now reorganizing the police, the CIA, the FBI, the Justice Department and all the rest of the gun toters to protect them from the people when they wake up to what they have done and are doing.

It is going to take more than just "voting the bums out." The entire structure is so rotten and corrupt we must think in terms of making public property out of the private property that keeps them rich and powerful and keeps us poor and weak. Taxing the rich is the place to start.

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.peopletribune.org.

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DEMOCRACY UNDER ATTACK AS POVERTY AND JOBLESSNESS INCREASE

By Ethel Long-Scott and Joyce Mills

OAKLAND – July 1, 2010. Chanting “Tax the rich, Tax the rich, don’t put seniors in the ditch” and “Tax the corporations, don’t starve the population,” Oaklanders of all colors, ages and mobility levels rallied at County Social Services against the disastrous effects of the new California State budget.

After months of bitter partisan fighting over deficits, California’s Legislature has passed a budget for the new fiscal year that results in cuts to every aspect of life, cuts on top of those already made over the past three years to the State budget.

The new budget cuts annual funding for K-12 public schools by \$6.3 billion—on top of \$6.3 billion already taken away from schools since 2008-09! Many school districts have already cut programs badly needed by the children whose futures depend on good public schools.

The new budget makes more devastating cuts to CALWORKS, the program set up to help poor parents get a pittance of support when “welfare” was destroyed. Already on life-support due to \$3.5 billion in spending cuts since 2008-09, the cuts will also reduce the time families can spend in CALWORKS from 60 months to 48 months.

There will be “dramatic” cuts to Medi-Cal, California’s Medicaid program. Some 7.7 million low-income families, seniors and the disabled will see limits placed on doctor visits, costs raised for

hospital care and emergency room visits and a ten percent cut for payments to health providers will mean more doctors will stop seeing sick and needy people insured by Medi-Cal.

The People’s Tribune spoke to many at the rally to protest the cuts. Although there for different immediate needs, the participants showed a high level of unity and sophistication when it comes to the real answers to the crisis we face.

Latanya from St. Mary’s Senior Center came because she knows what it is to be hungry, and knows she will see a lot more hunger with these cuts. “This is here in America—people, c’mon!—right here at home . . . let’s take back from the corporations, they have taken everything from us, let’s take back what they took from us.”

Maggie from the UFCW (United Food and Commercial Workers) was there representing union members being hurt by the cuts.

Linda and Melanie were there because the cuts are unfair to children and seniors alike. “Children 3-7 years old are on the street and in foster care. Seniors here are hungry and scared of the future. We are cutting the next generations off . . . we need to take the money from the corporations and make them pay their own way.”

Ashley from Lifetime was there because she is being “timed off” of CALWORKS. “I’m already halfway homeless... I won’t be able to feed my son, clothe my son, buy him shoes, give him



Oaklanders converge at County Social Services to highlight the effects of the California State budget on them and their families. PHOTO/AUSTIN LONG-SCOTT

what he needs on only \$300 a month. You can’t get out of poverty in four years! Poverty is everywhere and this is going to make it worse, unless we come together and change it. We need to keep these rallies and press conferences going... and effective.”

Michelle was there to fight the cuts to In Home Supportive Services (IHSS). “Last three years we’ve been hit hard.

These cuts will make things much worse. We’re going to see people dying in the nursing homes. The Democrats have given in to the Republicans one more time. I’m tired of it... This is a worse budget than Arnold’s (former Republican Gov. Schwarzenegger), but people are willing to go for it because Brown is a Democrat.”

We don’t have to live like this.

Corporations Win California Budget Fights: Working Class Must Stand Up

By Ethel Long-Scott and Joyce Mills

California’s budget is important to the rest of the nation—and to the world—because it illustrates how corporate interests are attempting to capture elected officials of both major parties so that the government turns its back on workers and does the bidding of the corporations.

California Budget Project director Jean Ross noted in the Washington Post, “The bad news is that the legislature . . . can cut, but it cannot tax . . . We have tax loopholes that everybody agrees are either inefficient or that set up perverse incentives for businesses to move out of state, and we can’t close the loopholes. So we instead cut funding for higher education.”

Why is the Washington Post so concerned? Because the budget that Democrats brought to California is “almost exactly the budget process Republicans want to bring to Washington.” That’s what the GOP’s latest debt-ceiling demand was all about.

The reality is that what we are experiencing in California is part and parcel of a bi-partisan effort to respond to the needs of corporate America—and corporate interests world-wide. Britain faces its first referendum in years. Corporate interests world-wide are aware that voters are angry with the kind of corporate control over decision-making we see here in the U.S. “With technology making it easier to hold referendums,” notes “The Economist”, “direct democracy could be on the march.”



PHOTO/AUSTIN LONG-SCOTT

There is money in California. In two years alone, Californians will have added more than \$100 billion to their personal incomes . . . \$20 billion of that new income will go to the very richest Californians. More than 60 percent of all income earned goes to the richest 20 percent, which would mean \$60 billion in income to people who are already richer than four of every five Californians. Through tax breaks, more than half of California’s corporations pay little to no taxes. Major corporations like G.E. and oil companies in California pay NO taxes.

Like Californians, people across the country and the world face a choice. We can demand that government guarantee an economy that works for the needs of society as a whole or one that works for the corporations. In Oakland it has become a life and death struggle for too many of us. This is a fight for democracy and the future itself.

“I WANT TO DISTRIBUTE THE PEOPLE’S TRIBUNE”

I picked up your newspaper from my dearest friend, and I am so excited that somebody is speaking the truth. We need your papers all over the city. I have a small income but if there is any way I can help please let me know. I know people in different places and I am going to try to call radio stations and read some of the articles. I do housekeeping for a living. I give my money to missionaries but I want to give \$10 a month to your paper. How many papers can I get? I want to take it to churches, restaurants, and business offices. I will go to all the major stops. I want to do it in a strategic way. I want to meet people one to one. People don’t even know that the things your newspaper reports on are happening. People need to see the pictures to see the action. A lot of things are going on in the West Coast; people need to hear what is going on back East, too.

— Michelle Grammer, Portland, OR

“ILLEGAL” IN AN UNJUST WORLD: What is the Fourth of July to the Undocumented Immigrant?

By Ted Quant

NEW ORLEANS – July 4, 2011. In 1852, Frederick Douglass spoke at a 4th of July celebration in Rochester, New York. Douglass asked the crowd: “What, to the American slave, is your Fourth of July?” He insisted that Americans open their eyes to the injustice staring them in the face: while they celebrated their freedom, millions of African people were enslaved.

Two years before Douglass spoke, the federal government had started to strictly enforce the Fugitive Slave Act of 1793. This law demanded that white citizens in free states help capture runaway slaves, and return them into slavery. The law criminalized anyone who helps a “fugitive slave” escape “directly or indirectly” or “harbors, conceals” an escaped slave. White abolitionists, conductors of the underground railroad, and religious leaders who recognized the dignity of the enslaved African were all criminals according to this law—along with the runaway slaves.

Five years after Douglass’ speech, the Supreme Court upheld the Fugitive Slave Act. In the Dred Scott decision, the Court said: “The Negro lies so far

below whites on the scale of created beings that they have no rights that whites are bound to respect.”

These were the laws of the land that Frederick Douglass was expected to cel-

brate on the 4th of July.

And who was illegal? Runaway slaves, their resistance movement, and the whites who acted in the true spirit of the 4th of July—for “liberty and justice for all.”

So I ask you: what does our Fourth of July mean today, to those who American society designates as “illegal?”

In New Orleans, where I live, thousands of undocumented immigrants—the “illegals”—are targeted by racist policies and practices under the pretext of rule of law. In state after state, millions of “illegal” immigrant workers and their families are under attack from racial profiling bills. And as the federal government carries out the highest rate of deportations under any administration, the daily humiliations of immigrants have overwhelmed the imagination: women are afraid to give birth in hospitals, because immigration may be there. Students back from school have returned to empty homes, turned on their TV sets, and watched news reports of their parents caught in immigration raids. In my own city, the immigrants who arrived after Katrina to help us rebuild our city, now live in terror because a broken tail-light, a traffic

violation, or just being Latino can lead to their deportation.

What does our 4th of July mean to these immigrants? What does it mean to be “illegal” in an unjust world?

My ancestors were fugitives from an immoral system. They built a resistance that was illegal. The white families who hid them, and the pastors who gave them safe harbor, chose to become illegal with them.

Today, laws being passed can only have taken their wording from the fugitive slave laws of 150 years ago—criminalizing anyone who assists, harbors, employs, transports or conceals undocumented immigrants.

The same actors that are leading the fight to criminalize immigrants are also decertifying unions, and passing laws to make it more difficult for African Americans, poor people and students to register and to vote.

Will we betray the legacy of those who risked their own lives to fight for our liberty—those who became illegal for our freedom?

On the 4th of July, the defense of the immigrant worker is the defense of a deeply-held belief: that human dignity cannot be at odds with the law – and when it is, the law is wrong, not us.

Ted Quant is a long-time labor and civil rights organizer. Ted can be contacted at quant@loyno.edu.



New Orleans Protest in support of immigrant workers. The same forces that are fighting to criminalize immigrants, are also decertifying unions, and passing laws to make it more difficult for the poor to register and to vote.

PHOTO/TED QUANT

DC’s New SHARC Homeless Advocacy Group SHARC Has Got Some Bite Now

By Eric Sheptock

Well, it’s been 3 months since several homeless people and their allies began to hold weekly meetings in the basement of Washington, DC’s CCNV (Community for Creative Non-Violence) Homeless Shelter. As you may recall from a previous article, several others and myself were discussing the impending budget cuts to Human Services while at a COHHO (Coalition of Housing and Homeless Organizations) meeting on April 14th when someone asked, “Who’s going to tell the poor and the homeless about these budget cuts that are going to affect them?” As a result of that question, arrangements were made to meet every Monday in the basement of the shelter.

On May 18th we held a march and about 75 people marched from the shelter to the Wilson Building (City Hall) to protest the threatened budget cuts to much-needed social services, joining another 150 protesters who didn’t march with us. When all was said and done, we had over 200 people inundat-

ing the DC Council with our demands to save Human Services.

On May 25th the DC council voted on the budget and restored funding for homeless shelters which had been removed in the mayor’s proposed budget. They partially funded other Human Services that had been defunded in the mayor’s proposal. But the DC Council must vote twice on all legislation and then send it to Capitol Hill for a congressional review. So, we did additional council visits with much smaller groups on June 10th and 13th, the latter event having been dubbed the “SHARC Attack.” (SHARC became the official name of the group by majority vote on June 27th and stands for Shelter, Housing And Respectful Change.) On June 14th the DC Council held its second vote on the budget, leaving the advocacy community somewhat disappointed.

While they found \$17 million to make up for the \$20.5 million projected budget shortfall in homeless services for FY 2012, they didn’t replenish the \$18.4 million that the mayor took from the Housing Production Trust Fund (HPTF) which is used to build affordable hous-

ing. The council also renegged on the list of budget priorities (a list of services for which they’ll replenish funding if they find the money during quarterly budget forecasts) by moving various Human Services further down that list and decreasing the likelihood that those services will have their funding replenished. We were able to save the shelters but not the affordable housing, making this a partial victory for the advocacy community and the homeless.

Within the first couple of weeks, attendance at our meetings peaked at over 50 people in attendance and then dropped off to about 5 people. It has since risen to 15 or so. But the level of attendance isn’t the only thing that has changed. The meetings have become more orderly and there is a higher level of commitment amongst the attendees. As it turns out, the homeless are a very disenfranchised lot of people. Furthermore, many of them lack prior experience as community organizers or advocates. Then there are the feelings that people have a need to vent. All of this made for some disorderly, emotion-filled meetings at the onset. People seem to have gotten many frustrations off of their chests at this point and have begun taking on different tasks.

Several of us met with DC Councilman Jim Graham who has oversight of the Dept. of Human Services on June 20th to discuss a broad array of issues being faced by the homeless. Mr. Graham asked that we formalize our demands by putting them on paper which has now become the focus of our group. Having the ear of the councilman has not only given our group a sense of direction; it has also given us the lead on other advocacy groups that are still grappling with the question of how to become more proactive rather than simply reacting to the mayor’s unfavorable budget proposal.

Though still in its infancy, SHARC is becoming a political venue for Washington, DC’s homeless community since developing political power is the only way that we can hope to ever effect positive change. But, unlike my friend Cheri Honkala whom I’m helping with her campaign for sheriff of Philadelphia, we have no immediate plans to run for political office within the existing system. We intend to put pressure on elected officials to do better by the dispossessed of the city, but look forward to the day when complete system change will be possible. Even so, the SHARC has got some bite!

A New Economic Model is Needed says Labor Leader

Sandy Reid of the People's Tribune interviewed Richard Monje, Vice President of Workers United.

People's Tribune: What is the significance of the state budget battles?

Richard Monje: The industrialization that took place in the Midwest with the explosion of auto and appliance production was the pivotal thing that spurred growth in the 1930s, 40s, 50s. This greatly impacted the construction of the cities. At that time, there were correlations between people's expectations and how goods and services were distributed. The industrial production set a framework, but over the past 30 years, with the destruction of capitalism, jobs and investment have shifted from the U.S. So the investment that creates the basis for the distribution of goods and services has been eroded over a long period of time. The current wave of attacks against workers occurred by shifting the tax base from the wealthy and the corporations paying their "fair share," to the workers. This is the construction of a new economic model for cities and states. It is not an accident. It has been designed. For example, General Motors asked 14 cities for tax abatements to the tune of millions and millions of dollars. This is part of the design, which includes the more brazen attacks on state, city and county workers and utilizing the budget to attack them. Unfortunately, most Democrats are as much a part of this design as are the Republicans.

PT: How did they pull this off?

RM: They have used both economic policies and political pro-

grams. Political programs separate the self-interests of groupings of workers. Workers who work in the private sector are put in opposition to public employees. This separating out is the same thing they have done historically. They would demand concessions from an auto plant in Detroit. If they didn't get it, they would ask a plant in Dallas to accept those concessions to guarantee them the work. They would constantly play off one group in opposition to another. That political program of separation, whether in the form of anti-immigrant activity, or attacking those receiving welfare or food stamps or any service from the government, is a way of systematically consolidating individual political foundations for different groups of workers. This is opposed to a collective political

foundation with collective interests. The conscious deconstruction has coincided with a political program. First Clinton and now Obama is continuing to carry out those neo-liberal programs that are utilized all across the world to deconstruct the distribution of goods and services. This is now expanding to a debate in this country around Social Security and Medicare, and over healthcare and who should get it, how you get it, what is the role of a job in getting these necessities and what is the future of work in this country? It is not a debate about the economic model we should have, in terms of the distribution of goods and services, including how people get their necessities of life—food, clothing and shelter. Those are the fundamental discussions that should be taking place

—new economic models and then the building of the political foundation to support those economic models.

PT: How can vision change society?

RM: When we look at the deconstruction of capitalism there appears to be a frustration that nothing can be done. That's farthest from the truth. Today, the opportunity exists to recapture our historical direction as a country and as a people. It requires a rededication by sections of American society to understand what has ended and what has begun and to recognize the first step that needs to be taken to build a new economic model for our people and perhaps the world. What are the steps? First, it requires a reawakening of the thirst for knowledge. We certainly have that inspiration as individuals when we strive to solve the problems of our family. We recognize that we can only solve those problems if tied into a community, and therefore participate in the struggle to protect our community and our family by participating in political debate and the construction of a vision of how should our family live in this community and country. So reconnecting those important elements is the greatest characteristic of the American people. If you look at anything positive that has happened in American history, it is those conscious acts by groups of individuals to build that vision and to make it a reality. That's what we're all about.

In the September, 2011 People's Tribune, Monje will discuss the next steps for labor and whether there is motion toward a third party in America.



Demonstrators in Chicago confront a gathering of executives from some of the world's most powerful corporations. Protesters call for the corporations to "Give it back!"

PHOTO/BRETT JELINEK

WHAT "TAKING OVER THE CORPORATIONS" MEANS

From the Editors

Our readers are asking what we mean by the slogan, "society must take over the corporations before the corporations take over the society." Here's what we mean:

We live in a capitalist society where things such as the land, factories and water—socially necessary means of production—are privately owned by a handful of giant corporations. Under this system, if you don't have a job and money to buy the things that corporations produce, you freeze, starve, or die from a lack of healthcare. Is this right? Should individuals have the right to own and profit from what we need to survive and thrive?

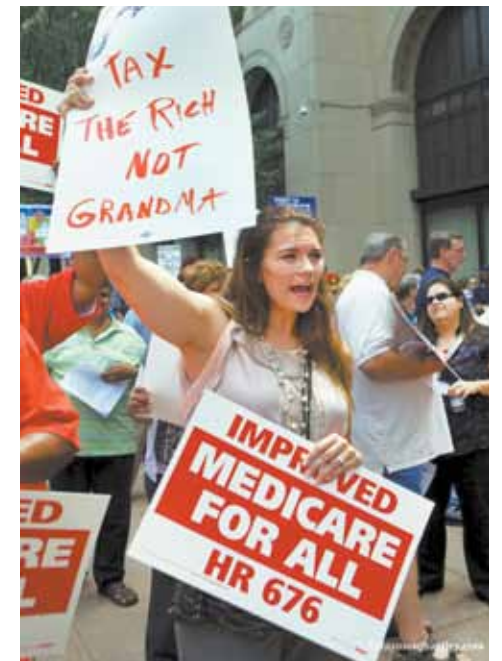
Today, society is changing, but in whose interests? More and more workers are permanently losing their jobs to automation and plant closures. Fami-

lies don't know where their next meal is coming from. We simply have to determine other ways to run the economy. Ultimately, we need to create a new cooperative society. Such a society would distribute what is produced according to need (not money). Each of us would give to society our talents and skills. Private corporate property would become public property. The alternative is a fascist society where government and corporations merge to protect their interests, where people have no rights or ability to survive.

We need to gain the political power to change the society in our favor. To do so, we must win the people to new ideas: One is that corporations do not have the right to own and profit from the sale of the things we need. Two, that we don't need to sacrifice for the "betterment" of the corporations. Three, that corporations must be substantially taxed. Fear

not. Taxing the corporations will not prevent them from creating jobs. The corporations are not creating jobs because computers and robots create more profit than wage labor. The jobs are not coming back. We have to go forward to a new society.

The first step is to tax the rich. They should pay more than their "fair share." They should pay for the trillion dollar federal and state deficits (which they created by stealing our money). Next is the demand for the government to take over the giant corporations, and run them in our interests—not corporate interests. These steps will create the conditions for a government of, by and for the people, where all socially necessary means of production is publicly owned, and where all people have a fulfilling life.



Demonstrations in Detroit protest the governor's proposed budget cuts which will cut the contracts of state employee unions.

PHOTO/DAYMONJHARTLEY

LABOR WINS FIRST PHASE OF CAMPAIGN AGAINST OHIO'S ANTI-LABOR LAW

By Robert A. Davis

On March 29, 2011 with less than three months in office, Ohio Governor John Kasich signed Senate Bill 5 into law. Senate Bill 5 is Ohio's anti-collective bargaining law that eliminates virtually all provisions in collective bargaining for the state's more than 300,000 public employees. With the passage of this bill, gone is the ability to negotiate hours of work. Gone is the ability to negotiate over healthcare coverage. Gone is the right of seniority as the determining factor in job promotions and layoffs. These are just a few of the draconian provisions set forth in Senate Bill 5.

On June 29, 2011, more than 3,000 individuals joined with the We Are Ohio campaign in a march through downtown Columbus to deliver 1,298,301 petition signatures to the office of Ohio's Secretary of State. On July 21, 2011 Ohio's Secretary of State Jon Husted verified 915,456 of the signatures that were collected as being valid signatures of registered voters; a validity rate of more than 70 percent. So now the next phase of the campaign begins.

Already the pro-Senate Bill 5 group known as Building a Better Ohio has formed to push Governor Kasich's message, a message that will be heavily funded by organizations such as People for the American Way and individuals such as billionaires David and Charles Koch. Their message will say the economic problems of state and local governments are the result of public employees having the right to collectively bargain. We all know that individuals collectively bargaining over wages, hours and conditions of employment, did not bring about the economic crisis that our federal, state and local governments face. The crisis

was brought about because of the lack of revenue due to middle class job losses and unneeded tax breaks for the wealthy and major corporations.

The We Are Ohio campaign, an organization formed of labor, religious and community organizations is in the process of recruiting thousands of volunteers to communicate with Ohio's 8.5 million voters. This communication will take place via the media as well as door-to-door campaigns. Its message is one of fairness. A message that says individuals should continue to have the basic right to sit down with their employers to negotiate over items that affect their work life. Public employers do this on a regular basis with contractors and suppliers. Why not with their own workforce? Labor has always stood ready to work with employers to help them address an economic situation that has been negatively impacted because we have always believed that the best way to address a problem is for the parties to sit down and have a thoughtful discussion and not have one party impose their will on the other.

This year will go down as one in which we saw the attack on labor implemented on a national level. The American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), is a national right-wing think tank that has developed a strategy to minimize labor's impact politically and legislatively. In addition to Ohio, states such as Wisconsin, Michigan, Florida and Pennsylvania have all introduced anti-union legislation and this trend shows no signs of letting up. Legislation to eliminate the prevailing wage and place stricter limits on public pensions has been introduced as well, showing the right-wing's intent to cripple all of labor.

In Ohio, labor knows Senate Bill 5



(Top) There were so many petitions gathered to repeal Ohio's Senate Bill that a semi truck had to carry the 1,502 boxes of petitions. (Bottom) The boxes had to be separated by 88 counties. Larger counties were stacked in the driveway where there was adequate room.

PHOTOS/HAROLD MITCHELL



is just the start of this right-wing attack. For the first time in many years, labor has come together to fight. AFSCME has been joined by other unions representing public employees, the skilled trades and the manufacturing sector to make sure that on Tuesday, November

8, 2011 there is a "Citizens Veto" on Senate Bill 5. We hope that the voters of Ohio will join us in this effort.

Robert A. Davis is Political and Legislative Director, AFSCME Ohio Council 8, AFL-CIO

Call to Action: From The Assembly to End Poverty National March on Washington, DC June 30, 2012

This Call is being issued to every person who reads these words. The world waits for us to move toward a progressive path that ensures humanity's existence. OUR VERY EXISTENCE IS ON THE LINE! The 1% of the population that profits from wars, mass foreclosures, and union busting is attempting to divide and eliminate the rest of us one group at a time. Strategies to divide us have been successful. To unite in our interest, we must organize, analyze, and teach what is happening and why...

- hard won rights of working people are being stamped out;
- democracy is being overturned;
- the corporate destruction of the planet is being ratcheted up;
- hardworking people are losing their jobs, their homes, their futures and their

families;

- attacks are mounting against Medicaid, Medicare, education, welfare, housing, the environment, and Social Security.

With the technology available today, there is no need for scarcity anywhere on earth.

POVERTY—and the threat of poverty—CAN BE ELIMINATED AND THAT IS THE GOAL!

We ask you to unite with us to reach that goal. Join us in mounting this national MARCH ON WASHINGTON DC—and the local and national organizing and educational campaign of which it is a part, the ONE CLASS-ONE CAUSE Campaign.

Let us unite all sections of workers—the able-bodied and the disabled—the

organized and the unorganized—the high paid, the low paid and the unpaid. We are one class—the working class. Our fight is not against each other but against those who seek profits at any expense. The corporations love war, will seek profits at anyone's expense, and they never hear or heed our cries. Their motto is, "pollute, shoot, and don't give a hoot!" Our motto is "One Class, One Cause!"

We are marching on Washington, D.C. because it is both the seat of national government and a blatant example of everything wrong with this country that we are gathering to fight. We are marching toward the building of what history demands from us—a world where the needs of the many out-weigh the needs of the few. The future of humanity is at stake. We have to craft a society that

cares for mother earth, and allows all people to thrive and not merely survive. You must help carry this March.

Get involved by e-mailing EndPoverty2012@gmail.com or calling (313)964-0618. For further information and to fill out the endorsement form, visit www.EndPoverty.org.

From the 2nd US Social Forum came the Poverty Working Group. It continued to meet and has now become THE ASSEMBLY TO END POVERTY, a coalition of some 450 individuals representing organizations throughout the United States. THE ASSEMBLY has a history grounded in fighting for the rights of the most destitute among us.

A safe place for our homeless is needed

SAFE GROUND JUBILEE SEPTEMBER 14

By Tracie Rice Bailey

It is a busy time in Sacramento California—Safe Ground Advocates are gathering weekly to plan the upcoming 2nd annual SafeGroundSac Jubilee.

This year's slogan is: "Still Searching For Safe Ground". Last year's slogan was "It's Been a Year and We're Still Here". It has been two years and we are still hoping and praying for a safe place to be. Our elected officials should be doing everything in their power to move things along for our poor. A safe place for our homeless to be could create by default a nicer environment for our housed population as well. A win-win all the way around wouldn't you think.

Homeless people are being made to move often, yet they still have no place to go. They are still here, they still live, breathe and have their being just like you and I, they just have no safe place to stay at night like you and I have.

The planning breakfasts are fun and inviting many great ideas float around the table. Our breakfast planners range from attorneys to formerly homeless and some homeless.

The purpose of the Jubilee is to or-

ganize homeless folks and to create awareness of homelessness and the issues faced by the poorest of our poor.

We are also trying to link our housed and homeless folks since housed folks are usually one paycheck away from

becoming a homeless criminal in a very broken economy full of budget cuts.

As I told the City Council on July 12, "I haven't been here in a while—I simply wanted to step back and see what happens—the answer I got was BUDGET CUTS—huge budget cuts that are hurting everyone—there are still hundreds of people living outside with no place to go."

How does constantly moving people do anything to find a lasting solution? Homeless people are not just here, they are everywhere. Empty buildings are not just here, they are everywhere. Can we not, in all our vast wisdom, find a way to create a lasting solution here? Something we can all live with?

The actual date of the Jubilee is Tuesday September 14, 2011 and will be held in Cesar Chavez Park which is right across from City Hall. The time is from 3:30 to 7:30 pm. There will be music, fun, food. We will have speakers from the housed and homeless community alike.

Everyone is invited to join us for this day of awareness and fun.



Last year's Jubilee celebration of the struggle for the rights of the homeless. Organizers are trying to link the housed and homeless since housed families are usually one paycheck away from becoming homeless.

PHOTO/SANDY PERRY

School Board Dissolved in McAlmont, Arkansas

By Simuel Ramey

The firing of the District Superintendent, and the dissolution of the School Board of the Pulaski County Special School District is causing quite a stir in the small township of McAlmont, Arkansas.

McAlmont is a small predominantly Black, low-income township that is trapped between the cities of Sherwood and North Little Rock, just south of Jacksonville, Arkansas.

The number of school board dissolutions in recent months across the state is causing grave concern among the citizens of the township of McAlmont, Arkansas.

The Arkansas Department of Education has got a critical eye on school boards in central Arkansas, specifically school boards that are predominantly Black, alluding to the recent dissolutions of the Helena-West-Helena School District Board, and the Pulaski County Special School District Board (PCSSD), along with the firing of the newly-hired Superintendent, Dr. Hopson.

I recently caught up with one of the PCSSD school board member's, Gwen Williams, who is a victim of this demise, who felt she needed to get this off her chest. She really seemed quite perturbed by the whole ill-conceived mess. She feels compelled to give us

the real facts about the recent hostile take-over of the PCSSD Board. Here's what she had to say: "First, the District is not broke. The Chief Financial officer (CFO) informed the Board four months ago that the District had \$7.9 million dollars in "reserves". So, the District was not in fiscal distress because of money issues. Rather, they were placed in fiscal distress because of "policies and procedures." The District submitted a plan to the State Department of Education. In the plan, the District met a lot of the concerns voiced by the State. The District wasn't even given the opportunity to put the plan into effect."

"Secondly, the attack of Dr. Hopson, and the recommendation of the dissolution of the Board came from the Legislative Audit Committee, of which State Senator Linda Poindexter-Chesterfield is the Co-chair. Let's wake up people! Dr. Hopson was escorted from the District Office by State Police, like a criminal, followed home, where his vehicle was taken from him. Dr. Hopson was not given the opportunity to clean up Twenty (20) years of "MESS"!!! There's grave concern coming from the residents of McAlmont. A lot of people have taken this downright "personal." Our African-American children, and communities will dearly suffer behind this take-over. Lastly, Dr. Kimbrel, the State Education Commissioner, now wants to put all renovations and construction of new schools on hold,

for the next two years in hopes that the communities will forget about it, and not speak out about it. The time has come for all of us to say "enough is enough." We want our schools renovated. We want our communities, parents, and students to be treated equal and fair, as they are in Sherwood and/or Maumelle. "IT IS TIME TO SPEAK OUT" about the "injustice" that has been done here."

This just adds to the pattern of "Human Rights Violations" that I have wit-

nessed and experienced, and spoken about in recent issues of the "People's Tribune", in my crusade back to my home state of Arkansas. We're hoping that the citizens of McAlmont, and other communities will rally behind Dr. Hopson, in his quest for vindication, through his lawsuit against the State Department of Education to re-coup the remainder of his three-year contract since there was never a "breach of contract" on his part!!!

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To the Graduating Class of 2011

The following is an excerpt from Oakland, CA teacher Steven Miller's retirement speech. The full version can be read at www.peoplestribune.org.

By Steven Miller

Since I started teaching in 1985, I have worked with the HipHop Generation from its very beginning. Oakland has played an inspirational role both nationally and internationally, in the development of funk and HipHop. This music has gone viral around the world and today is the greatest political and protest music in the history of the planet. The music itself is teaching. At every stage, Oakland voices have been in the house.

Those of us who have the experience have the responsibility to sum it up and communicate it, so that the new generation can avoid the mistakes of the past. Those of us who have the energy and vitality have the responsibility to deepen this understanding—and—to act on it. The central question for society is which future we will create.

Will the wonders of the latest technology—electronics—be used by the public as a whole to guarantee the distribution of abundance for all—or—will



School kids in Michigan.

PHOTO/JIMWESTPHOTO.COM

it be seized by the rich and powerful to create a nightmare of dispossession and human destruction? Transformation is at hand—whether this will be positive or negative is up to us.

This is perhaps the central question

of our time.

Let's demolish one of the great myths that blinds us.

In 1998 the United Nations documented that the world economy produced enough abundance so that every human being on Earth could have the basic necessities of life: "The world has more than enough resources to accelerate progress in human development for all and to eradicate the worst forms of poverty from the planet. Advancing human development is not an exorbitant undertaking. It has been estimated that the total additional yearly investment required to achieve universal access to basic social services would be roughly \$40 billion, only 0.1% of world income. That covers the bill for basic education, health, nutrition, reproductive health, family planning and safe water and sanitation for all."

This is the time of the teacher. In the school of society, we are all teachers. Parents, adults and children—we are all both teachers and students—because we daily debate ideas about the way forward for humanity. In the end, we will conserve only what we love. We will love only what we understand. We will understand only what we are taught.

There's no way to go backwards and build today on the model of yesterday. What was possible a decade ago is now impossible; what was impossible is now possible. If we cannot fight backwards, we certainly must fight forwards towards a different future.

For this new world, teachers—all teachers—must continue to advocate the most dangerous ideas in America. You know the ones:

Share.

Clean up your mess—tell that one to British Petroleum or Standard Oil.

Stand in line so everyone gets their turn.

No bullying.

Respect everyone else like you want to be respected.

Everybody gets to play.

Nobody is better than anybody else.

Cooperate and work together.

And, of course, there's one of the great lessons of American history, one that America still must learn if it is to survive: This time around it's all of us, or none of us.

So congratulations graduates—you have a world to win!

Thank you all.

And thanks to all my teachers.

THE RISE OF THE NATIONAL POLICE

By Ron Scott

In 1829, Sir Robert Peel, who was a member of the British House of Lords, drafted the Metropolitan London Police Act. The "Nine Principles of Policing," which were included in this law, were the theoretical guiding principles for the first professional police departments in Western Europe and later in the Americas. Those Principles are:

1. To prevent crime and disorder, as an alternative to their repression by military force and by severity of legal punishment.

2. To recognize always that the power of the police to fulfill their functions and duties is dependent on public approval... and on their ability to secure and maintain public respect.

3. To recognize... that to secure and maintain the respect and approval of the public means also the securing of willing cooperation of the public.

4. To recognize always that the extent to which the cooperation of the public can be secured diminishes, proportionately, the necessity of the use of physical force and compulsion for achieving police objectives.

5. To seek and to preserve public favor, not by pandering to public opinion, but by constantly demonstrating absolutely impartial service to law...

6. To use physical force only when the exercise of persuasion, advice and warning is found to be insufficient to obtain public cooperation...

7. To maintain at all times a relation-

ship with the public that gives reality to the historic tradition that the police are the public and that the public are the police.

8. To recognize always the need... to refrain from even seeming to usurp the powers of the judiciary.

9. To recognize always that the test of police efficiency is the absence of crime and disorder, and not the visible evidence of police action in dealing with them.

You might call these principles guidelines for a police force directed and controlled by the people they serve. Peel's foundational purpose was to create a framework of safety in the community while building a people's force to buffer and protect that community from the encroachment of an outside military force.

American policing during the last 100 years, and specifically during the last 40 years of the "War on Drugs," has not only destroyed any relationship to Peel's principles, but has also eliminated the lines between a national military and locally-controlled police. U.S. Justice Department's funding initiatives, focused on the confiscation of "Drugs, Guns and Gangs," have given local police departments the armament and the inclination to designate whole sections of urban areas as "hot spots." The FBI has identified these hot spots as areas where statistically more street crime occurs than in other areas of the city. These areas, ironically enough, happen to be concentrated largely in communities of color.

In Detroit, Michigan, where I work with The Detroit Coalition Against Po-



Police line at Chicago protest against corporations. PHOTO/BRETT JELINEK

lice Brutality, we see individuals who contact us on a daily basis who have been stopped, harassed, beaten and killed at gas stations and party stores. In many cases, special departments in urban areas use federal grants to increase overtime for officers while suppressing primarily young individuals who are part of the displaced worker population. Monetary, informational and legal separation between federal, state and local police entities have been all but eliminated through what are called "multijurisdictional task forces"—thus creating a unity of national police activities under the umbrella of unifying the fight against crime, illegal immigration and terrorism.

The biggest terror is that of police

forces who have been given armament and missions comparable to those of military forces around the world to suppress the population. Local police now are working in conjunction with the border patrol, I.C.E. (U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement) and Homeland Security to define who is and who is not an American citizen as a premise for investigation and incarceration. As these interconnections between law enforcement and investigative units on every level are increased, the people become less able to realize their rights as expressed so long ago by Sir Robert Peel.

Ron Scott is President of the Detroit Coalition Against Police Brutality

Will San Jose Become The Wisconsin Of The West?

By Peggy Elwell

San Jose, California, may become the Wisconsin of the West, with the declaration of a fiscal emergency by Mayor Chuck Reed and several city council members. A virulent anti-union campaign has been waged in the pages of the San Jose Mercury News; by highlighting the salaries and pensions of a few highly paid examples, they are trying to get public support for a ballot measure that would effectively negate collective bargaining for all city employees on compensation, benefit and retirement issues. Mayor Reed and the initiators of this proposal are all members of the Democratic Party.

Earlier in the year, the city conducted a poll of city residents asking essentially if they wanted to solve the \$112 million budget deficit by paying higher taxes, cutting city services, or lowering the pay of city workers. Faced with these three apparent choices the majority of those polled chose lowering city worker pay. Some council members are telling low-income residents that they should come out in opposition to overpaid union workers, since the less they are paid, the more necessary city services will remain open.

However, city unions and the labor movement united with many community

leaders for a “Neighborhoods First” campaign, pushing for city funds to be concentrated on services to neighborhoods such as libraries, community centers, and parks instead of downtown interests. In addition several hundred workers have mobilized for rallies and city council meetings to protest the attempts to stonewall collective bargaining.

Already the City has imposed terms and conditions on several city unions resulting in a pay cut of 10 – 12% of all compensation received from the city. There has been a flood of city employees using their legal benefits to file for bankruptcy, and there is a special office for city employees facing foreclosure.

The pension for non-safety employees is no more than 70% of their salary. The average pension for non-safety employees is only \$35,000, which does not go far in this expensive area. In addition, city workers do not get social security. About 1500 city employees are part time and receive no fixed pension benefit, and most receive no health benefits.



Hundreds of city workers, labor and community groups, attend an August 1 “Be Fair and Care” rally to support collective bargaining and to push for city funds to be concentrated on services to neighborhoods instead of downtown interests.

PHOTO/SANDY PERRY

San Jose is in the heart of Silicon Valley, home of the cutting edge of the technical revolution, and headquarters for Google, eBay, Facebook, Hewlett Packard, Apple, Intel, Cisco, Applied Materials, Yahoo and countless more. San Jose recently surpassed Detroit to become the 10th largest city in the country.

In an April report, it was revealed that the collective profits of the top 150 Silicon Valley corporations had reached \$84.7 billion. A favorite saying of corporate interests these days is “don’t tax the job creators”, meaning corporations

and the wealthy. Yet, the job increase from these companies was only 6%, while the increase in profits was 80%. They paid less than 18.7% of this profit in taxes at all levels, the result of cash remaining offshore to avoid taxes.

Meanwhile, state and local governments are cutting health care, laying off teachers, eliminating housing funds, reducing services at libraries and community centers, letting the infrastructure fall to ruin, compromising public safety and cutting essentials for the disabled, elderly, and poor families.

Some measures are being proposed for the state level that would seek to tax corporations and the wealthy and deserve to be supported. Signatures are being collected for ballot measure for an oil extraction tax, as California is the only petroleum producing state that has no excise tax to charge corporations for depleting this public resource. Some California teachers are pushing for one tax that has been very popular in polls, which would levy 1 percent from the wealthiest 1 percent.

We have to start taking back our government from the corporate interests that are now successfully dominating our public life for their own benefit. It’s time to revive the concept of the “public good” and the common interest of all the people!

No Going Back

Around the rotunda you gathered,
voices raised resolutely,
as resolutely as iron-girded muscles.
Voices of dissent taking back
that which would be wrenched
by governor decree.
Voices loud, voices singing,
voices hoarse, voices chanting.
Voices in remembrance
of battles not forgotten,
of heroes, being raise in invocation.
Voices new, voices soaring,
new heroes in the making.
Our voices must be heard
and actions must be taken.

No hard-won gains are forever.
The struggle of workers
marching forward
never rests; the struggle
is eternal as is the breath of life.
Voices bellow out in fierce
and fiery tones
against injustices, to nip
them in the bud.
Let there be no question; no
misunderstanding.
We will be back!

Fists raised in unison and solidarity.
Fists raised in anger, angst and agony.
Small fists, weathered fists,
Black fists, brown fists, white.
Fists tensed in emotions.

Fists knowing the power necessary
to keep families intact and
workers working.
Fists high, raised up high and strong,
each finger, knuckle, tendon,
cell declaim
Defiance, power and strength!!
The message, clear and lucid
breaks the icy air.

They marched, signs held
firmly, in defiance.
Signs held hopefully, unapologetic,
demanding the dignity of their work,
upholding rights, so slowly won,
rights, protections and benefits,
that raise all workers up,
for UP, IS where we belong!!

To push us down into the muck,
the governor threatens, rants and raves,
pointing a finger, foul and
misdirected, at US,
working families who build this nation,
not at those who never pay
their rightful share,
always the beneficiaries, never the target.
But he is one and WE are many!!
We are all Wisconsites and
we are ready.
Our fists are raised; we have the power!

— Rosa Escamilla
February 16th

Visionaries of Yesteryear

Change cannot occur until the people achieve a vision of the kind of new society that is possible and that they want. In America vision has played a greater role than perhaps in any other country. As we struggle to formulate our vision of a new cooperative America, let us stand on the shoulders of the visionaries of yesteryear.

“Unlimited competition leads to a huge waste of labor, and to that crippling of the social consciousness of individuals. . . This crippling of individuals I consider the worst evil of capitalism. Our whole educational system suffers from this evil. An exaggerated competitive attitude is inculcated into the student, who is trained to worship acquisitive success as a preparation for his future career. . . I am convinced there is only one way to eliminate these grave evils, namely through the establishment of a socialist economy, accompanied by an educational system which would be oriented toward social goals. In such an economy, the means of production are owned by society itself and are utilized in a planned fashion. A planned economy, which adjusts production to the needs of the community, would distribute the work to be done among all those able to work and would guarantee a livelihood to every man, woman, and child. The education of the individual, in addition to promoting his own innate abilities, would attempt to develop in him a sense of responsibility for his fellow-men in place of the glorification of power and success in our present society.”

—Albert Einstein, From Monthly Review, New York, May, 1949

CHA Tricks Residents Out of Housing

By Joseph Peery

CHICAGO – At a time when there are record numbers of home foreclosures with record numbers of layoffs and companies going out of business, why are public housing authorities trying to convince public housing residents, some of the most economically vulnerable people there are, to buy homes and start businesses? Some public housing residents are finding out that what is disguised as an opportunity is just one more way of getting them out of public housing and possibly onto the street.

One such person is Veronica Buckley, a former Cabrini Green resident who is a wife and mother of five. Six years ago she got a Section 8 voucher and moved to a mixed income community hoping to find a better life for her family. When she lost her job, she started her own business as part of the “Family Self Sufficiency Program,” offered by Section 8 and CHA. What follows are excerpts from interviews with her describing her experiences in this program.

People’s Tribune: They were kicking you off Section 8. Talk about that.

Veronica Buckley: I got a letter stating that I was over income. When I lost my job I started a day care so I could be at home with my kids and help other people with their kids while they were out working. In day care, you get kids and you lose kids. It’s not a stable income. It fluctuates up and down. As

soon as you make some money, you’re out because the program then considers you self sufficient. I was shocked. To me, self sufficiency means you’ve got a career and won’t be laid off because of the economy.

PT: Did the economy affect the families of the kids you were caring for?

VB: Yeah, it affected everybody. When they lose money, I lose money,

because they no longer need my services. This is what happened and I lost clients.

PT: You were telling me that you felt tricked by them.

VB: I was tricked into the program. When I moved out of Cabrini Green a lady came out to the house and presented me with the program which was called Feather Fist at that time. They

tell you all these good things about the program. First you get self sufficiency so that you can own a home. You get five goals, three of them from Section 8 and two you create for yourself. Their three goals are that you have to work a job for a year, get a good credit score and be off of all government assistance. The two goals I created for myself were to become an RN by finishing nursing school and to get a college degree. I wasn’t working at that time so she explained that once I started working my rent would go up and the extra money I would be paying for rent would go into an escrow account. You get all that money back when you graduate from the program and complete all your goals. And she said Section 8 won’t go up on your rent. When you get this money, you do what ever you want with it. So it’s like free money. Anyone would sign up for this. So when I joined, not even a few months later, I got a job through CHA with Family Works. In my department I was the number one employee. I kept getting “Employee of the Month” awards several times for the job I was doing helping residents. I was going to court with residents facing eviction, helping them with whatever they needed to maintain their housing and helped them get jobs.



Veronica Buckley (bottom right), a former Cabrini Green resident and a wife and mother of five, was talked into joining a program to get her own business. As she began earning some money, CHA tried to kick her off of Section 8, which would have made it difficult to survive. PHOTO/DONATED

Part II will appear in the next issue of the Peoples Tribune.

Elderly In Nursing Homes Need To Be Loved And Cared For—Not Forgotten

By Lenette Evans



Recently my Dad was put into a nursing home in St. Joseph, Michigan for rehabilitation for physical therapy/occupational therapy twice a day Monday through Friday. He gets breakfast, lunch and dinner, and sits in the dining room with other residents.

The food quality is absolutely terrible and looks like a frozen Banquet dinner. With each meal is a served generic coffee or hot cocoa from a packet. Then they give you sugar-free apple, prune, cranberry, or orange juice. The slice of bread is dried up and every meal has either pie, or cake.

The meals at the nursing home have very little nutritional value. The food is processed with additives, preservatives, and every table has a container of NutraSweet fake sugar in blue, pink and yellow packets. Most of the residents have Alzheimers, are diabetic and have heart conditions. This IS NOT the type of food these people need. Something desperately needs to be done so

that nursing homes across the USA are educated on health and nutrition and more vegetarian based meals and less sugar!!!!!!

When I sit in the dining room with residents, simple things like tearing open a ketchup packet, or trying to eat is a difficult task. Many of the residents are put at the table but cannot help themselves. I saw one man sitting in his chair completely unable to eat by himself. Many need assistance and do not ever get it.

The other thing I see is how they seat white people at one table and some of the Black residents at another table. How racist! We need to seat people all together regardless if they are white or Black.

My Dad has Alzheimers, dementia, anxiety, and panic attacks. At times, he sits in a wheel chair. He cannot bathe himself, use the restroom on his own and needs assistance. He also needs to be changed less then every two hours but never gets the help.

One night my mother and I pushed the red call button because my Dad had gone to the bathroom on himself. He had to wait over an hour. A lot of residents go through this and are forgotten and

can go all day without being changed.

At nursing homes you can mention over and over to them the foods you want them to have but they ignore your requests and you have to EVERYDAY keep after them about what needs to be done. But I am here to tell every family that is out there in America **GO TO THE NURSING HOMES A FEW TIMES A DAY** and get to know the doctors, nursing staff, kitchen help, activities director, etc. because your loved ones need attention and seeing family and friends often helps them. The more you are there the more you see of what is done and what truly is not done.

Our government needs to stand up

and care for the elderly. Many would go home if cared for right and fed decent, healthier meals. They are human and have feelings. What they need is people to have deep unconditional love and compassion for them just as Jesus Christ loves and cares for us and this includes the nursing staff, as well as families too. People get involved and make a difference!

Lenette Evans, Street Evangelist, Saving Souls Ministry, SavingSouls1@yahoo.com 269-876-1848

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Whirlpool Conquers and Divides City Of Benton Harbor

By Rev. Edward Pinkney

Whirlpool has destroyed the city of Benton Harbor by buying up Black leaders and bringing in the Emergency Financial Manager to run the city.

When we look in the mirror we sometimes fail to see our flaws and strengths. Whirlpool has blinded residents by dividing and conquering. The corporation uses the Boys and Girls Club, Band of Brethren, First Chance, Inc., and the Consortium for Community Development to make it appear as if the Black community supports the Harbor Shores project and Whirlpool's takeover of Benton Harbor. It's devastating what money can do. Whirlpool also controls the Benton Harbor School Board, and every sizeable board in Berrien County.

Whirlpool Corporation was one of the first to outsource jobs to countries with weak or nonexistent labor and environmental standards. Congressman Fred Upton, heir to Whirlpool, voted for NAFTA (a trade agreement between the

US, Canada and Mexico to create greater profits for the corporations). What is most important about the outsourcing is the resulting permanent elimination of jobs, and the destruction of communities in the process.

Thanks to Whirlpool and Congressman Upton, Benton Harbor is now under a dictator. They would like us to believe that checks and balances in government are not important anymore. They think Benton Harbor doesn't matter enough for that. We don't need checks and balances—multiple governing branches to ensure that a single force doesn't dominate. All Benton Harbor needs is Emergency Financial Manager Joseph Harris to make every single decision for us.

That is the message inherent in the Emergency Financial Manager legislation proposed by state Rep. Al Pcholka and Gov. Rick "the Rictator" Snyder and given speedy approval by the legislature. We must say no to Pcholka and Snyder. We must say no to Whirlpool. We must say no to Harbor Shores. We must say no to the PGA. We must



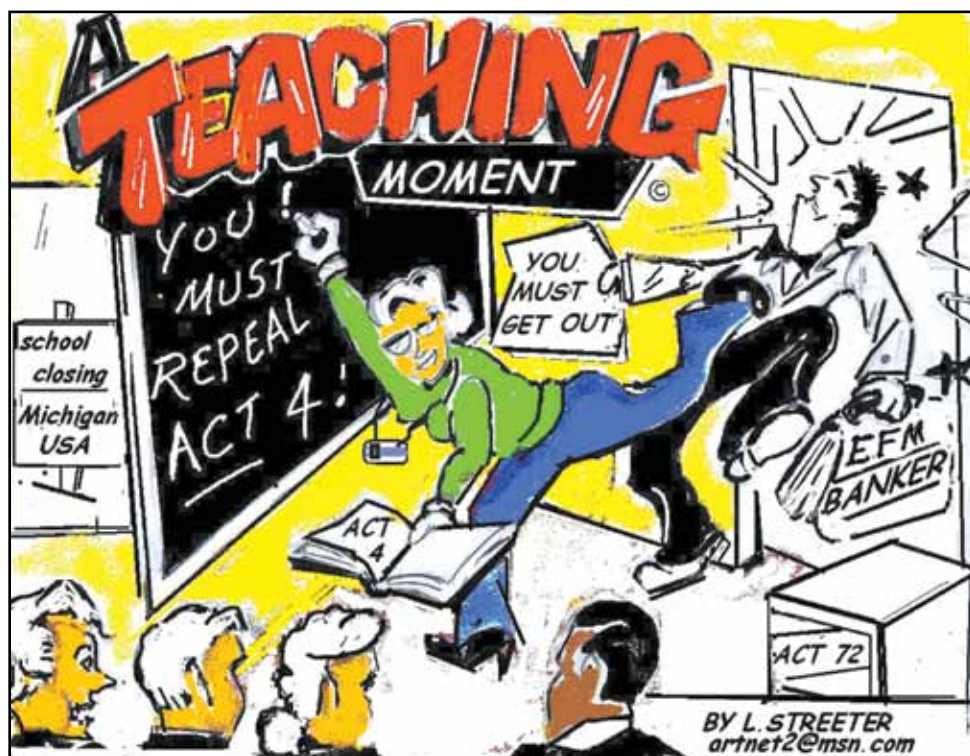
say no to the hostile take over of Benton Harbor.

We are fighting to take the control of this country away from the corporations and to build a society that puts the people first.

Call me anytime at 269-925-0001 or visit our website at bhbanco.org

Rev. Pinkney leads demonstrators in a march against the opening of Harbor Shores Golf Club, part of Whirlpool's takeover of Benton Harbor.

PHOTO/BRETT JELINEK



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Cynthia McKinney will be speaking in Benton Harbor on October 8, 2011.

There will be a mass demonstration on May 22, 2012 in Benton Harbor.

Why You Should Support the People's Tribune

The People's Tribune has been involved in the struggle in Benton Harbor, MI since 2002. Rev. Edward Pinkney of Benton Harbor has said of the People's Tribune, "we used the newspaper for our cause. It allowed us to grow; it allowed people all over the country to know exactly what we are doing and us to know what other people were doing....I don't believe that we would have achieved as much as we did without the People's Tribune."

Today we are seeing a fight across Michigan and elsewhere against the corporate takeover of government. The People's Tribune predicted this in a July 2005 editorial in which we said "...economically powerful forces are moving to not only dominate the government, but to become the government. That is the foundation of American fascism. They see the little democracy that still remains in our country as an obstacle to their rule. They are determined to destroy it before the deteriorating economic conditions kick the people awake. Herein lies the importance of the struggle developing in Benton Harbor, Michigan. Fascism, like democracy, does not consolidate from the top, from the big 'important' struggles. It consolidates down below—by gaining victory after small victory until it has the base for the 'important' struggles. This is why it is so important that the revolutionary and democratic forces learn to confront fascist, corporate power at every turn. From time to time an attack against democracy is so blatant that it symbolizes the entire process. This is the importance of Benton Harbor."

The People's Tribune needs your financial support and we need people to distribute the paper in their cities. We—all of us who are struggling—are not just fighting bad people, but a bad system. As the struggle intensifies, the people of Benton Harbor and others will continue to need a press. And the People's Tribune will continue to offer its pages to defend the fighters who step forward, to expose the system that threatens to destroy us, and to offer a vision of a new society free of poverty and oppression.

Contact us at 800-691-6888 or email info@peopletribune.org. Visit us on the web at www.peopletribune.org.