

EDITORIAL *The Economic Crisis:* **MORE THAN GREED OR CORRUPTION**

“If you tell a lie big enough and keep repeating it, people will eventually come to believe it. The lie can be maintained only for such time as the State can shield the people from the political, economic and/or military consequences of the lie. It thus becomes vitally important for the State to use all of its powers to repress dissent, for the truth is the mortal enemy of the lie, and thus by extension, the truth is the greatest enemy of the State.” Joseph Goebbels (1897-1945, Hitler’s Minister of Propaganda)

If Herr Goebbels rings a wake up bell, it is because the state and the corporate media can no longer “shield the people from the political, economic and/or military consequences of the lie.” The lie—or the network of lies—that led the American people to believe that corporate capitalism is the best of all possible worlds is beginning to unravel. The Occupy Wall Street movement is only a dramatic example of this awakening and the growing anger the people feel toward their economic situation and political leaders.

The last gasp of corporate rule is the attempt to shield the critical nature of the economic crisis by blaming it on greed and corruption. In their words there is nothing wrong with the system—it has been mismanaged and can be corrected by uncorrupted and less greedy people.

The capitalist system operates according to its laws and no political law can change an economic law. The capitalist system is based on the production and exchange of value. Value is produced by labor. The production by labor is exchanged with money, which is the measure of value of all production. The difference between the cost of the production of labor power and the amount of value that labor power creates is profit. Our entire society, production and exchange—all our social, political and legal institutions are built around or arise from this reality.

We are deep into an economic revolution (electronic production) that is doing away with value as it does away with labor. Since labor-



Occupy Detroit rally against Bank Of America is in support for Moratorium Now! Coalition to Stop Foreclosures, Evictions and Utility Shutoffs!
PHOTO/DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM

less production increasingly cannot be exchanged on the basis of value, how are we to get our daily bread? Our society and all its institutions is increasingly out of sync with its changing economic foundation. The economic revolution is producing a vast social revolution. The first stage is the step-by-step destruction of the existing order to make way for the new. If anyone doubts this reality, look at the shuttered factories, the idle unem-

ployed, the abandoned homes and the homeless families. Look at the polarization of wealth and poverty, and most of all look at the awakening social consciousness of the American people.

The problem we face is revolutionary. We are at an historic fork in the road. It is either sink into some sort of electronic feudalism of corporate lords and serfs or build a whole new world of peace and freedom. The first step is to

pass through simply being against the current rot and corruption and visualize what kind of a new world we can build with these marvelous new means of production. The tremendous response generated by OWS indicates the vast revolutionary potential of the people. Can we, the revolutionaries add the intellectual ingredient to develop protest into change? This future is up to us!

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.

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

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Take Over the Corporations!

COVER STORY

The question is simple: Are we going to live under corporate domination, or will we have a free and prosperous society of, by and for the people? The corporations are destroying society in their scramble to grab everything they can to stay alive and profit. We either take them over and run them in the interests of society or we perish. The merging of these corporations with the government has created a corporate state to protect and accumulate more property, wealth, power and privilege for a shrinking capitalist class at all costs. They are not fit to rule. We are at the fork in the road.

One fork is found in the vision of the corporate few, whose success is at the expense of the many. This fork leads to a constant lowering of living standards, increased poverty and outright destitution for the many, with no health care, housing or education, and the death and destruction of ecological disasters and war around the world. It also leads to police repression and fascism.

The other fork expresses itself in a global movement that is beginning to take shape in opposition to the corporations. Its activity is spreading. In the United States, the Occupy Wall Street protest, a key recent expression of this movement, has spread to more than 1400 communities and cities across the country and is growing. Its potential is sustained by a youthful core that knows the system has no place or future for them. Only the creation of a commonly shared vision for a new society—a new future now made possible by the marvels of electronic technology—can sustain the potential of this movement for the long run.

A society constructed in the interests of the vast majority would provide food, clothing, housing, healthcare, education and meaningful existence to all of society. Such a society is not possible without taking over the corporations and running them in the interests of society. We need to hold our government accountable to



CARTOON/ANDY WILLIS

take this step and if necessary create a government that will do so.

Can the corporations be tamed or reformed to provide these needs of society? No, they cannot. Capitalism operates according to one basic law: maximum profit. The capitalist economic system of corporate production and exchange is dying because of its inability to create jobs, which is the result of a global electronic revolution in production that increasingly eliminates the need for wage labor. Eliminating jobs eliminates the market for goods and services. The effect of the economic revolution is economic polarization—concentration of wealth at one pole and the expansion of poverty at the other—accompanied by the destruction of the economic middle. The growing demands of the

99% cannot be met without defeating the economic power of the corporations and the only way to do that is to take them over.

The economic revolution is producing the early stages of a social revolution. Eventually the social movements that are taking shape around the world will begin to express themselves politically. Politics is about power. We need the power to determine our future in this new age of electronic production. The definition of power is the ability to determine outcomes. Building the power to confront the power, to take the power, and finally to use the power to create a new society will be a long, difficult struggle. There will be advances and setbacks before a final victory.

What is being done to the peo-

ple is not right. We will not live in poverty under corporate fascism. We have the right to freedom and a decent life.

The corporate government's actions to protect private property are transforming scattered, issue-based battles into political battles over what the government does and whom it protects. The next step forward in securing our future is to move from scattered defensive fights to unified political battles. The demand must rise from every battle that the government should take over the corporations and run them in the interests of the many and not for the private gain of the few. Either we take over the corporations or they will take over 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.

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JOIN THE CAMPAIGN FOR A PEOPLE'S SHERIFF

By Cheri Honkala

This speech was delivered on October 6, the first day of the October 2011 occupation of Freedom Plaza in Washington, DC.

Good afternoon. I can't hear you! Repeat after me, raise your hand: "One class, one cause! One class, one cause! One class, one cause! One class, one cause!"

I bring you greetings from poor and homeless people across the United States of America. I come to you today as a woman who has been arrested over two hundred times in the fight for the basic necessities of life. And dammit, that doesn't make me a terrorist, that makes me a patriot!

While folks have been occupying Wall Street and occupying financial districts across this country, I have been working with fam-

ilies for twenty-five years trying to teach them how to occupy their homes. This next year, over a million families will lose their homes. Every seven seconds, somebody will lose their home.

When the banks received billions in bailout dollars, and didn't do a damn thing for the American people, and while our backboneless politicians didn't do a damn thing either, I decided to stand up. After my baby sister lost her home to Wells Fargo this year, I said enough is enough and I'm running as the first female sheriff in the city of Philadelphia, to be the people's sheriff.

That means on November 8, I need you to occupy Philadelphia! Because once we make history and I become the people's sheriff, ain't nobody going to get kicked out of their homes in the city of Philadelphia! And from there we will hit



Cheri Honkala delivers her keynote address to the Democracy Convention in Madison in August.

PHOTO/BRETT JELINEK, OLAFIMAGES.COM

city after city after city, and we will tell people, why can't we have a people's sheriff that represents

the people, not the banks, the developers, and the speculators, and corporate America. Dammit, let's

protect each other and let's run people's sheriffs across the United States of America.

What I'm doing is not symbolic, it's concrete. Bill and Ida and Glen, who are with me today, and millions of people are going to lose their homes unless you take this seriously, and not just march about it, pray about it, and sing about it, but help me fill every damn poll in Philadelphia. That's the birthplace of revolution and change, and we can do it again in this country and we can take our country back.

We can stand up to the banks and corporate America because we are good people in this country, because we believe in a cooperative society, and because our movement is based on love and care for each other. We're going to take our country back! God bless each and every one of you!

Immigration Raids: It Happened on Friday the 13th



Youth put themselves at risk during a Chicago protest outside a Department of Homeland Security hearing on the Secure Communities Program. They are undocumented and were later arrested. They are fighting the case. PHOTO/ADRIAN GARCIA

By Ricardo Trevino

With 354,000 deportations of Mexicans in 2010 alone, and over 1,000,000 total since taking office, the Obama administration has nearly doubled the immigration enforcement actions taken during the Bush Era. This is a ruthless feat on track to surpass the Hoover Administration's forced "repatriation" during the Great Depression that sent over 1.2 million Mexicans, many who were U.S. born citizens and didn't speak Spanish, back to Mexico on cattle cars. Statistics alone fail to describe the suffering and injustice of the enforcement actions taken by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

As a Mexican-American and bilingual human resource worker, I witnessed these actions first hand. Often contracted as the staffing manager into workplaces

where mainly Spanish is spoken, and low wage factory labor is needed, I know that it's only a matter of time before I will receive that fateful phone call. On a cold February morning, ICE officials called and reported that the company was selected for a "random audit" for compliance of official employment documentation. The subpoena required the company to hand over all employment forms and copies of the identification for all employees.

Later, ICE issued an ultimatum to the company in the face of stiff fines and jail time. Officials were to terminate workers that ICE found to be ineligible. Although the working papers were reviewed, and several employees were spared, twenty-four workers couldn't document their "right to work" according to ICE standards, and faced termination. All of the workers were artisans and produc-

tion leaders with long standing records of hard work and craftsmanship that was the lifeblood of the company's core products; and who had remained loyal for up to ten years, not even taking paid vacation days when production was in full swing. All were raising families, or sending money home; and all paid more than their fair share of taxes, for which they would never be able to file a return, or qualify for any benefits.

Although company officials hired the best legal counsel to avert the enforcement, and to help build a case for workers, ICE policy ruled. On Friday, May 13, twenty four workers were dismissed without incident; except of course, for the broken dreams, dismay, tears, and the sullen expressions that donned the faces of those that were left to pick up the pieces.

We struggled for the next three months to fill the gaping hole left in our workforce, only to find a few good qualified and committed skilled craftsmen who were good enough to perform the work, and who were willing to accept comparable wages of those we lost. My duties and workload doubled. Having asked for assistance—and after having been denied—I was given my own set of walking papers.

More importantly, good people were lost, our friends, our co-workers with whom we broke bread and celebrated our birthdays together. Every last one of them was from Mexico or Central America, and victims of failed U.S. trade, drug, and foreign policy. Workers were displaced by the free trade agreement, NAFTA, which only benefits the multinational corporations and which caused a severe economic collapse in Mexico. Mothers and fathers fled the violence of a "Drug

War," made worse by the river of weapons flowing freely south into Mexico, and aided by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, (ATF) "operations." Political refugees from Central America flee oppressive U.S. installed regimes and death squads, propped up by U.S. security services to protect corporations and

the precious investments of their Wall Street Banksters.

Where is the justice for these economically displaced workers, the parents fleeing violence, and the political refugees who came to "El Norte" in search of an honest day's pay for an honest days work?

Defending Human Rights: WHERE WE'RE HEADED

The following editorial is from our sister publication, the Tribuno del Pueblo.

Immigrant rights advocates have become an assortment of strange bedfellows. Politicians, police chiefs, businesses and unions, religious, community and civil-rights organizations, are all finding themselves on the same side.

In this mixture of some good and some very strange company, revolutionaries need to figure out what should be our guiding light.

Nationally, powerful economic forces are moving, not only to dominate the government, but to actually become the government. They see the little democracy that remains in our country as an obstacle to their rule. They are determined to destroy it before deteriorating economic conditions kick people awake.

They need to divide and conquer. Herein lies the importance of the immigrant issue for this ruling class.

Historically, it has been used to divide and conquer the working class, pitting native-born against immigrant. They use the attack on the undocumented as a smoke screen to hide a failing economic system, capitalism.

To be able to see through this smokescreen, workers need to see the commonality of their struggle. Our dreams and strivings are no different for any of us, no matter what color, or what nationality we may be.

Our struggle is one of love for our families. This love makes us search for a job across borders and inter-state. We live and work to provide our families with the basic necessities of life, such as food, shelter, health care, and education.

It's this love for our families that unites us, immigrant and native-born. Though we may be frightened and confused about our future, we must not let our rulers divide us. Our only viable path is to unite as workers—as one class—and fight for our basic needs, our dignity, and a better tomorrow.

Understanding Racism in the Age of Electronics

By David A. Romero

Part history teacher, part anthropologist, all social scientist, author Preston Dickerson launched into his lecture "Understanding Racism" at the small business and art gallery, Machine Pomona, in the Arts District of Pomona, California. Dickerson's lecture challenged a crowd of mixed ethnic origins, religious backgrounds, and professional occupations to relate racist ideologies and myths to their historical and material foundations.

Dickerson delivered his lecture from his book, *Capitalism: Another Word for Slavery*, with a variety of intonations, making eye contact with an audience mostly in their twenties. Now a seasoned orator and lecturer, Dickerson was able to read from his notes while pausing for moments to expand upon ideas with both facts and personal anecdotes.

Dickerson's lecture began with the bold statement, "We need to grasp that economics is not just a part of human life, it is every part of human life." He followed that with, "when the economy changes, social values change and the poli-

tics change in that society."

Dickerson dispelled many misconceptions as to the origin of the African slave trade. "The failed enslavement of Native Americans and European indentured servants led to the permanent enslavement of African Blacks," Dickerson stated. African Blacks, particularly West Africans, were chosen for "agricultural knowledge" and "immunity against malaria from mosquitoes." He continued, "the subjugation of millions of people had to be justified with an ideology... this ideology was racism."

Dickerson pointed out that increased mass poverty amongst Blacks, whites, Hispanics and Asians in our modern era has led to a greater class consciousness. He concluded his lecture with the statement, "if we destroy the current economic situation, then we destroy institutional racism."

Oliver, the owner of Machine Pomona David "Judah 1," stated that he had invited Dickerson to speak at his business to "bring a different element to the space; to provide a deeper level of debate and conversation." Oliver was an active participant in the discussion following Dickerson's lecture.

The discussion was lively, presenting both criticisms of his critique of capitalism as well as providing hope for what could be accomplished in this new era of electronic means of production. Demarcations between racism and prejudice, capitalism and classism, were drawn by Dickerson and the audience. Challenges to a future based on collectivity were levied on the basis of two arguments, "people are too greedy and/or people are too lazy for such a society to exist." Dickerson countered this skepticism with the historical fact that the majority of human history has been one of primitive communism in which humanity engaged in cooperative economics.

Not one to romanticize the past, Dickerson also made it clear that the recent developments in the fields of automation and robotics have renewed the promise of a cooperative society. "Economics, and with it, human society, has been defined by scarcity for the past few hundreds of years," Dickerson said. He continued, "We now have the tools at our disposal to destroy the basis for economic inequality." An attendee added on to his point, "Americans throw

away 96 billion pounds of food a year. We don't live in a world of scarcity anymore."

Raquel Rodgers, a sophomore at UC Riverside, summed up what she had learned from Dickerson's lecture and discussion on "Understanding Racism," "Human history and human society has been

based upon our human needs and how we fulfill those needs. Now, we have to fight to survive. That's the problem. As a society, we need to change our ideas of our values and our needs. We need to start to ask how we can structure a society to meet those human needs."



In San Francisco, joining together, risking arrests, to stop a planned raid against the occupation ordered by Interim Mayor Ed Lee.

PHOTO/MYLES BOISEN

CHA Evicts People For Crimes They're Not Convicted Of



Gloria Franklin, Cabrini Green resident, is victim of the One Strike policy. A criminal case against her 16-year-old son was thrown out of court, yet the CHA still used his arrest to threaten her entire family with eviction.

PHOTO/JASON REBLANDO

By Joseph Peery

In the September/October 2011 edition of the Chicago Reporter, there appeared two investigative articles and an editor's note questioning the use of the Chicago Housing Authority's (CHA) **ONE STRIKE** policy. With this policy, the CHA has evicted hundreds of families based on just an arrest of any household member or guest.

Indeed, the last sentence in Section 8 Part (m)1 of the Lease reads, "Criminal conviction is not necessary to demonstrate serious violation of the lease."

The Chicago Reporter analyzed more than 1400 cases where CHA took residents to eviction court using **One Strike** over the past six years ending in January 2011. They cited numbers which backed up the following conclusions:

1) **The vast majority of lease holders were not the one who had committed the alleged crime for which they were being evicted.**

2) **More than half of the evictions were based on allegations that were never proven in criminal court.**

3) **The largest numbers of these evictions occurred in gentrifying communities where public housing developments were being prepped for demolition.**

4) **No community has experienced more *One Strike* cases than Cabrini Green.**

A debate opened up in the city. On September 2, Gloria Franklin, a soft-spoken mother of three, grandmother of two and Cabrini Green resident, went on the radio and told her story. Her 16-year-old son had been arrested on a marijuana charge outside the home and she got an eviction notice. Even though the case against her son was dismissed, the CHA continued with the eviction. She fought as long as she could, but in the end she was forced to go on probation for a year and remove her son from the lease. He could never come on CHA property again or visit her.

Then her voice began to choke up. "Mama loves you", she told him. They hugged, shed tears, said their goodbyes and he was gone. Having no-

where else to go, he became homeless and dropped out of school. "He would call and tell me he was hungry and I would bring him food," she continued. Sometimes she would see him sleeping on a park bench near the house and described it as "the most hurtful thing."

Tears swelled up in the wells of the eyes of people in the room. Listeners called into the station and sent text messages in support of Gloria. Asset manager Jadine Chou, the CHA representative on the show, responded with the argument that the harsh lease and policies were there to provide safety for the other CHA residents, but couldn't explain how this teenager was a threat.

The next day the New York Times reprinted one of the Chicago Reporter articles by Angela Caputo, "One And Done." By September 9, Carlos Ponce, the CHA's Interim CEO released a statement saying—"Its' publication allows a welcomed discussion of the role of public housing, the rights of public housing residents—and their responsibilities as well. Public Housing is not a shelter, nor is it a warehouse of last resort..." And further, "Each and every person who rents from or through the CHA knows the rules. Quite frankly, it is a small price to pay for the guarantee of affordable rents in excellent

housing."

The next phase of welcomed discussion must begin with the Lease, for once it is signed, residents give up many of their constitutional rights. Nothing can cover up the fact that CHA was Gloria's son Tyran's last resort. And like most residents, no one in their family knew the rules because the CHA management only gave them a four-page Lease Part 2 without the "Terms and Conditions" included, which was a common practice at that time. So a child pays the price and another mother weeps, but not alone. Those of us who have a conscience weep with her. But not for long. Even before all the tears have dried, the conscious join the fight.

Correction

On Page 9 of the October, 2011 edition of the *People's Tribune*, in an article about Cabrini Green, a commentary by Joseph Peery at the end of the article was mistakenly attributed to Veronica Buckley. Peery's comments began with "Public Housing was born in the Great Depression..." We regret the error.

—*People's Tribune*.

A People's Victory—Short Term

By Maureen D. Taylor

The status of residents in Detroit is precarious and we all know it. Here is the landscape on which we live:

1) The only state to lose population in the last census was Michigan;

2) Of all the manufacturing jobs that disappeared, 50% vanished from Michigan;

3) Detroit's population fell to 717,000, confirmed in the last census;

4) Some 235,000 Detroit residents receive unemployment benefits, not counting those who benefits have exhausted;

5) Some 95,000 parcels of vacant lots and vacant homes are standing empty as of this writing;

6) Michigan is one of the top five states leading in home foreclosures.

The foundation on which workers live has changed forever. Gone are the middle income producing jobs that used to be tied to auto-manufacturing. Gone are the benefits that workers fought so hard to secure. Gone are the days when the expectation was that our children would do better than their parents. Technology that used to enhance labor, now replaces labor and, with that fundamental change,

comes the truth about raw, predatory capitalism...it knows only feeding. If you can no longer produce

for this system, which only knows constant consumption, then there is no need to keep you alive.



Protest against Michigan welfare cuts that will throw up to 40,000 children off welfare. Families won a short term victory when a judge ruled that notices sent to households were flawed, and that funds taken away incorrectly must be restored immediately. PHOTO/DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM

Low income children are being targeted in Michigan. In the worst job market, the worst housing market, with the cost of living going up and the chances of living going down—the governor of Michigan has decreed that the first 40,000 welfare families who have received 48 months of cash assistance will be separated from those dollars permanently. Mother can't pay rent, mortgage, or utilities. This is not the first time that mothers were told that their "first-born" children had to be sacrificed. The difference in this class-attack is that the entire family is being tossed out into the streets—forced into homelessness and whatever else awaits them.

This decree from this corporate Pharaoh was to have taken place on Oct. 1, 2011. Federal Judge Paul Borman ruled on Oct. 4th, that the notices sent to these households were flawed and that the proper steps required for notification were not followed. He ruled further that funds taken away incorrectly must be restored immediately.

A cry of victory went out that could be heard across the land from those parents, grateful to have more time allowed between them and the shear terror that engulfs extreme poverty as those October dollars could not be taken

away from them.

The State is today hard at work, correcting the form that will be sent out, so that it is in full and demonic compliance when they strike again at the poorest among us—blond, blue-eyed children.

Fact: Some 57,000 job openings have been posted on-line for the entire state on the official Michigan Job Site for this year-to-date.

Fact: Approximately 1,100 jobs were posted the week of Oct 1, 2011 for the entire state.

Fact: Some 835,000 resumes are on file that drop off after one year—about 8 to 1.

Welfare Rights continues to recruit visionaries to the Resurrection Marches that happen every Thursday at the State Building in Detroit—3044 W. Grand Blvd., from noon to 1PM. We resurrect the spirit of social justice, of resistance, and are talking about what a new society based on the needs of the many looks like, or we collapse under the dead weight of what we are suffering through today.

Maureen D. Taylor is State Chairperson, Michigan Welfare Rights Organization

PROGRESSIVE CINEMA

By Bill Meyer

One of the more prominent themes at this year's Toronto International Film Festival was immigration. With the world facing increased poverty as the rich get richer, filmmakers are examining the ramifications of shifting populations. The richer countries are facing the realities that the poor of the earth have to find new lands to survive.

Two great new films from Italy address the moral and human aspects of the growing phenomenon of so-called "illegal" immigration. **CARDBOARD VILLAGES** directed by the veteran master Ermanno Olmi (**TREE OF WOODEN CLOGS**), tells about a group of North African refugees who take shelter in a Catholic church that's set for demolition. The lonely aging priest, played by famed actor, Michael Lonsdale, (**MUNICH, OF GODS AND MEN** and **FREE MEN**) that also appears at this year's Toronto International Film Festival), confronted with this final challenge in his decaying parish, takes the moral high ground and defends their right to seek shelter against the impending threat of starvation and possible death. In defiance, a tent city is constructed inside the empty church, while the priest,

who could face charges of harboring "illegals," contemplates the ethical questions that define the role of the church and just being human. The police eventually arrive and the movie offers a poignant resolution to the crisis. This is possibly the last film from this revered director.

With a different locale, but the same issue of immigration, **TER-RAFERMA** takes us to a sunny island off the coast of Sicily, where an old fisherman takes his grandson out to sea to learn the fishing trade. As the sun begins to set, they see a startling vision in the horizon: a raft overloaded with human beings frantically waving for help. As several take the risk and jump off the raft, desperately heading towards their boat, the old fisherman chooses between the new law of the land that punishes those who pick up 'illegals,' versus the law of the sea that directs a person with moral conscience to pull drowning people from the water. A pregnant mother and several others are loaded onboard before a Coast Guard boat arrives and they leave before getting caught. The story takes us through an emotional roller coaster. A pregnant woman and her son are taken in while the others flee once they reach land. The fisherman's daughter helps deliver

the baby that we soon find out was the result of a prison rape in Libya. The hardships of their long journey from Ethiopia, the reluctance of the daughter to accept the Africans, the villagers who pride their island as a resort town free of "illegals," and the eventual concerns about how they will get off the island with increasing police surveillance, infuses this drama with one moral (and political) dilemma after another. Director Emanuele Crialese, appearing after the screening, revealed that the woman playing the African mother actually was an immigrant from Somalia who encountered the tragedies depicted in the movie.

Acclaimed Finnish director, Aki Kaurismäki (**MATCH FACTORY GIRL, MAN WITHOUT A PAST**), has also turned to the hot button issue of immigration. Applying his trademark style of dry humor, simple camera movement and a warmth for the working class, he offers a story about a man faced with the moral dilemma of harboring an "illegal." **LE HAVRE** won the FIPRESCI Award at the 2011 Cannes Film Festival, and this 'fairy tale' comical approach to a serious social issue is as effective as a hard-hitting documentary.

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Occupy Wall Street–Detroit



PHOTO/DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM

By General Baker

Occupy Wall Street Detroit is at Grand Circus Park in Detroit. There are about 100 protesters from the Greater Detroit area and about 50 tents are set up. The police aren't bothering them.

Michigan is in the heart of the Rust Belt and Detroit, the former auto capital, has some of the highest unemployment and poverty in the nation. Overall, the idea of the 99% helps move forward our understanding of classes in society, but we are trying to stress that we represent the *very bottom of the 99%*.

Occupy Wall Street Detroit has been sending people to the Resurrection Marches that have been struggling around the government's welfare cuts. They have supported the foreclosure struggle. They sent all of their forces into the struggle against Bank of America and its foreclosure policy here. They supported people in demonstrations

against the bad bus service in this city. So they are blending themselves into the struggles. One of the big things is their international solidarity. There was a joint protest with the Occupation in Windsor, Canada. They almost closed down one of the bridges. Some local people involved in the bridge struggle joined that struggle.

The occupation movement is settling in! It was a little raggedy at the start; a lot of learning was needed. When you start something downtown in Detroit, you can get overrun by the homeless. Downtown Detroit has hundreds of homeless people. So we had to point out that they weren't down here to feed the homeless; they were down here to Occupy and to do the work of the occupation. There are plenty of places in Detroit where the homeless can go and eat. Lists were made up so they would know where to send people. Now the Occupation is going into its third week. They

have a commitment for 60 days, until mid December.

The Occupation makes decisions through the General Assembly (GA). If you want them involved in something, you take the issues to the GA and have it discussed and voted on. Most of the participants are white. However, when it comes to Detroit, you have to involve the multinational makeup of the population, the African American, the Arab and Hispanics into the struggle. Generally, people are working together.

The Occupy Detroit effort needs to be welcomed into the city. It brings more forces and more opportunities to learn and it helps sharpen the class contradictions we are trying to expose.

General Baker is an internationally known autoworker (now retired) and a leader of the Detroit rebellion in the 1960s.

OCCUPY CARBONDALE

By Cathy and Sheridan Talbott

People from across Southern Illinois are gathering on a regular basis in Carbondale in solidarity with the "Occupy Wall Street" movement going on in New York, across the country and across the world. They come from all walks of life. They are young and old, mothers, fathers, and grandparents. They are laid-off factory workers, teachers, students, veterans. They are all saying basically the same thing. They want a future, a future for themselves, for their children, for everybody. They want a social system that doesn't serve Wall Street and the top 1% like we've had for so long now, but one that serves the

people of this country, the 99%.

The people of Southern Illinois have watched their jobs go up in smoke and vanish into thin air. They've watched funding for state functions that benefit the people, like education and health care, be cut and cut again. The ever-higher spiraling cost of healthcare moves any meaningful healthcare out of reach. As union members, they've watched and are watching their collective bargaining rights be systematically attacked and eroded. To get an education the students at Southern Illinois University have to accumulate heavy debt. If they graduate, they ask, "Where are the jobs?" And who makes big money on that debt? Student debt looks

like one of the next big economic bubbles to burst.

They're watching want and need increase while "Wall Street" and the top 1% gorges itself in the wealth we create. Politicians keep telling us there is no money. There's plenty of wealth and money. Only problem is the 1% has it all and keeps wanting and getting more and more. The corruption is systemic. And so the people of Southern Illinois are now standing up with all the others in unity saying "meet human need and not corporate greed." I know from talking to people in various communities that everyone knows we do not have a system that works for the majority. The movement

VISION OF A NEW SOCIETY

From the Editors

The People's Tribune is devoting the following pages to coverage of the Occupy Wall Street protests sweeping the nation.

The demand of the Occupy Wall Street movement for a just and democratic America where corporations are placed under the rule of law is a reflection of this epochal moment in history and points the way forward. The polarization of wealth and poverty has reached extreme levels globally. More and more people are barely eking out an existence while the number of billionaires is multiplying. The corporations in the U.S. have merged with the government, a prescription for fascism. Underlying it all is the fundamental change in the way society produces its necessities; this is bringing about the end of capitalism and producing a struggle for a new society.

Capitalism, a system based on the buying and selling of labor power, is dying, not because someone wants it to, or because it is so corrupt and immoral, but because of the labor-eliminating computer and robot. No corporation is going to buy your labor power when greater profits can be made by producing with a robot. The jobs aren't coming back; yet under capitalism, without a job, you starve.

We are not going to achieve

any semblance of a democratic America with an economy based on the law of maximizing corporate profits. We have to organize a cooperative economy or we won't be able to feed and house ourselves and our families. We have to break the power of these giant corporations by taking them over and make them work for society, rather than for the profits of the 1%. However, this cannot happen until the people themselves have the political power to make fundamental changes in the economy, society and the political structure. This is the pathway to a new cooperative America.

In such a society, the abundance that science and technology makes possible today will be distributed to all based on need—without money. Everyone will have the opportunity to contribute their talents and skills back to society. To achieve this age-old vision, made necessary and possible by the new electronic technology, we must go beyond the struggle to simply reign in the corporations. We must gain the political power in order to create a totally new society of, by and for the people. The first step in this long and difficult, but historic battle for humanity and the earth itself, is to orient our struggles to take over the banks and all the rest of the giant corporations and run them in the public's interest.

OCCUPY FLINT

We are citizens of the Flint area. We come from all walks of life. We are not affiliated with any political party. We each bring different views, skills, and experiences to the movement. We come together insisting the status quo be changed. We further insist on a paradigm shift to a system that is citizen-oriented.

We must examine the train wreck our society has become. We must ask hard questions and demand answers. We must educate ourselves on the problems facing the 99%. And most importantly, we must come together. Though we may not agree, this is a conversation we *must* have.

Our General Assembly is structured as a Direct Democracy; we have no specified leader, everyone has a voice, and we vote on all major issues. We respect and value all viewpoints, ideas, and opinions.

We believe that every human being has the right to food, shelter, education, health care, a safe working environment, and a working wage equal to no less than the cost of living.

We are tired of living in an economy where a two-income family struggles to pay bills and cannot afford to save for retirement.

For further information, contact OccupyFlint.org.

here will grow and expand.

So what now? Are we going to again let them march us around in a circle, give us a donut, send us home, and tell us to vote democratic? This rapid slide into deep poverty didn't start with George W. Bush. Nor did it end with the

election of Barack Obama. We need to set our own independent path. And we can start with the demand in a single voice that this one percent and these corporations be taxed. Together, we can and will find the answers and implement solutions.

Occupy San Francisco



Occupy San Francisco has suffered two attacks by police but the protest continues to thrive. PHOTO/MYLES BOISEN

By Sarah Page

On September 17, 2011, Occupy the San Francisco Financial District kicked off in solidarity with Occupy Wall Street, at 555 California Street, outside the Bank of America building, aka the “Wall Street of the West.” Approximately 150 people participated in the opening rally. Members of U.S. Uncut and the Revolutionary Poets Brigade were present, as well as people of all ages and international students. Independent media documented the event with photographs, tweets and video. We shared the megaphone with people in the crowd to hear stories of how they have been affected by corporate greed. US currency was set on fire.

After a couple hours the rally split up into one group who marched to Wells Fargo and down Market Street, and another group who stayed and met in a public assembly. Plans were made to meet again in Union Square the following Saturday. A small group

of campers formed and stayed the night, including a couple travelers who had intended to leave San Francisco when they saw a flyer for the event and were compelled to stay, and a young man who had taken a train from Vancouver, Canada to support the movement.

The camp is continuously growing and we have been protesting and organizing ever since. There are now daily meetings at the camp at 6PM and General Assemblies every Saturday in Union Square at noon. This is a leaderless movement that operates on a very democratic and open consensus basis. We developed a process for measuring consensus during our meetings. Raised hands with moving fingers indicate agreement with what is being said, arms crossed over the chest in an X indicate disagreement with what is being said, rolling your forearms over each other indicates disinterest in what is being said. The General Assemblies on Saturday attract about 60 people, this week will likely bring more. The daily

Riot police attack #OWS San Francisco protest

By Sarah Menefee

After two recent attacks on the Occupy Wall Street San Francisco occupation site by a large number of riot police, who beat up protesters, arrested some campers, and confiscated tents and food, public support for the movement and its demands is stronger than ever, and the occupation is growing, with outpourings of donations and on-site solidarity to prevent further attacks. This eyewitness account was written by poet and

supporter Jim Byron: “After two police raids in which ‘public works’ employees jacked as much stuff as they could fit into their truck and riot-gear policemen pushed people around and arrested them, you might think that the Occupy San Francisco movement would be on the brink of collapse. But, the opposite is true. It is stronger than ever. It is thriving. We are building a new society in which every human being is provided with everything they need to survive.”

A New Class of Workers Who Are Revolutionaries

From the Editors

What will it take to bring about a new society? Society is transformed when something qualitatively new is added to the economy that disrupts the existing economy. Economic revolution begets social and political revolution.

Something new has been added to our economy and to economies across the globe: it is production using computers and robots (electronics). For 40 years, the new robotic production has been wiping out jobs by the millions and driving down wages. This growth of electronics-based production is reflected in society as the growth of a new class of workers. Millions in this class are permanently unemployed. Some are destitute and homeless. Millions of others are among the part-time, contingency, below-minimum wage workers within the employed sector of the new class. This new class created

by electronics is no longer able to survive under capitalism.

As electronics entered the economy in the 1970s, we first saw the jobs of unskilled and semi-skilled laborers eliminated. Today, workers from every section of society, from skilled industrial workers to people with advanced college degrees, are being forced into the new class.

The needs of this new class can only be met by creating a new society where the means of production are publicly owned and what we produce is distributed according to need. It is therefore a revolutionary class. It is forced to fight to overturn corporate private property and build a new society to meet its economic needs. It is forced to fight for the political power to shape society.

The essential task of revolutionaries today is to make this decisive new class conscious that it is fighting for a new society, and give it a vision of the economic

paradise that is possible if the marvelous new electronic means of production are taken over by the people. With the means of production in the people’s hands, we could eliminate back-breaking toil, we could feed, clothe and shelter everyone, provide everyone with health care and education and everything needed for a civilized life. The productive power of electronics should be raising our standard of living. Instead, in the hands of the capitalists, it is plunging masses of people into poverty. The electronics that, in capitalist hands, is strangling us, could set us free if it were in the people’s hands.

We can have a society and a world free of poverty and oppression. It’s right in front of us. We just have to take it. Class consciousness is the weapon that will propel us to victory.

meetings at the camp have had up to 20 people.

We want an end to corporate personhood, to corporate greed. That is our main focus right now. Ultimately our demands are the same as the Occupy Wall Street demands.

Occupations have popped up in cities all over the US, including Boston, Chicago and LA. This is really a global movement, inspired by people organizing like this in Israel, Egypt, Spain, Iceland, and beyond. We have had involvement by young people from several of these countries here in SF. Also, I received a phone call from a doctor in Uganda one night when I was meeting with some people from the occupation in a Starbucks planning a newsletter. He left a message saying: “We are all waiting for and anticipating” the success of your movement to “wrestle from that evil government” your “just demands” which will “remove the pressure” from the “millions suffering under the yoke of American Imperialism.” “I have a radio station and will” report on what is going on there. “One day justice will be done.” He said he would call again.

www.occupysf.com
www.occupytogether.org

The Shifting Of The Tides

Marching protesters fill the roads
Tent cities line the streets in rows
They are taking back the land that has been stolen
Declaring that the jig is up
For now they have had enough
And the people are demanding revolution
Like the morning sun, it glides
They too are now on the rise
And they’re gonna be putting it all in

Oh, it’s the shifting of the tides, let them shift, let them shift
Oh, it’s the shifting of the tides, let them shift, let them shift, oh!

Like the seas are bound to transform
A nation too can be reborn
The moon is always moving across the sky
& as life keeps moving down the line
Even mountains erode with time
Change is the only thing that is constant
Men and insects build their empires
The sun explodes with furious fires
Hear the call of the people taking back their own land

Oh, it’s the shifting of the tides, let them shift, let them shift
Oh, it’s the shifting of the tides, let them shift, let them shift, oh!

The cheating politicians scramble
The vigilantes light their candles
Camping outdoors neath the twilight moon glow
Reclaiming the broad boulevards
Under the eyes of countless stars
Who bear witness to the pangs of evolution
Crowds gather large all over the land
To make the whole world understand
They are greater than the few who wish to rule them

Oh, it’s the shifting of the tides, let them shift, let them shift
Oh, it’s the shifting of the tides, let them shift, let them shift, oh!

—By Jim Byron

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THE OCCUPY OAKLAND GENERAL STRIKE

By Steve Miller

When Occupy Oakland took over the plaza in front of City Hall, they renamed it “Oscar Grant Plaza” in honor of the man who was murdered by BART police in 2009. Young people put their bodies on the line to reclaim a public space that is increasingly denied to the victims of society.

Homeless people, who sleep every night separately and invisibly in downtown Oakland doorways, quickly joined the encampment. Unions responded by sending porta-toilets and thousands of meals. As a

failing city, Oakland symbolizes the privatized future of the Race To The Bottom that the 1% offers to society... and everyone knows this.

Occupy Oakland soon reflected three distinct, but closely related, sections of the working class: the long-term homeless, the Youth who work temp jobs when they work at all, and organized labor. The encampment also strongly reflected the city’s multi-racial character. This dynamic, and contradictory, mix has driven the process ever since.

Actor Danny Glover addressed Occupy Oakland in mid-October with one of the great statements so

far in the Occupy Movement. He called for a total re-imagining of what we mean by democracy, of work, of public education and what it means to be a human being.

“... it’s not only taking back our democracy. We have to remake it. We have to transform it. We have to build something better than that... It’s let us down. It’s failed us. It’s failed us in our homes. It’s failed us in our communities. It’s failed us state by state. But it’s also failed this fragile planet we live on, this fragile Mother Earth, which nourishes us.” (Search YouTube, Danny Glover, Oakland)

The police attack on Occupy campers was seen around the world. Later that night, police continued firing tear gas into crowds of protestors and fractured the skull of Iraq Veteran, Scott Olsen, with a direct hit. Their goal was more than to disperse the Occupiers. It was to stop the process of Re-Imagining that has gripped the spirit of Americans and the world. (Editor’s note: As the *People’s Tribune* goes to press, the world is hearing about the brutal beating by Oakland police of another veteran, Kayvan Sabeghi.)

This attack was not just common police brutality. This was the New Police in action, a squad of 17 agencies that had been welded into a strike-force by the Homeland Security Agency as a part of its policy of militarizing the police across the country.

Rather than be intimidated, Occupiers called for the first General Strike in the U.S., since the one in Oakland, in 1946. Over twenty thousand people marched and rallied all day and shut down the Port of Oakland, the country’s 5th largest, by blocking access to the gates.

The Port represents the political power of the 1%. Though it produces billions of dollars in revenue a year, and in fact is the port of Silicon Valley, the Port is “legally separate” from the city, which gets nothing at all. The Port should be public space to benefit the people; since it’s not—shut it down!

The Battle of Ideas within the movement moves forward as people consider “Next Steps”. The Democratic Party seeks to tie the Occupations to the timid politics of incrementalism and begging that has so obviously failed. Movements self-organize around ideas.

Do we fight backwards to the old status quo, or do we fight forwards to a new system? Are we here to patch up the system? Or does the public have to seize the corporations, before they destroy society?

Do we continue to fight on the scattered fronts of single-issue politics, or do we unite the movement into a real political battle against the state?

The political independence of the 99% will grow from how these questions are answered.



Thousands of demonstrators participated in Oakland’s General Strike that shut down the Port of Oakland, the fifth busiest port in the U.S.

PHOTO/AUSTIN-LONG SCOTT

The Uprising of the 99%: A Century After the Uprising of the 20,000, We Must Rise Again

By Andi Sosin & Joel Sosinsky

With Occupy Wall Street demonstrators encamped in New York City since September, and occupations developing nationwide, protesters are now encountering efforts from corporate media outlets and politicians to silence the occupiers’ voices and shut down their occupations. But demonstrators can be heartened by learning that over 100 years ago activism set a precedent for successful outcomes to solving social and economic problems. Positive changes did not happen swiftly, and did not come without darker moments, but ultimately change did come.

During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, when the robber barons of industry used their wealth and political power to oppress the American working class, workers all across the nation engaged in numerous strikes, wherein marchers took to the streets to demand change. In 1909, the power of worker solidarity became clear when New York City’s striking shirtwaist workers picketed outside garment factories. Their strike, called the Uprising of the 20,000, gained public sympathy, and when 146 mostly young immigrant female shirtwaist workers died in the infamous Triangle factory fire of 1911, the funeral procession brought over 400,000 people into the streets to mourn. In the Triangle fire’s aftermath, outrage turned into purpose, forcing politicians to heed the people’s will. New York State and other states passed laws that improved worker safety, prohibited child labor and instituted

worker compensation systems.

When the national economy collapsed during the Great Depression, unemployed workers raised their voices in frustration and anger. They camped out in “Hoovervilles” across the country, making themselves the evidence of the system’s failure. Franklin Roosevelt’s Secretary of Labor, Frances Perkins, who witnessed the Triangle fire, was instrumental in passage of the many laws that ended the Depression, including the Fair Labor Standards Act, the Social Security Act, and the National Labor Relations (Wagner) Act, which authorized collective bargaining and the right to form and join a union. These New Deal laws were designed to end protests and industrial strife, and provide jobs. They created the American middle class, and established a social safety net for all, that is today in peril.

Since the end of World War II, technology has revolutionized industrial production, reducing the need for human labor. In the name of corporate profits, globalism, war and environmental plunder have decimated economic prospects and reduced freedom for 99% of the American people. Unemployment, the burden of student loans, and the housing foreclosure crisis have taken place because an inhumane and corrupt capitalist system, facilitated by bought politicians, has allowed corporate speculation and corruption to ruin the US and world economies. Exposure of the unfairness and the wide disparity between the 99% who work for a living, and the 1% who possess most of the wealth, now prompts



us to raise our voices in protest.

Occupy Wall Street makes it clear that its primary goal is to change an unfair economic system, and to reform politics so that the will of the people is done. Reform may be difficult to accomplish, but remembering the example of the outpouring of citizens’ ire following the Triangle fire that resulted in a strong labor movement and institution of our social safety net, affords a historical model of success. Taking to the streets in solidarity for nonviolent demonstrations, exposing corporate excesses and crimes, and organizing for political power to demand justice has a model in the actions taken by American workers over one hundred years ago. Although the struggle for democracy and a fair and just economic system is unending, it is a struggle that can and must be won by the 99% today.

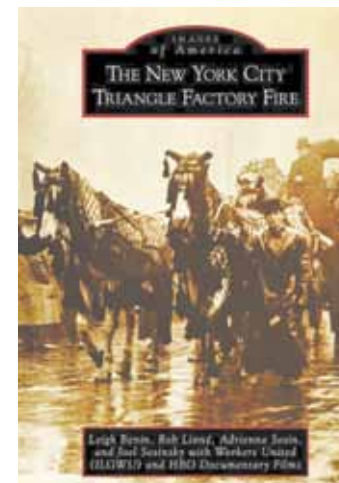
On October 5 Labor unions support Occupy Wall Street with a massive rally and march. Retired garment workers from Workers United, successor union to the ILGWU, carried a banner and shirtwaists to symbolize the Triangle fire, which galvanized the union movement over 100 years ago.

PHOTO/ROY CAMPOLONGO

Now available:

The New York City Triangle Factory Fire,

Copyright 2011 by Leigh Benin, Rob Linne, Adrienne Sosin, and Joel Sosinsky with Workers United (ILGWU) and HBO Documentary Films. Published by Arcadia Publishing. E-mail sales @ arcadiapublishing.com, or 1-888-313-2665. This is a living photographic history which presents the finest collection of pictures of the Triangle Fire and the monumental labor struggle that it ignited in the streets of New York 100 years ago. It is a stirring exposé which is suitable for use in the classroom, or among today’s fighters for economic justice in America. It is an invaluable tool for teaching while we fight.



FASCISM IS ARISING IN AMERICA



Occupy Oakland street protest October 25. Peaceful protesters face off against police with full riot gear, tear gas, rubber bullets, helicopters. PHOTO/MYLES BOISEN

From the Editors

The Occupy Wall Street protests have spread to over 1400 cities in the U.S., involving over 250,000 people. The powerful corporate media has tried, unsuccessfully, to smother the movement. The widespread use of brutal police terror to dislodge peaceful protesters, including the infliction of serious head wounds on an Iraq-war-veteran in Oakland is providing a glimpse of what American fascism could look like.

What is fascism? Why is it developing now? Fascism is the naked, unrestrained rule of corporate power. It is arising now because the capitalists need to secure corporate private property in the face of a changing economy and potential challenges to their rule.

Fascism has not been fully unleashed because there has been no serious organized resis-

tance. The rapidly deteriorating economic situation is changing all that.

At the root of this process is the antagonism between capitalist private-property relations and the labor-replacing instruments of production. Millions are losing their jobs, homes and livelihood. Although the rulers will try to disorient the developing mass struggle, ultimately, they have no solution for them outside of fascism. Its features have been developing for some time. It is seen in the merging of the corporations and government which is the political foundation for fascism. It is seen in the widening police brutality, the rounding up and deportation of immigrants, the stripping of democratic rights, and the fear promoted by the "terrorist" bogeyman.

Old repressive laws have been updated and new ones have been written. For example,

under the so called "REX" program, the President could declare a state of emergency, empowering FEMA to take control of the internal infrastructure of the U.S. and suspend the constitution. The President could invoke executive orders that would 1) draft all citizens into work forces 2) register all men, women and children, 3) seize all airports and aircraft and 4) seize all housing and establish forced relocation of citizens (i.e. concentration camps). It is all in place awaiting only a presidential declaration to be enforced by both military and civilian police.

The reality is that this country is in trouble and cannot be fixed without fundamental changes in the economic relations. Nothing less than replacing this military-financial oligarchy with a co-operative economy where everyone's needs are met can save it. Our

and immediately we were deluged with supplies donated by both members of the protest and outsiders who supported us. While we still did not have a tent or space set up, we gathered together to set up a field hospital that would be used both for emergencies and protecting the health of all involved.

At around 8 PM, the people's microphone called us to a general assembly, where the goals and reasons for why we had gathered were announced. By this time, the crowd had swelled to at least 700 people. There were no demands made; this was just a protest to show our anger against the corporate system that had led our country into financial decline. The meeting was orderly. All who wanted to speak were given the chance to voice their opinions

and ideas and the crowd responded with both applause and thoughtful consideration. Despite it being a Friday night in the financial district and very nearly deserted, a march was organized and I volunteered to carry an EMT bag along with another medic to go with the crowd just in case there was need for medical attention. The march snaked its way along downtown Boston with plenty of people emerging from the bars and restaurants to get a closer look and pictures of a group of at least 500 chanting in the streets. The circuit of the city culminated at the Federal Reserve, where the crowd gathered in the park in front of the building. There we were met with a line of both Boston police and the Federal Reserve's private guards. While the crowd did chant

DECLARATION OF OCCUPATION ATLANTA

Proposed by the Demands Committee to the General Assembly on October 7, 2011

Preamble: We hold this truth to be self-evident, that the 99% deserve equal rights, equal protections, equal access, and equal opportunity as the 1% who benefit disproportionately from the current system. We therefore freely assemble to assert our rights and demands:

1. We demand greater democratic control in all spheres of life, from the home to the government, from the economy to the workplace. It is a moral, logical, and political imperative that people should be in control of their own lives to the greatest extent possible.
2. We deserve an economic system that meets human needs, reduces economic inequality, shrinks the income gap, and doesn't reward decisions that have a negative impact on society.
3. We recognize that the market will not regulate itself. What is good for profit is not always good for people or the environment.
4. We assert the right of every human being to adequate shelter, food, clothing, hygiene, and other basic necessities.
5. We assert the right of every individual to adequate protection from the economic uncertainties of old age, accident, unemployment, and other hardship.
6. We denounce all predatory lending and fraudulent banking practices and demand accountability.
7. We recognize that no society should allocate more resources to warfare than to the public good.
8. We demand a more democratic, publicly representative, and accountable media.
9. We insist that the Internet is a basic human right and as such should remain absolutely free and neutral.
10. We assert our right to public spaces and our right to freely inhabit them because they are essential to democracy and our right to assemble.
11. We denounce a criminal justice and for-profit prison system that relies on mass incarceration, especially when it reinforces the marginalization and disenfranchisement of people.

We are the people. We are not Republicans, Democrats, or any other party. We occupy because no party represents the 99%. We are not affiliated with any union or organization. Our movement does not align with organizations. Organizations align with our movement.

starting point is that this is our country. Fascism is not inevitable. We have already seen the little victories that can be won when we stand together against an immoral system that creates such abundance for one

section of society, while one in five Americans live in dire poverty. We, the people, have truth and justice on our side. We must unite around the basic demands of the people to save the country.

MY EXPERIENCE OF OCCUPY BOSTON

By Michael Sosin

Upon arriving to Dewey Square across from the Boston Federal Reserve, I could see that Occupy Boston was going to be something. I could only estimate the crowd to be around 300 people waving signs, chanting, and getting ready for the long sleep-in that was coming. By around seven, groups were forming for different tasks that the movement would need in the coming weeks. Legal, Tactical, Media, Arts and Culture, Food, Medical, and a few others dispersed to discuss logistics and what would eventually happen. I joined with the medical group because that is where I felt most useful (I had CPR and First Aid training when I worked as a lifeguard)

out "Fuck The Fed," they maintained a respect for the police. They maintained the principle of non-violence and just chanted, sang, and danced to express their frustration at a broken system.

I returned to Dewey Square Monday afternoon to find a new world. A tent city had been established with a system of boards acting as a makeshift sidewalk between the tents. I went back to medical to do a 4-hour shift as an oncall medic and I was astounded by the amount of supplies we had received over the weekend. The medical team had gotten tons of donations over the weekend. Even so, at least 20 times an hour people approached me to ask if we needed any medical supplies. People were giving us so much that I truly felt

a sense of community in this tent city. The movement has shown me that democracy works when we take care of our own. As a medic I was able to see this firsthand as I changed bandages, checked throats, and checked up a few protesters who were ill. The Occupy movement does not ask for money, political capital, or fame; we just want our shot at the American Dream that was promised to us when we were young, and we don't want that dream to be taken from us due to the greed of the 1% who control the banks and financial markets. It is best summed up by one quote spoken at the general assembly, "The 99% is too big to fail."

Reach Michael at michael.sosin@gmail.com

Occupation Comes to Los Angeles

By Mark Lipman

Despite a media blackout, word spread like wildfire. The Internet made the main stream media obsolete. Yes, I heard about Occupy Wall Street and so did everyone else across the country. Calls went out and people gathered here in Los Angeles—200 strangers came together in Pershing Square, near the financial district, and in one

week organized a movement like I've never seen before.

"We are the 99%" and "We are leader-full," people spoke in full consensus, referring to how everyone's voice mattered. On October 1, the occupation of Los Angeles City Hall began, overshadowed by the tall towers of Wells Fargo, U.S. Bank and Bank of America. Over 3,000 people turned out to give voice to the swelling anger visited

in every corner of the country and around the world, over economic injustice.

"We stand in solidarity with the protesters on Wall Street and in 76 cities across the United States that have turned out today," a voice could be heard in the crowd.

Amazingly, in a move unprecedented in memory, members of the Los Angeles City Council instructed their police department to cooperate with the peaceful protesters who had assembled, saying that their eye would be on the police, and not the occupiers—a welcome difference to the horrific stories of police brutality in New York City that streamed constantly on the web.

"Our battle is not with the police, we are peaceful, we are non-violent," the general assembly agreed. "Our battle is with the system, with capitalism, with the greed of Wall Street and the banks, who have mortgaged our lives for profit."

"The world is watching," the group chanted in unison.

One demonstrator noted that "Capitalism will create the tools to overthrow itself. We are everywhere. They cannot silence the truth. They can only ignore us for so long."

No, we are not winning, we have already won.



Occupify LA leads a march on banks. PHOTO/ROSEMARY LEE

Occupy Houston



Occupy Houston demonstrators rally for jobs, healthcare, education, to stop "Corporate Greed," to "Get Big Money Out of Government," to protest "Bad Bankers" and to demand that government put "People over Profits." Over 800 protesters marched and demonstrated earlier in front of the JP Morgan Chase Bank tower before proceeding to City Hall.

PHOTO/MARIA ELENA CASTELLANOS

Occupation Movement Gets a Boost from LA City Officials

By Dan Bluemel

Two days of rain has not quelled the energy of the "Occupy Los Angeles" sit-in demonstration occurring at City Hall. However, it helps when your city officials got your back.

Councilmen Richard Alarcón and Bill Rosendhal introduced a resolution to support "the continuation of the peaceful and vibrant exercise in First Amendment rights carried out by 'Occupy Los Angeles' on the City Hall lawn," according to the blog *The City Maven*. Councilmen Jose Huizar, Paul Koretz, Ed Reyes, Dennis Zine and Eric Garcetti seconded the motion.

Mark Lipman, an Occupy LA demonstrator, who attended the council meeting, said there is already enough support for the resolution to pass. "[This] will be the first government body in the country to endorse the occupation," he said.

According to Lipman, Council members Jan Perry and Bernard Parks gave no support for the resolution and remained silent after its introduction.

Since the "Occupy Wall Street" demonstration began in New York on Sept. 17, solidarity actions supporting economic justice have spread across the country

and the world. The website Occupy Together reports occupation meet-ups in 405 cities across the globe. Aside from Los Angeles, California has "occupy" groups in San Jose, Santa Cruz, San Francisco, Orange County and Long Beach to name a few.

"This is global now," said Lipman. "To many people are fed up with being stepped on and having a sliver of the population living in the lap of luxury." "It's a good day for democracy," he added.

Gary Boatwright wasn't so enthusiastic about support from city officials, feeling they acted out of political motivations. "I don't trust them a bit," he said. Boatwright, 59, has been homeless since 2006 and lives on Skid Row. He has suffered, he said, from much harassment from police concerning camping, jaywalking and shopping carts. As a result, he has had numerous court appearances. He joined the protesters yesterday after reading about the demonstration online. He said he has shared the same sentiments of the "occupy movement" for a long time.

"Here we are. Same thing all over again, only different," he said. "[It's] pretty much the same message about the capitalist pigs, the greedy motherfuckers. They seem to be worse and more sophisticated than they were back in

my day." "The comparison would be the robber barons," he added. "[They are] all doing very, very well for themselves just like in the 1890s. Once again, they seem to have the upper hand."

Allan Eaton, who had attended

Occupy Wall Street for its first five days, had a much different reaction over the news of the City Council resolution. He said it helped him regain some faith in his country. He has camped out at City Hall since Occupy Los Angeles be-

gan. "I was in tears," he said. "To hear them coming back at us with words of support and compassion, and wanting for us to be safe and carry on our message, it is a huge motivation builder for us."



A General Assembly is held daily at 7:30 p.m at the Los Angeles OWS.

PHOTO/ROSEMARY LEE

The Occupy Movement Comes to Washington, DC

By Eric Sheptock

The occupation of Freedom Plaza in downtown Washington, DC by "Stop the Machine-Crete a New World" began on October 6, inspired by the Arab Spring.

Stop the Machine led a march through the streets of the capital which culminated at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce where some people ascended the front steps and began to demand job-creation so vehemently that several police ran inside and away from the crowd. This just goes to show that they don't share our analysis of societal conditions or our realization that the job market is shrinking due to an increase in labor-replacing technology.

The rallying cry of Occupy DC has been "We are the 99%! You (while pointing at bystanders) are the 99%!" This group has made a point of raising consciousness—differentiating between the wealthiest 1% of Americans who hold at least 40% of the nation's wealth and the other 99% of us.

These two actions which are separated by six city blocks (.6 miles) and a world of differences have created a teachable moment in movement building. McPherson

son Park is occupied by hundreds of 20-something people while the Freedom Plaza crowd has an average age of about 50. While both actions are placing emphasis on the creation of a "horizontal, leaderless movement", everyone knows who the organizers of Stop the Machine are. There are no clear leaders of Occupy DC, which presents us with a new set of challenges. There has been disagreement over the level of civil disobedience which people would be asked to engage in. The older, staid protesters have proven to be more comfortable with being arrested than the young people who are just beginning their lives as adults and have a stake in the system.

The horizontal, leaderless aspect of the local movement has created issues insomuch as some homeless people claimed they were told that they weren't welcome in a park that was frequented by the homeless community before October 2011. It turns out that they'd been turned away by a couple of people who didn't represent the group as a whole and the group stated its acceptance of the homeless during one of its general assemblies soon thereafter.

Both groups are continually



Stop the Machine protest in Washington, D.C. on October 6.

PHOTO/ERIC SHEPTOCK

carrying out actions at the offices of various war profiteers, banks and Capitol Hill Offices. We have made our demand for a new system known. We've caused the National Air and Space Museum which has U.S. drones (unmanned aircraft which kill civilians) and other war machines on display to close early. We've done the same

at branches of Wells Fargo and the Bank of America. We've disrupted business at the Hart Senate Office Building and we've held impromptu marches in the streets, holding up traffic.

We're also having discussion groups where we talk about the problems experienced in our society and what the new society which

we are fighting for will look like. And, though the media doesn't always portray us favorably or convey our message effectively, the aggregate effect of the continued coverage will be that the general public gets the message and is moved to join us. This is proving to be a teachable moment.

The Postal Service Is Yours, America Don't Let Anyone Dismantle It

By Donna Macris

The United States Postal Service is under attack.

As the second largest employer in the U.S. (second only to WalMart) and with the country's largest single-employer union membership (over 575,000 largely union workers), the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) is being targeted by Republicans to be dismantled and privatized.

Among the SPIN of 'going bankrupt, insolvent, and can't compete with the internet' is a seldom told truth that the U.S. Postal Service is being crippled by a 50-Year-Pay-It-Forward Pension requirement.

Congress created this mess in 2006 under Bush's Public Law 109-435, targeting the Postal Service as the only American business, governmental or private, mandated to prefund its retirement health benefits 50 YEARS into the future (2006-2056) including coverage for employees not yet born and payable over ten years.

One of those ten annual payments of \$5.5 Billion was due September 30, 2011, creating a predictable financial crisis.

The Postal Service wants to have its prior overpayments to the

Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS), estimated to be between \$50-\$80 Billion, returned to its postal accounts and be allowed to use this surplus to pay its bills.

Most of the Democrats in Congress support this effort.

HR 1351: U.S. Postal Service Pension Obligation Recalculation

and Restoration Act is sponsored by Rep. Stephen Lynch D-Massachusetts and supported by 226 members of Congress. It allows the Postal Service to recalculate its overpayment of \$50-\$80 Billion and use these returned funds to pay its bills.

Rep. Elijah Cumming's HR

2884: Extension Act would give the Postal Service a 90-Day Extension until December 30, 2011 to pay its prefunding payment. And HR 2967, the Innovate to Deliver Act, would lift Postal Service restrictions, allowing innovations, efficiency and profitability.

Democrats in the Senate have introduced companion bills: Sen. Max Baucus' S1649: Recalculation and Restoration Act and Sen. Barbara Mikulski's S 1688: Save Our Postal Worker Job Act, which allows the Postal Service to restore its funds and use its own money to save jobs, rural postal sites and pay bills.

However, Rep. Darrel Issa, R-California, as Chairman of the Republican dominated House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, appears to be blocking the Democrats' bills.

Issa has just passed his own bill through his own committee: HR 2309: the Postal Reform Act of 2011, identified as a destructive and jobs-killing postal bill.

Issa's HR 2309 would not recalculate nor return billions of dollars in overpayments to the USPS. Instead, Issa's bill would cut postal services, decrease postal delivery days, decrease rural postal service, heavily regulate the Postal Service,

and slash postal jobs (110,000) opening it to privatization.

Senator McCain (R-AZ) has introduced an equally restrictive companion bill in the Senate: S 1625: the Postal Reform Act of 2011.

However, Congress has no Constitutional right to dismantle the United States Postal Service.

The U.S. Postal Service was explicitly established *for the people* by the nation's founders in the U.S. Constitution in 1789 under Article I, Section 8, Clause 7. This 'Postal Clause' states that Congress "shall have the power to establish Post Offices and Post Roads."

In defense of this Constitutional right, an estimated 50,000 Americans including Postal Union members, Progressive Democrats, Farm Worker Unions, the AFL-CIO and the public joined in Rallies outside of 550 Congressional offices nationwide September 27, 2011, to fight back to 'Save America's Postal Service' and gain support for HR 1351.

This is not a fight for postal workers alone but a fight for all Americans. After all, the U.S. Postal Service belongs to the American people.



Postal Service Workers Rally outside Rep. Jim Costa's D-California Fresno office for national Save America's Postal Service Day, September 27, 2011.

PHOTO/DONNA MACRIS

A Letter From Martin Luther King, Jr. To The United States Of America

By Adam Shapiro

Editor's Note: This article comes from The Community Homeless Street Newspaper, Atlanta Overlook. It has been updated since its original publishing. It is a fictional, imagined account of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s imagined address if he were able to do so today. It is not meant to be representation, only symbolic.

Dear America,

I bring you greetings from my home in the sky. Life is wonderful here. I have everything that any human being could possibly want. There is no government harassment, no segregation, and no class warfare.

I am surrounded by family and friends. I made my peace with Malcolm X before he died, and I see him fairly regularly. Sometimes John and Robert Kennedy stop by.

As you know I was forced to leave planet earth with my business unfinished. I would give up everything that I now have, if I were able to come back down so that I could make the world a better place.

I grieve for my Atlanta. Neighborhoods, like Sweet Auburn, Old Fourth Ward, and Cabbagetown are nothing more than shadows of their former selves.

My homeless brothers and sisters can no longer live on the streets. Of course, they wouldn't have to if we were willing to provide adequate housing. City government

is more interested in serving the needs of the corporate elite than it is in serving the people. On the day when my birthday is celebrated, the politicians and these same elite sit in their comfortable churches and talk about my dream. I wish that they understood what I tried to do.

America, you are beautiful, and I love you, but just like the Old Testament prophets, I must speak the truth. When I was alive, you were fighting a war with Vietnam. Now you have troops in Libya, Afghanistan, and Iraq. You may even have troops in countries that I don't know about. There are some who live lives of abundance, while others have little or nothing. After the flood, God said that he would not destroy the world. Humankind, however, seems willing to do just that. You are not given dominion over the earth so that you could make it uninhabitable. Obviously, I could say much more about your transgressions, but space will not permit.

Georgia has just reached its highest poverty rate since 1983 according to the Census Bureau figures. 1.83 million Georgians live in poverty, 61,000 more than a year ago. Georgia is the third-highest rate among states. Nationally, the poverty rate climbed more steeply and reached 46.2 million of Americans who live below the poverty level. The rate of Georgians without health insurance, 19.4 percent was 3 points higher than the national number. The state's uninsured rate fell slightly from 2009 as more people



Martin Luther King's 1963 Speech in Washington, D.C.

found coverage through government programs. For many Georgians a life in poverty and without insurance is something new.

The state of Georgia just executed Troy Davis. There was international outcry against the death penalty due to many doubts in this case. Davis was sentenced to death for the 1989 killing of Savannah, Georgia police Officer Mark Allen MacPhail. There were dignitaries, including former President Jimmy Carter, Pope Benedict XVI, and former FBI Director William Sessions calling for Davis' life to be spared. Supporters included Am-

nesty International and the NAACP using social media to rally worldwide support. More than 700,000 names on petitions asked that Troy Davis be granted clemency.

For those of you who are engaged in struggle and who

suffer at the hands of Pharaoh, I can only say: keep fighting, and don't give up. There is still time to make things right.

—Martin Luther King, Jr.

St. Joseph, Michigan Nursing Homes: Stop Corporate Corruption, Elderly Need Better Care

By Lenette Evans



The researchers from the National Institute of Aging used Medicare records from 2000 to 2007 to identify what would qualify as "burdensome" and unnecessary transitions of care: uprooting sick elderly patients in the last three days of life, carting them to hospitals multiple times in the last three months of life and moving them in such a way that they landed in a new nursing home afterward.

Disgusting enough, these hospital transfers were also more common with Black and Hispanic Elderly Patients. This means nursing homes are not only selfishly hospitalizing elderly patients that are terminally ill for financial gain, they are also trying to get rid of them for racist reasons as well. The result of this is significantly eye opening because more than

1.6 million Americans live in nursing homes!

When my Dad was in ROYALTON MANOR Nursing Home in St. Joseph, Michigan for 12 months to get rehabilitated Medicare only paid for 100 days for his stay, his medications, food and rehabilitation. After those 100 days it was costing my family \$220 a day out-of-the-pocket which ran an outrageous bill of over \$6,500 for a month's stay.

From the day we had to pay ourselves I asked employees and a manager to please look into getting him out of the nursing home and to bring him home. They ignored my request on five to six different occasions and did absolutely nothing for my family to get my Dad home to get homecare.

Why? Because its all about keeping patients longer in nursing homes, giving them poor food quality and very little to no rehabilitation so they end up as a permanent patients because the corporation is all about for profit

for themselves and could care less for the patients at Royalton Manor and other nursing homes alike.

I have seen patients at Royalton Manor drop like flies out of wheelchairs because of lack of care and most are ignored, neglected, and isolated. Patients and families have shared with me their horror of experiences and neglect.

Where is the love and compassion in our corporations and nursing homes to truly care for the elderly which matter the most. Its time for people to get involved and families to make a difference and to be a voice for the elderly, and to stop corporate corruption in America!

Lenette Evans
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REMEMBERING REVEREND SHUTTLESWORTH

The People's Tribune, its staff and contributors join progressive Americans in paying tribute to and mourning the passing of Reverend Fred L. Shuttlesworth. A founder of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and an unflinching, courageous leader of the Civil Rights Movement, Rev. Shuttlesworth leaves American revolutionaries a legacy of dedication and militancy.

We live in a country where the schools, the media and all the institutions daily uphold the acquisition of material possessions as the goal of life. Under such conditions, only a person of lofty ideals, moral clarity and conscious determination can resist such temptation and dedicate ones self to the actual and lasting goal of life – that is bettering the condition of humanity.

Reverend Shuttlesworth's task was clear – to force the American government and people to put an end to the illegal, destructive, exploitative system of American Apartheid. Bloodied by assassination attempts—jailed, beaten by police and racist mobs, he never retreated from this goal.

The cotton-picking machine, the mechanization of Southern agriculture, made the segregated, near total exploitation of Black labor superfluous. No longer indispensable to Southern profit and tractor-ed off the land, a new freedom became possible. At that point everything depended upon the clarity, vision and determination of the people and upon the intelligence, honesty and self-sacrifice of their leaders. Reverend Shuttlesworth, with humility, courage and dignity, answered the call of history.

Today's revolutionaries faced an even more difficult and complex goal – putting an end to all exploitation and oppression forever. Again and on a global scale, new productive equipment is making the exploitation of labor superfluous. Again, for the working peoples of the world a new freedom is possible. Again, everything depends on the clarity, vision and determination of the people, and upon the intelligence, honesty and self-sacrifice of their leaders.

We are indebted to Reverend Shuttlesworth for illuminating our path.

Online Invasion of Public Universities

By Steve Teixeira

A battle's brewing over online courses in public universities. In October, the University of California lecturer's union (UC-AFT) won the right to bargain over the impact of online instruction. But UC spokesperson Dianne Klein assured the press that to stop any online program, the union would have to endure "mediation, fact-finding, and, if necessary, a university mandate and potentially a union strike."

"Online education has proliferated, from community colleges to M.I.T.," wrote Bill Keller in the New York Times October 3.

The Fight for Public Education: TAKE THE OFFENSIVE

From the Editors

U.S public education is designed to meet the labor needs of the capitalist class. During the industrial era, public education guaranteed a supply of educated workers to design and operate the sprawling factories of the 20th century. Under the electronic (laborless) production methods of today, most workers are becoming increasingly unnecessary to the globally integrated production process.

The capitalist system has no need to educate those it can't employ. Public education is now being privatized by the corporations; it will be available to the select few. The right to an education is becoming a thing of the past.

Today, laborless production is creating a growing mass of people who are permanently jobless or reduced to working part-time or as contingent labor. Their needs can only be met by a society where the socially necessary means of production are publicly owned and what we produce is distributed according to need.

A free, universal system of public education is the cornerstone of a democratic society. A first step toward ensuring the education system we need is to fight for nationalizing education under the leadership and control of those who pay for it and receive it—the working class.

He asked if it could improve education, or just save money. But a third possibility is that online instruction masks a campaign to increase the corporate privatization of public universities.

The California Faculty Association in the California State University system is also negotiating to protect teaching standards in online courses. CSU's managers first proposed online instruction to help entering students with so-called "remedial" skills in math or English. Then, they *required* all 20,000 remedial students to take summer "Early Start", much of it online. But when the "CSU Online" goals were presented, they included much more than just remedial courses.

The quality of the university is at risk here. When Cal State Bakersfield laid off some remedial math faculty and replaced them

with an online system in 2009, student failures rose to almost 40%, from just 25% the year before. Only when faculty were allowed to re-design the online course did student performance improve. "We're not getting what we're promised and what we're paying for," student leader Vanessa Rojas told the local press.

In addition to issues of educational quality, there is concern that online instruction is a screen for injecting private companies into public universities. At first, CSU Online's goals stated that "A business partner for CSU Online might be needed"—but then the job announcement for its Executive Director position *required* applicants to have "Experience in higher education and experience working for/with for-profit agencies". Is it paranoid to worry about that?

Not if you study the Center for

Higher Education Policy Analysis' report *Making it Happen: Increasing College*, which urges that California government create a new higher education planning board to openly link public and private institutions (both non-profit and for-profit). The Board would oversee enrollment shifts from public community colleges, CSU, and UC to private institutions, and allow students at private companies to receive Cal Grant financial aid. Other goals would be to "outsource" remedial courses and online instruction to "private institutions". Which is exactly the path already being pursued by CSU and UC leadership.

As America's economy evolves from one based on millions of jobs in heavy industry to one based on global hi-tech, capital is sniffing around public services like education to see what it can shift into and privatize. They

are counting on government officials to help them, even though this has proven to be bad for students as well as employees. That's why Bob Samuels, UC-AFT president, says "We are not standing in the way of progress, but we are trying to block the downsizing of academic jobs and the degrading of instructional quality".

The battle to defend public education can be won if these faculty and staff can come together with the thousands of students who are exposing corporate abuses in the "Occupy Wall Street" movement. After all, they're really fighting the same enemy.

Steve Teixeira is an officer of the CSU staff union Academic Professionals of California. The People's Tribune asked him to sum up his remarks from a recent speaking tour of Cal State campuses.

Race to the Top. Road to Where? Education Revolution on the March

By Todd Alan Price

The Federal Department of Education clearly intends for their flagship program, *Race to the Top* to serve not only as a springboard for a major overhaul of the public education system, but also as a powerful metaphor. 'Race' is critical; competition is implied and 'to be globally competitive' is trumpeted in official pronouncements as a compelling rationale to 'drive' the 'engine' of public education reform.

Occurring with the backdrop of *Occupy Washington*, national education policy is spinning with twists and turns. The question remains: whose interest is being served by the politicians in Washington D.C. and at what cost to Main Street Americans gathered outside Wall Street?

While the battle rages on around getting financial houses and investment banks to pay their fair share of taxes, another battle has been raging in the streets with teachers taking the lead. That battle is for the heart of public education, and *The People's Tribune* has been diligently documenting the skirmishes ranging from pay cuts, to outright layoffs, from attempts at dismantling elected school boards (Mayoral takeovers), to union busting (going after public sector workers' benefits and compensation). The latest front is for 'wedge' issues, like longer school days in Chicago Public Schools, and merit pay, to divide and conquer those logging hard hours in the teaching profession. The teachers are having none of it, returning the favor by going after the TIF's (tax incremental financing districts), which hide tax dollars that should be going to the students.



The Chicago Teachers Union leads a march outside of the Chicago Board of Education, protesting policies that harm students and teachers. PHOTO/BRETT JELINEK, OLAFIMAGES.COM

Still other major issues emerge on the national scene, reflecting a tenuous grip by administrators, politicians, and venture capitalists concerning the events on the ground that call for authentic public education solutions, like fixing the school funding, not phony education reform, the *AstroTurf* reform that has been forwarded at the behest of the multi-billion dollar foundations

To be specific, the United States Congress, having failed to revise the *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) law since it came due in 2007 has now, given the Obama administration an end run around the law. The Federal Department of Education has seized on the opportunity, short-circuiting the efforts in the Senate and the House, by granting 'waivers' from the law to states that apply for them. While getting rid of *NCLB* would make

many teachers applaud, the devil is in the details; waivers granted, the states would then be forced to accept as federal mandate the requirements of lifting caps on Charter schools, of embracing the *Common core curriculum standards* and aligning teacher pay ever more closely to *high stakes, standardized tests scores*. While *no one loves NCLB*, the *NCLB* waiver process is a backdoor to *Race to the Top* where the federal government can pick winners and losers for badly needed school funds. It sets up a dangerous precedent.

But the problem is deeper still; education reform is bound to come up short when it is disconnected from the real issue: *the need for education revolution*. The public has painfully come upon the realization that the political game is largely rigged; subsequently it is no surprise that increasingly cor-

porations, military, and big business interests are leveraging their power to water down even modest reforms to a system which has served so many so poorly.

Tweaks around the edges won't do; in order to really turn around the poorest performing schools and lift up the most underserved children, America needs a revolutionary vision: education for all. A truly educated society begins when we stop bailing out the banks and take back the money that was lost to greed and speculation. The necessary struggle is to educate and agitate for socially just ends. Citizens on the streets, across the country are taking the first step, learning while they march. The time has come for education revolutionaries to frame the debate: no more layoffs, or bank bailouts, *Save our Schools!*

ORDER THIS BOOK: MOVING ONWARD: FROM RACIAL DIVISION TO CLASS UNITY

By Brooke Heagerty and Nelson Peery

The people of the world, especially the people of the United States, are again approaching an historical fork in the road. Yet this is one of history transforming proportions. Robotics and globalization are doing away with the foundation of "racial" unity. The world's population is being reduced into two categories—the global rich and the global poor. The once privileged white worker, and in a descending order of privilege, all workers of the world are cast adrift by a new ruling class of multi-colored, supra-national financiers. This new international ruling class cares no more for or has no more need of the worker in Chicago than one in Rio De Janeiro.

Within this process a new class of workers—created by automation—is forming. If conscious, they have the power to break the formula of control that has been used to exploit and divide the workers in this country and in the world since Columbus first set foot in the Americas and the first slaves were driven from their homeland to live in bondage.

Throughout the history of the U.S., whites and Blacks have joined together from time to time and place to place, but they have been unable to truly unite. The social privileges granted to the white poor over the Black poor have always kept them apart. These social privileges were made possible by the super-profits from imperialism. Today, capital has expanded to the limits of the Earth. There is no more expansion. Now, the mass of African Americans



who form the core of the new class and the growing number of impoverished whites joining its ranks unmistakably have common interests which grow out of not morality alone, but objective economic interests. Unifying the new class is today's most pressing political question.

Send \$8 to Speakers for a New America, PO Box 3524, Chicago IL 60665-3524.

The Future Is Up To Us

By Nelson Peery

An excerpt from the book:

The capitalist system is moving into crisis because computerized production is making fifty cars today with five workers. Fifty industrial workers are making five cars. The workers cannot reproduce their wages. Therefore, the capitalist class is getting wealthier and the people of the earth are getting poorer. They are going to organize to get what they need for their daily lives. We have to show that given the automated character of production, the goals of peace, freedom and social democracy are only attainable with a collective or communist system.

What is communism? Many people think communism is a political system. It is difficult to tell them that it is an economic system. First, it is a system that allows every person to contribute to society. I place this first because self worth, the foundation of happiness, is based on social contribution. Secondly, it is the rational distribution of the necessities of life according to need.

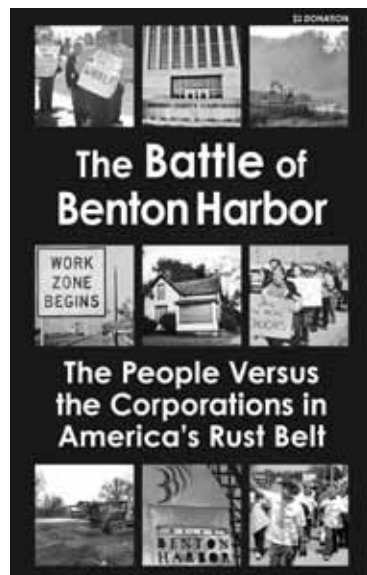
What is needed today is educators who will help the people understand what they already know. More than that, we need speakers who are capable of explaining the situation and the inevitable resolution in such a way as to excite people for their historic revolutionary tasks.

Send \$12 to Speakers for a new America, PO Box 3524, Chicago, IL 60654-3524 or pay via pay pal at speakersforanewamerica.com. Click on "Books."

The Battle of Benton Harbor: The People Versus The Corporations in America's Rust Belt

This booklet discusses the victories and next steps in the struggle against the corporations in Benton Harbor, MI. A battle has been won, and this should be celebrated, but there is still a war going on. Will America have prosperity and democracy, or live in poverty under the heel of open corporate power? Will the American people move to take over the corporations before they take over society? This booklet holds lessons for everyone fighting for a just America.

Send \$4 per copy to Speakers for a New America, PO Box 3524, Chicago, IL 60654-3524 or pay via paypal at speakersforanewamerica.com. Click on "Books".

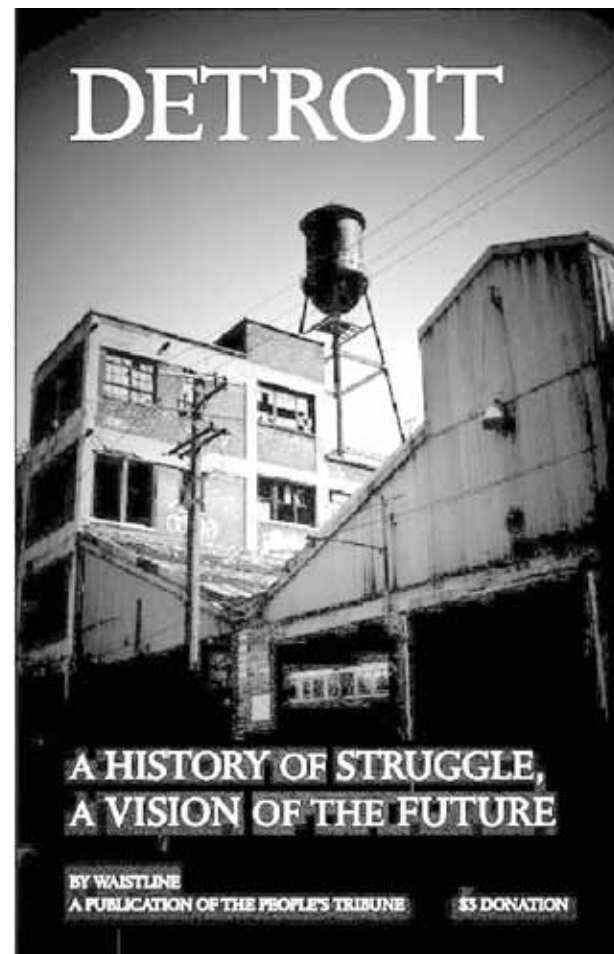


DETROIT A HISTORY OF STRUGGLE, A VISION OF THE FUTURE

By Brother Waistline

My first involvement was in 1968-9. I was a young man. I was driven by the Civil Rights Movement and the kind of struggle that no longer exists today. I want to place everything in that framework. The world that I grew up with no longer exists. When I was in high school, I knew what I was going to do with my life. I went to a school with different trade programs. We had music classes. You could learn how to cook. You could learn a trade. My point is that I grew up in a society with a different orientation: industrial. At 16 or 17 I knew I could find my place in life. I could get a job and make a man's wage and marry the girl I always wanted to. That's not the case today. Something has happened. I grew up as part of the last generation of what we would call the great industrial "middle class" of America. Once upon a time, people in America made money. We made money in this town [Detroit]. That's not the case today. Today, 60% of the American working class makes \$14 an hour or less. That's pathetic. Something has happened. We have to figure out what that was.

Our story is the story of the development and the rise, and the fall of the industrial working class. It is the story of all the phases we went through to try to get organized. Bound up with our story is the history of the development of industrial capitalism. We have to know what it was that we were fighting and why we have to have another vision and do things in a way so that we can



continue to struggle for a new society.

Send \$4 to Speakers for a New America, PO Box 3524, Chicago, IL 60654-3524 or pay via paypal at speakersforanewamerica.com. Click on "Books."

Invest in People, Envision Power

An Interview with Cynthia McKinney

Cynthia McKinney, former Green Party Presidential candidate in 2008, was keynote speaker at the Benton Harbor/Twin Cities NAACP Second Annual Freedom Fund Banquet on October 8, 2011. The People's Tribune interviewed Cynthia McKinney.

People's Tribune: Cynthia, could you speak about your views on the direction of the country?

CM: I haven't had a chance to read the US controllers report yet, but apparently it says approximately 25 banks are responsible for \$300 trillion worth of derivatives. There was a time when the U.S. actually exported something, but now we export war, hatred, ethnic division and financial fraud. It is imperative that people have some time to actually think about what it means to be a citizen of the U.S. What are their values? Who are they? Who is our country? If our country diverges in any way from the image or definition that they give for themselves and the vision that they hold for their country, then they have to do something about it. We have to distance ourselves for a few minutes from the perception management that is ABC, CBS, Fox and all the rest of them and have some time with ourselves.

PT: Can you comment on the developing independent political motion.

CM: There are a lot of individuals who are so disappointed—they shouldn't have gotten their hopes up so high—but they are looking for another way. If people look for another way, they'll find it. What we have to guard against is fabricated efforts by wealthy individuals to create the idea of another way so they can swoop in and become the other thing. Wayne Madsen wrote a piece about Soros and his effort to co-opt the OWS movement. Wayne reminded folks

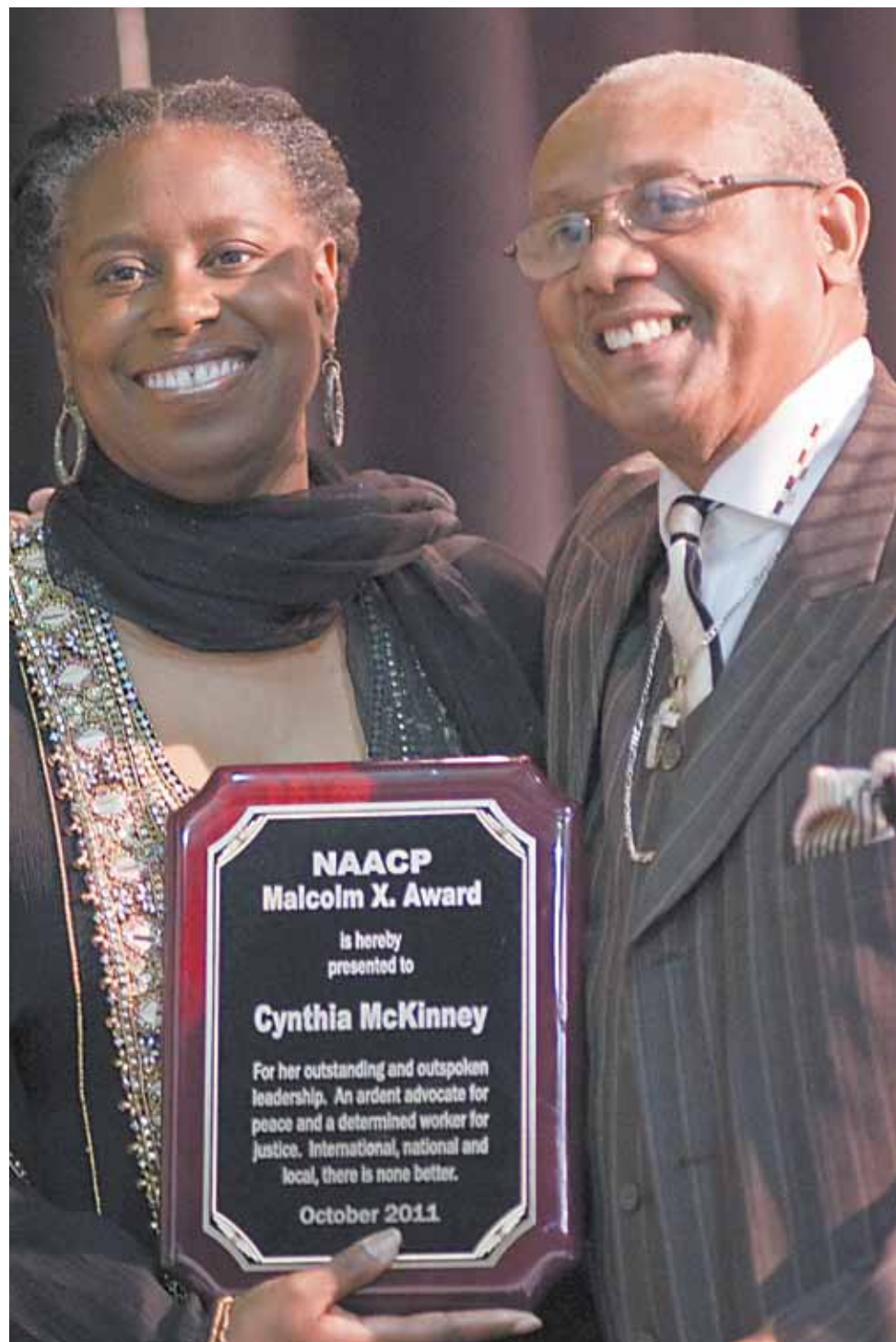
that Soros is Wall Street—so is Obama. The response was “we will not be co-opted.” So if that is the case, that's marvelous. Our young people have been watching what's been happening and they are as disgusted as the rest of us. So I am happy that there is an appearance of people being fed up.

PT: What is your vision of a new society?

CM: First, we would make investments in people. The objective is to be color informed, not color blind, so we would see the rich diversity of this country and the strength. And we would invite people to give us their strength. We would invite people to become more than they ever thought they could become so that our country could become more than we ever thought our country could be. So that means that you have to divest from the way you do things now, divest from trying to commodify the planet, divest from the status quo politics, divest from the political and military-industrial-financial-media complex, divest from all of that. Divest from the current political structure and we would go to direct democracy where people govern themselves.

PT: What is the most important idea to get over?

CM: That we are powerful if we envision ourselves as powerful. We limit ourselves by what we think of ourselves. It's just saying we're going to do it and being fearless about it. The visit here and seeing Rev. Pinkney made me ask him: do the people that you do what you do for—do they recognize the tremendous sacrifice? Is it worth it? I got such a powerful response from him that it made me almost embarrassed that I had asked. So I hope that this was a successful event. There's a lot of people standing on Rev. Pinkney's shoulders.



Cynthia McKinney (left) is awarded Benton Harbor's NAACP Malcolm X Award by Rev. Edward Pinkney (right). PHOTO/BRETT JELINEK, OLAFIMAGES.COM

Hold the Fort: Our Time Is Coming

By Rev. Edward Pinkney

Michigan is a great observation point for the corporate takeover of America. The duly elected officials in Benton Harbor were effectively fired—terminated and replaced with a Emergency Financial Manager with ties to Whirlpool, the blood sucking corporation.

The residents claim the city deficit which gave the corporations and government the opportunity to put in an Emergency Manager was caused by Whirlpool's tax breaks to the tune of hundred of millions of dollars. There are now over 400 Emergency Managers in training to take over cities in Michigan, and it may become a model for U.S. cities.

The state of Michigan is in a crisis with roughly over 35,000 families who will lose their welfare benefits. Welfare recipients ordinarily spend 100% of their monthly income. The decrease in consumer spending will have a negative effect, not only on indigent families with dependent children who rely on that income, but also on state

businesses, on the crime rate, and the quality of life of all residents. It will continue what is essentially a depression in minority communities—and beyond.

It will only worsen America's financial situation. Hundreds of thousands of indigent children going homeless and hungry will not reverse the downward spiral America is in because of corporate theft and military spending. Abandoning the poor will make this nation like a third world country, where war is constant and life is cheap.

We must stop the greedy corporations. We must stop Whirlpool and the PGA senior golf tournament in Benton Harbor, Michigan. Come to a mass demonstration in May 2012. Our pathway must be through the soil up through the swamps, through the forest, up through the stream and rocks, up through the commerce, education, and religion. We must say enough is enough and the time is now. We, the people, must build a powerful movement to break that the grip that the corporations have over the country and life itself.

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