

PEOPLE'S TRIBUNE

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DONATION \$1



This Sacramento family of five, evicted from their rented home after the husband lost his job, is living in a budget motel. They are trying to save money for a deposit on a new rental home, but are finding it difficult as they pay nearly \$1200 a month for the motel room.

PHOTO/JUSTIN SULLIVAN, GETTY IMAGES

INSIDE:

Take Over the Corporations	2
Universal Healthcare	4
Homeless Day of Action	6
California Education Battles	7
Monsanto on Trial	8
Benton Harbor Community Radio Up for Auction	12

GOVERNMENT MUST HOUSE THE HOMELESS

[Read Story on Page 3](#)

TAKE OVER THE CORPORATIONS

EDITORIAL

Readers have asked us, “What does it mean to take over the corporations?” and, “Are you raising this as a slogan or as a practical tactical demand?” In any far-reaching political struggle, slogans precede political demands. Slogans are goals, guidelines and propaganda rather than tactics.

Occupy Wall Street never meant nor could mean physically occupying the totality of Wall Street. It was and is meant to announce to the financial rulers of America that “we are here, we have our eye on you and we will not allow you to proceed without taking our needs into consideration.”

What has been the historical experience of the American people in this regard?

Our best reference is the pre-Civil War period. Then, as now, new means of production were disrupting formally stable economic and political relations. The rising industrial North came into political antagonism with the slaveholding agrarian South. The South controlled the nation politically since slaves were counted as 3/5 of a person in the voting. Thus, the rise of what became known as the slave power. The majority of the people of the North struggled against the slave power’s reckless disregard for their needs, while upholding slavery.

Some farsighted people realized that the slave power’s base of power was slavery itself. They became abolitionists. They demanded an end to slavery. That demand seemed far-fetched or illegal since slaves had been declared property. After three years of bloody Civil War and propaganda the North understood that they could not defeat the slave power without the abolition of slavery itself.

So today, as the movement confronts the polarization of wealth and poverty—the tendency is to deal with the results of private ownership of socially necessary means of production rather than the cause. For example, electronic production is cheaper than mechanical. Under capitalism this means the robot is used and the worker is laid off. The resultant rise in poverty cannot be solved by attacking the greed of the capitalist. The problem is production for profit rather than for use. The entire system of distribution must be replaced since the system of production has been changed. This tendency to deal with effects rather than causes is deeply rooted in the history and legacy of slavery when the rights of property were clearly superior to human rights.

The propagandistic task of revolutionaries today is to overcome the sense of sacredness of private property and overcome the disconnect between economic and political power. We raise the slogan of “Take over the Corporations” to illustrate the reality that those who economically own the country will run it politically.

All revolutionary organizations in America are relatively weak and that weakness will continue so long as the masses of the American people do not connect political power with economic power.

In the struggle to unite the revolutionary movement, and to strengthen the political direction, we must learn to work with what is actually happening—with what is inevitable. The current economic crisis shows us that nationalization of key centers of production and finance is inevitable to save the capitalist class



Occupy Wall Street Protest, February, 2011, New York City

PHOTO/JOEL SOSINSKY

as a whole. So the question is posed, “Nationalization in whose interest?” The government, since it belongs to the corporations, is going to nationalize in the interest of the corporations.

It has been an experience that allowed us to point out that nationalization, while inevitable, would be in the interest of the people only if there is a government of, by and for the people.

The other lesson is that we don’t need private corporate ownership in order to have production. Of equal importance is that nationalization under these circumstances means that the people will enter into concentrated struggle against the corporate government rather than against scattered individual corporations.

PEOPLE’S TRIBUNE

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

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

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

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

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

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

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Why Revolutionaries Need A Press

From the Editors

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

Visit us on the web at www.peopletribune.org

Government Must House the Homeless

COVER STORY

Isn't there something horribly wrong with an economic system that leaves people homeless when there is plenty of housing? And what about a system that throws people out of their homes when they lose their jobs? That's what is going on in America. And only the people can stop it.

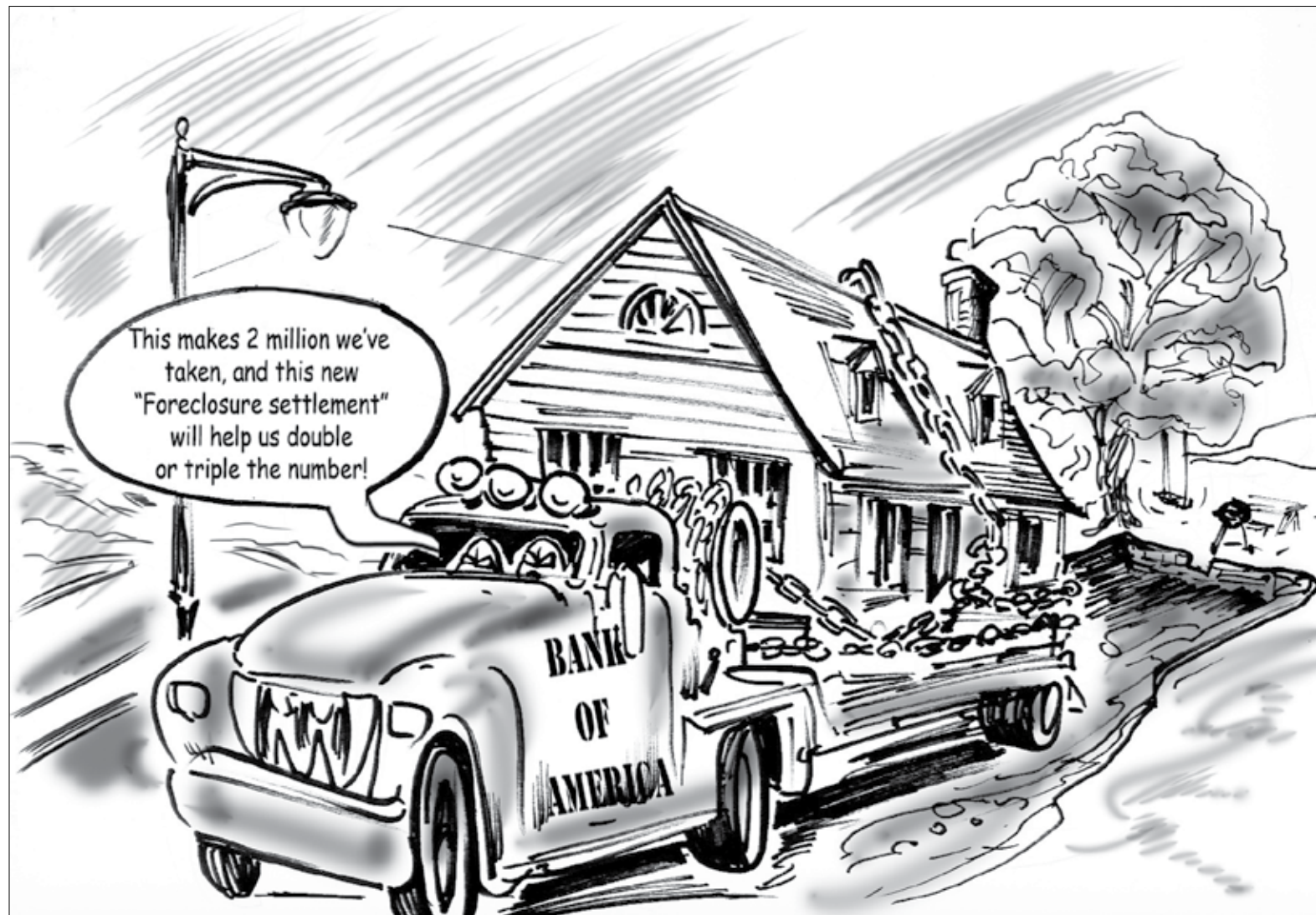
Each year 3.5 million people, including 1.35 million children, experience homelessness in America according to the National Coalition for the Homeless. Some estimates put the numbers even higher.

The foreclosure crisis is making things worse. According to the Western Regional Advocacy Project, about 2.5 million foreclosures have taken place since 2007, an additional 6.9 million foreclosures have been initiated, and a projected 5.7 million homeowners are at risk of losing their homes. Many people who get foreclosed on are becoming homeless.

Yet there is plenty of vacant housing. U.S. Census Bureau figures for 2010 (the latest available) show there were 18.4 million vacant homes in the U.S. in the last quarter of 2010. Eleven percent of the 131 million housing units in the country were vacant all year round.

Clearly this country could easily house every single homeless person and family. Why doesn't our government do the obvious thing: nationalize the vacant homes that are owned by the banks (make them public property), put the homeless into those homes, and prevent the banks from taking people's homes through foreclosure?

Because the government is in the hands of the corporations, that's why. The corporate government is bound to protect the private property of the banks. It is bound to protect a system that requires you to have a job and a paycheck, or some source of income, in order to have a home and everything else you need. The trouble is, that system based on jobs and private property no longer works



CARTOON/ANDY WILLIS

when there are no jobs.

Globalization and automation with computers and robots is causing the jobs to vanish, and the jobs aren't coming back. Yet the same automation allows us to produce mountains of everything—housing, food, clothing, health care, you name it. Isn't there something wrong with a system that leaves us homeless when there are millions of vacant homes? Is it right that we go hungry when there is plenty of food? Is it right that we do without anything we need when there is plenty of everything?

In order to protect the private property of the wealthy and the powerful, the corporate government is enforcing scarcity in the midst of abundance. The capitalist system cannot give free housing

to those with no money while at the same time insisting that those who have money pay for housing. So to maintain the property and profits of the corporations, the system forces people without money to be homeless, even though there is plenty of housing. And the same government that enforces homelessness makes it a crime to be homeless—look at the local laws that have been passed making it a crime to sleep in a public place, to sit or lie on the sidewalk, etc.

Automation has made a whole section of the working class economically superfluous. Their labor is no longer needed, and they are permanently unemployed and underemployed. With fewer and fewer people able to buy anything, the system begins to collapse. This

is the root cause of the economic crisis, and the root cause of homelessness and foreclosures.

The corporations won't take care of labor they don't need. What the people are ultimately fighting for is a cooperative society that will allow us all to contribute to society and share the abundance that automation can produce. A step on the road to that new society is for the people to demand that the government nationalize the vacant and foreclosed homes and use them to house the homeless.

See page 6 for information on April 1 Day of Action to protest criminalization of poor and homeless people.

Sister/Brother, can you spare \$20?

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

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

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Universal Health Care for All! National Strategy Conference on Universal Healthcare



Rita Valenti, RN, from Georgia, was one of many presenters at the the HealthCare-NOW national-strategy conference, a powerful gathering in the fight for universal health care for all!

PHOTO/MARIA ELENA CASTELLANOS

By Maria Elena Castellanos

HOUSTON, TX — The HealthCare-NOW national strategy conference was a powerful gathering in the fight for health care for all! Medical workers, together with labor, community, immigrant-rights, and Occupy-OWS organizers blasted a “gaping hole” in the age-old wall of resistance to universal healthcare in the U.S.

Keynote speeches and reports agreed that the current “for-profit,” health-insurance corporations, CANNOT and WILL NOT permit the development of a health-care-delivery system based on human need. For most attendees, the undeniable premise of the conference was that a single-payer health-care program would put “People’s Needs Over Corporate Greed.”

Leading participants said loud and clear: The capitalist, “for-profit” based health-insurance companies control both the financing mechanism and the delivery mechanism for “distributing” healthcare services in the U.S.

Given the current economic crisis and the increasing displacement of human workers by electronic technology, the only way “out” is by taking the “for-profit” insurance and “for-profit” pharmaceutical corporations “out of the healthcare” equation.

Medical and grass roots activists came together to clarify a “vision” and to forge a strategy to

make affordable healthcare-for-all a dream come true. The HealthCare-Now National Strategy Conference brought these hard-working deep-thinking, southern strong, friendly folks from throughout the U.S. to a hotel ballroom in Houston, Texas, on Jan 28-9, 2012.

The conference reinforced the foundation for building an independent, grassroots movement for a real national healthcare delivery system. The participants developed a vision of such a movement, built from the bottom-up—that recognizes healthcare as a basic human right ... rather than as a “commodity” to be restricted and sold by the “rapacious” for-profit, health-insurance companies to a diminishing pool of employed workers.

One hundred thirty-five conference attendees from 53 organizations and 25 states met to envision, engage, discuss, educate, strategize and plan on how to make a genuine healthcare-for-all system a reality in the United States.

Throughout the conference, calls for the inclusion of all persons, including undocumented immigrants, residing within the U.S. borders were applauded.

At one point, the walls of the Hilton-Hobby-Hotel’s ballroom shook with their thunderous chanting of “Everybody in, nobody out.”

During the “break-out” sessions, groups brain-stormed about bringing the vision of “single-pay-

er healthcare-for-all” into every social forum, and yes, into the streets of America where “occupy” activists are demanding a “fair shake” and their economic rights to jobs, healthcare, debt-free education, housing and a piercing of the bloated military budget. HealthCare for the 99% that emerged from OWS activists will have a strong impact on shaping the coming struggles for health care for all!

One of several inspirational speakers, Dr. Margaret Nosek, pointed out the contradictory nature of fighting to preserve Medicaid while at the same time fighting for a deeper transformation of the health-care system. How do we transform a private-insurance-for-profit system into a system based on “human need,” not corporate greed? And yes, said Dr. Nosek, she is for “socialized medicine.” But the question remains: how do we get from “here” to “there,” given the increasing privatization of hospitals and of healthcare delivery systems.

The conference participants clearly wanted to up the ante on both HR 676 and ‘in the street’ actions during election season and not get caught up in weak electioneering promises that yield no results.

Strategies addressing corporate disinvestment, the future of VEBA, coalition building, reaching communities of color, utilizing alternative and community-based media, forging citizen-immigrant worker unity, and taking the fight

Medicaid Recipients Suffer from Lack of Dental Services

By Dr. David Apsey

The Michigan Medicaid program covers 1.8 million Michigan residents and is expected to grow to 2 million people by 2013 out of a population of 9.8 million. That is 18% of the population covered by Medicaid whose income is low enough to qualify. The services include private doctor and dentist office visits, hospital care and long term care for seniors or disabled workers. Families with children are special targets of the program to attempt to guarantee adequate health care for Michigan children. The current budget is \$11.2 billion. The program provides dental benefits to children and adults. Michigan Governor Rick Snyder has proposed a new budget that leaves Medicaid reimbursement to doctors intact. So, do all Medicaid recipients have good health care? This story is to illustrate the very real burdens involved in obtaining dental services under the Michigan Medicaid program.

Dental treatment for poor Americans is difficult to obtain due to the high cost of care. Government programs designed to assist people are not providing an adequate safety net. In Michigan, the Medicaid program covers eligible adults and children. On the surface, this appears very reasonable. However, 95% of Michigan dentists do not participate so Medicaid insured

individuals have a nearly impossible search finding a good doctor who accepts their insurance.

For the 5% of dentists that accept the program, when they bill out \$100, they receive back only \$19. The write-off from revenues of 81% is unacceptable and this is the reason why most dentists cannot afford to participate. Most offices pay 60-70% of their fees just to cover payroll and other overhead items. This is the actual cost to deliver care before the doctor is paid. The Medicaid payout of 19% of average fees does not cover the cost of keeping the office open.

This is the primary reason that Medicaid covered patients including children cannot find a dentist to treat them. The dentists do not have a personal problem with treating disadvantaged Michigan residents; they simply cannot afford to treat them.

Without regular access to dental care, patients, especially children suffer serious health consequences, including toothache, facial infections and premature tooth loss. These problems cause pain and impair normal function and learning. The State of Michigan needs to take its responsibility for Michigan citizens care seriously and increase funding to attract more doctors to serve our people. This improvement would benefit doctors and patients alike.

This is the mouth of an American child denied elementary care in the richest country in the world.



2 year old, 9 areas of decay, 6 teeth unrestorable. Child in pain.

Without regular access to dental care, patients, especially children suffer serious health consequences, including toothache, facial infections and premature tooth loss. Medicaid funding for the poor needs to increase.

PHOTO/AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRIC DENTISTRY “PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED BY CHILDREN ON MEDICAID BECAUSE OF LACK OF DENTAL CARE” FEB 2006

for single-payer healthcare to new places, were the foci of workshop and workgroup discussions.

A blizzard of ideas and in-

formation deepened everyone’s understanding that “health-care-for all” is an idea whose time has come. Stay tuned.

Letters to the Editors

FROM READERS OF THE PEOPLE'S TRIBUNE:

"I received the January issue and it's fine! I'd love to donate more to allow you to expand your paper but I'm saving my money to return to Washington, D.C. at the end of March for the major occupation. I was at Freedom Plaza in October for the start of the STOP THE MACHINE action. That is where I first read the People's Tribune. Keep up the good work and maybe we'll meet in D.C. this spring for the OCCUPATION! We need to keep the truthful information printed and spread throughout the land."

— Michael T. Quinn, Florida

"I just got the issue in the mail. It looks even more fantastic in person. So glad to be a part of your paper!"

— Glenn Halog, (photographer who contributed the front page photo for the February, 2012 edition) California

"I am so relieved to read your excellent publication and I am submitting one of my articles that is being published locally in "The City New", Jackson, TN. From beginning to end, I read every word of the "People's Tribune". I am ordering a bundle of papers to get out. Thank you again for all that you are doing in an effort to return the homeless, unemployed, poverty stricken, hunger, etc."

— Mary Anne Barbour, Tennessee

"We'd like to take 100 copies of your paper. We'll distribute them and try to market them in this area: the Central San Joaquin area: Fresno, California being the heart of the Central Valley: home to the United Farm Workers, etc. We believe in the validity and quality and importance of your newspaper. The People's Tribune is an irreplaceable national link. We love it. It offers complimentary links outside of our very active local progressive newspaper . . . We shared papers with Occupy here and they loved it. Always with admiration for all you do."

— Donna Macris

"I read your articles and editorials on the Occupy-Police State coverage. Good job. I live in Paris and stay in Pittsburgh and NYC to perform poetry, often on stage as a jazz poet. Presently I'm an international communications facilitator for the Occupy Movement."

— Moe Seager, France

You can send letters to P.O. Box 3524
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The Sky is Falling: HEALTHCARE FOR ACTIVE WORKERS UNDER ATTACK

By Al Gladycyk

DETROIT, MI — In United Auto Workers 2011 Special Convention On Collective Bargaining, we sank deeper into the quicksand called Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA). The convention health care resolution contained two contradictory statements (page 29):

On the one hand we want to "Restrict the new law, and will push employers to join us in our fight for universal coverage."

And on the other hand we want to "Work to defend the improvements brought about by the ACA, and enshrine these provisions in our contracts. We will challenge any employers who are supporting efforts to repeal or restrict the new law."

To understand what is going to happen when PPACA is implemented in 2014, we must understand that this new law is based on the Massachusetts Health Care Reform Act of 2006 (Chapter 58) and we must look at Chapter 58's outcome.

Chapter 58 has its origins in the Bush Administration. In 2006, the federal government refused to release \$385 million in Medicaid funds to the state, unless public healthcare programs were drastically cut or eliminated. In other words, the aim of Chapter 58 was to eliminate public healthcare for people who did not qualify for Medicaid and didn't have medical insurance

by mandating that they buy it.

The failure of Chapter 58 is the fact that the cost of healthcare insurance keeps rising in the state and access to healthcare has actually declined. Legal residents will be unable to afford even subsidized healthcare insurance. So-called "illegal" residents are faced with less and less access to public healthcare programs because that money is now used to subsidize medical insurance companies.

The failure of PPACA is that it does not control the cost of medical insurance and more and more legal residents of the country will be unable to afford even subsidized medical insurance. And so-called "illegal" residents will be faced with less and less access to public healthcare programs because that money is "earmarked" to subsidize medical insurance companies.

We cannot continue to believe that PPACA would be for everyone except us. The companies know that PPACA is for everyone, especially us. And they have the government on their side.

Regardless of the propaganda campaign that the Democrats are on the side of PPACA and the Republicans are against PPACA, it is a "bipartisan" law that is "subsidized" by tax money that was used to fund public healthcare programs. And that bipartisanship is the political face of the class of billionaires and millionaires and



Detroit demonstration for healthcare and welfare.

PHOTO/DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM

the corporations they own.

Medicare For All (HR 676) will provide truly universal health care:

EVERYBODY IN, NOBODY OUT — Gives every resident of the united states and the U.S. Territories access to all medically necessary health services including vision and dental with no co-pays or deductibles regardless of employ-

CITIZENS REJECT GOVERNMENT BY EDICT DICTATOR LAW ENRAGES COMMUNITY

By Claire McClinton

FLINT, MI — Some recent meetings held in each of Flint's nine Council Wards, along with a recent City Council meeting, have turned into clashes with the newly appointed Emergency Manager, Mike Brown. Brown came in December, 2011. He suspended City Council meetings and decision-making power, while assuming the authority of both the Council and the Mayor. Soon, he closed the Ombudsman office, a watchdog agency popular to Flint citizens and a part of the City charter he chose to disband.

In an attempt to report to the community and solicit input and answer questions, the Emergency Manager found himself confronted by enraged citizens questioning his right to be in charge. Flint is a city with a long history of unionism and a reputation for leading the causes of social justice. A hired gun to rule over the people is not a good fit.

The people challenged his authority as an assault on both the US as well as the state constitution. Taxation without representation, they charged. More than one likened his presence as a throwback to Hitler's Germany. Some questions

were not answered. What happens if we the citizens disagree with your decisions? With the Mayor and Council clearly out of power, why are they getting paid at all? Will the Emergency Manager lower his own salary? Will you bust unions in order to save money? Will our Water Treatment (a source of city revenue) be privatized? Neither the Emergency Manager, nor the governor for that matter, will explain to us how trashing our democracy, selling off public assets, and dismantling union contracts can put our financial house in order. High unemployment, rising poverty, foreclosures, crime, and despair are relegated to the "to do" list.

As Flint's Emergency Manager finishes his citywide input meetings, over 200,000 signatures are being delivered to the state capitol in Lansing, MI to be put on the ballot for the citizens of Michigan to overturn this law—Public Act 4. This law is not just a bad idea but a declaration of class war. It signals that our ability to 'share the wealth' is not up for negotiation or for election. The economic and political future of the people is up for grabs. The people of Flint are showing that they are up for the challenge.

NO FOOLING: APRIL 1 NATIONAL DAY OF ACTION FOR THE RIGHT TO EXIST

By Paul Boden

Western Regional Advocacy Project (WRAP) and USA-Canada Alliance of Inhabitants (USACAI) are calling on our members and allies throughout the United States and Canada to join us on April 1 for a bi-national day of action to protest the ongoing criminalization of poor and homeless people in our communities.

We are building a movement to reclaim our communities for all members: not just those who set the rents. Three decades ago, the deregulation of financial industries came simultaneously with the withdrawal of government support for affordable housing. Just since 1995, the United States has lost over 290,588 existing units of public housing and 360,000 Section 8 units, with another 7,107 approved for demolition/disposition since March of 2011. At the same time, some 2.5 million foreclosures have taken place since 2007, an additional 6.9 million foreclosures have been initiated, and a projected 5.7 million borrowers are at risk.

In those same 15 years, over 830,000 new jail and prison cells have been built, draconian immigration laws and eligibility screening criteria have been implemented in

housing, healthcare, education and jobs programs, and America's three largest residential mental health facilities are now all county jails (Los Angeles, Chicago, and New York).

Over the past year, WRAP has led a survey effort with its West Coast grassroots members and allies in Portland, Berkeley, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Seattle, Denver, Houston and Worcester, MA documenting homeless people's experiences with the criminal justice system for survival-related "crimes."

About 78% of survey respondents reported being harassed, cited or arrested by police officers for sleeping outside; 75% reported the same for sitting or lying down, and 76% for loitering or simply "hanging out." About 57% of respondents reported bench warrants issued for their arrest as a result of these citations: that is, if they couldn't afford to pay the fines that these tickets carried, or if they were unable to make court dates, then they became subject to arrest.

We are calling for a national day of action on April 1 to raise awareness on this issue. We will be sending out information on ways to get involved in the coming weeks. Stay tuned!

Follow on Twitter: @withouthousing



Editor's note: The statistic for vacant homes was arrived at by combining the number of houses vacant in 2009, with the recent numbers for foreclosed and empty newly constructed homes. The figures for the numbers of homeless came from the official HUD Release of 2010. POSTERS AVAILABLE: PROPAGANDATIMES.COM

UN Special Rapporteur calls Sacramento to task: **GIVE HOMELESS RIGHT TO SANITATION AND WATER!**



At a press conference, Tim Buckley demonstrates the sanitation system he developed when he was living in the Safe Ground homeless camp. Because the homeless were locked out of restrooms in the area, he would take four bags of waste with his bicycle every day to a public restroom about a mile away and empty them into the sewage system.

PHOTO/SHOC

By Paula Lomazzi

SACRAMENTO, CA — Catarina de Albuquerque, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Human Right to Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation, visited Sacramento on a fact-finding mission in February 2011 investigating access to water and sanitation. This visit was part of a larger U.S. tour where she investigated water and sanitation issues in other communities, such as contaminated water and water service denials to poor people. In her visit to Sacramento, she focused mostly on our homeless population. She found our City wanting and violating the human rights of its homeless residents in respect to their access to water and sanitation.

Catarina wrote a letter to Sacramento Mayor Kevin Johnson, dated January 23, 2012, with her concerns and a plea for Sacramento to take heed of its poor treatment of homeless people that don't, but should, have housing. She stated in the letter that the lack of adequate sanitation and water could "...amount to cruel, inhumane, or degrading treatment." In her report she stated that, "An immediate, interim solu-

tion is to insure access to restroom facilities in public places, including during the night. The long-term solution to homelessness must be to insure adequate housing."

On her visit to Sacramento in February 2011, she met with homeless people from Safe Ground Sacramento and others in our community. She found that water faucets used by homeless people were decommissioned and that restrooms were being locked, barring access by homeless people that have been left with nowhere to take care of their sanitation needs. Not only has this city infrastructure been denied to the homeless, and actually other residents as well, the City of Sacramento refused to allow the non-profit organization, Safe Ground Sacramento and other benefactors, to provide portable toilets and garbage service to the homeless people living in tent camps.

Safe Ground Sacramento held a press conference on February 7, 2012 outside City Hall, after not getting a response from the city. Speakers were from Safe Ground, Loaves & Fishes, Sacramento Homeless Organizing Committee, Legal Services of Northern Cali-

fornia and other individuals. Tim Buckley demonstrated the sanitation system he developed when he was living in the Safe Ground camp. He titled himself the "Safe Ground Sanitation Engineer". He lined the camp toilet inside a privacy tent with two plastic bags. Demonstrating the operation with bags of water, he then removed the bags and put them in two bicycle baskets. When actually doing this at the camp, Tim would take four bags of waste with his bicycle every day to a public restroom about a mile away and empty them into the sewage system. Catarina de Albuquerque thought the fact that Tim and others must perform this service is unacceptable, and that denial of lawful and dignified sanitation can amount to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.

Though the letter from the Rapporteur was addressed to the Mayor of Sacramento, the message was to our whole community, and to communities everywhere: to stop denying homeless people the rights to exist and their rights to exist in dignity!

You can read the letter at www.sacloaves.org/un

CABRINI GREEN EVICTIONS: The Row Houses

By Joseph Peery

CHICAGO, IL — On February 16, 2012, the Chicago Tribune reported, "CHA had pledged to remodel all 586 of its Near North Side row houses for public housing. Now plans have changed, and residents in the un-rehabbed units have been told to leave."

Have plans really changed, or

was that the plan all along? Ever since the Chicago Housing Authority began to implement its Plan for Transformation, in 2000, it has broken promise after promise to CHA residents. Shaun Donovan, the U.S. Secretary of HUD (Housing and Urban Development) hinted at the real motives behind plan changes when he told groups of public housing tenant leadership from Chicago, New

Orleans and New York at meetings in Washington DC in October of 2010, "We're going to save public housing by making it private."

In the past, private corporations got higher profits from the fact that no matter how low the wages were they paid us, we only paid 30 percent of that for rent. Now that all those manufacturing jobs have gone, they no longer need us. Since they have

no intention of housing poor families simply because we need a place to stay, billions of dollars are now being diverted to private firms in countless ways, while increasing numbers of us die on the streets homeless with bodies piling up at the Cook County Morgue past its 300 body capacity. At the end of last summer, 165 homeless people were buried on the same day in paupers graves

in Homewood, IL., a suburb of Chicago. Caskets with unidentified bodies went into the ground bearing the words, "Known only to God."

In the fight to save public housing, we are literally in the fight of our lives. A system that does not value human life must be changed. If you, the many, the 99% are unwilling to die on the street so that the few, the 1%, can become richer than they already are, then join us.

California Community Colleges Under Attack

By Peter Brown

OAKLAND, CA — Back in 2006, you couldn't have told most California community college teachers that anything was on the horizon to threaten our colleges. Yet, as this article is being written, preparations are under way for huge student-led actions to defend public education and public services in California on March 1 and 5. Initiatives to tax corporate profits and the 1% are being put on the November ballot. Community colleges are at the center of the organizing.

What changed?

By 2007, with K-12 schools under attack all over California and the state's universities largely under private funding, the storm clouds over community colleges gathered.

The first relatively small round of budget cuts was accompanied by the introduction of Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs), and tightening accreditation standards for community colleges. Teachers could see the educational value in clarifying our goals for classes; they can help us teach better. But like many other so-called "reforms" for education, SLOs come with a poison pill. Developing SLOs takes considerable time and effort. All this with no extra time or pay, by already overloaded full-time tenured faculty or by also overloaded part-time faculty who are treated like temp workers.

This pushed teachers and administrators over the edge, to intolerable stress levels. Serious discussions began. "Is it all because of

District corruption and mismanagement? And what's next? Won't it get better again when the economy turns around?"

The past three years are revealing. The economy did not turn around. And, the budget cuts have accelerated each year with over 600 class sections cut in the last year and hundreds of part-time teachers fired in the Peralta District alone.

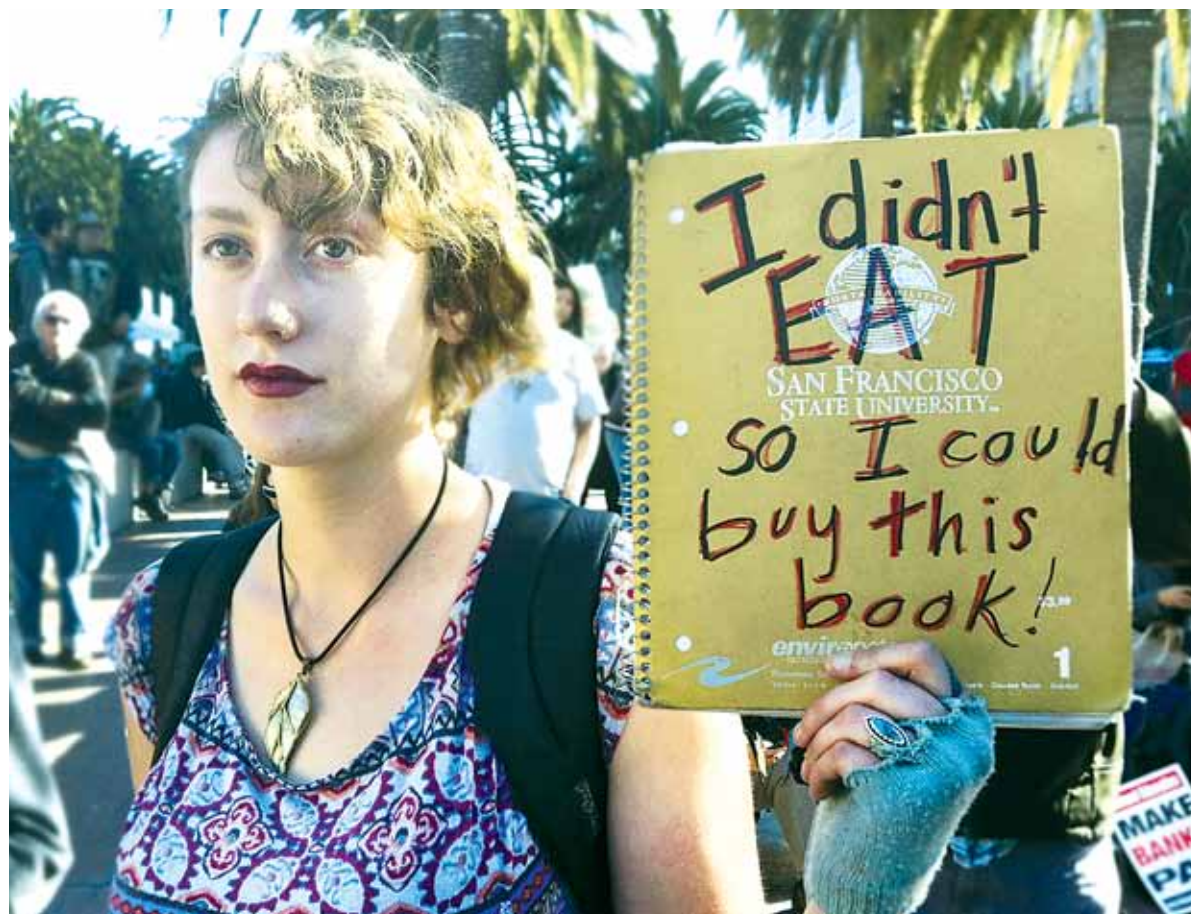
How does it make sense to cut classes, faculty, administrators and custodial/maintenance staff when students are clamoring to take classes?

Additionally, giant investment banks such as Morgan Stanley have been gouging growing numbers of schools through complex interest rate swaps, draining these public educational institutions of much needed funds in the millions of dollars.

While our state and federal governments trumpet that they are going to fund "vocational" education to prepare American students and workers for new and better jobs, Democrats and Republicans join forces to cut Carl Perkins funding (major funding targeted for vocational education) by 33% in two years.

And then there's the new California Student Success Task Force (SSTF). It sounds great, but at its heart is a scheme to limit access to education by forcing all students to have an "educational plan"; either to transfer to a four-year college or to use new vocational skills to get a job.

SSTF denies access to working students who need a class to improve existing skills; it denies access



Protest against school cuts in California where the battle is on for free, accessible government funded (not corporate) education for all.

PHOTO/STEVE RHODES

to students of all types and ages who want to improve their understanding of the world, or learn some creative skill, or just be enriched.

All of these educational disasters make it vastly harder to be a student or an educator.

All of these new policies are instituted by state or federal governments on the pretense that they are

either better for education, or absolutely unavoidable "due to the budget crisis." And they are all backed by the same corporate forces that have privatized the elementary and high schools without improving education one bit.

The battle for free, accessible government funded Public Education for all is on; more and more of

us understand that public education is inseparable from public everything, while corporate education is inseparable from corporate everything. We'll have one or the other, and it depends on us.

Peter Brown teaches Machine Technology at Laney Community College in Oakland, CA.

NEW STUDENT MOVEMENT STANDS UP FOR EDUCATION

By Daniel Osoy & Robert Dewitz

TORRANCE, CA — As tuition fees continue to rise, and class cuts threaten to deprive students of long awaited degrees, many are wondering what can be done to stop the crisis in education. Over the past few years it has become clear that public educational institutions are facing a significant crisis. The Occupy Movement has changed the political rhetoric of this country and inspired countless

students to fight for their educations. In late October, students at El Camino College began their own occupation in the spirit of Occupy Wall Street.

Occupy El Camino College, composed of students and teachers, seek to educate and empower fellow students, community members and El Camino faculty and staff. OECC wishes to educate on social economic issues that greatly affect the community and country at large, but also on the crisis in

education. Over the past decade, tuition fees have skyrocketed in California. We have seen the departure of numerous part-time faculty members, continuous cuts to class sections and student resources, hindering their ability to graduate and/or transfer to higher institutions. Not to mention great inflation in administrative salary pay while faculty wages stagnate, and all under the pretense of budget cuts.

Despite the disparity in the educational system, the call for student action has too often fallen on deaf ears. March 1, the National Day of Student Action, promises to be a call that cannot and will not be ignored. Occupy El Camino College, and other student organizations, have organized one of the largest student actions seen in years. Actions are planned in the University of California system, Cal State Universities, and numerous community colleges. Indeed, 2012 may very well be the year of the American Spring, beginning with the new student movement on March 1. Join us and stand up for education!



A new student movement is forming at El Camino College in Torrance, CA. Administration pay is going up while the students suffer from cuts in their education.

PHOTO/ROBERT DEWITZ

El Camino College		
Total Cost of President and Vice Presidents: (not all positions listed)		
2006: \$650,713 2010: \$1,185,289		
Increase of over 80%		
Officer	Salary increase	Percent increase
Thomas M. Fallo, President	2006: \$215,557 2010: \$288,905	Increase of \$73,348 34% increase
Jeanie Nishime VP Student/Community ADV	2007: \$138,972 2010: \$184,657	Increase of \$45,685 33.7% increase
Francisco ARCE VP Academic Affairs	2006: \$155,160 2010: \$197,916	Increase of \$42,750 27.5% increase

PEOPLE'S HEARING PUTS MONSANTO ON TRIAL

Feed The World, Not The Corporations!

By Cathy Talbott

"All the wealth produced in the world is controlled by 500 corporations. Profit maximization is the murderous strategy of global corporate hierarchies." — Jean Ziegler, UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, from "We Feed The World," 2005 documentary.

"Control the oil and you control nations. Control the food and you control the people." — Henry Kissinger, Secretary of State, Nixon administration strategist.

CARBONDALE, IL — On January 28, in the Lesar Law Courtroom at Southern Illinois University-Carbondale, one giant corporation with a history of disregard for the health and well being of the world's peoples, Monsanto, was put on "trial" in a "Peoples' Hearing" to "produce a comprehensive public understanding of harms and to determine responsibility for those harms."

Organized by the Compass Collective, it was the first in a series of hearings to be held in various Midwest locations. Testimony was open to anyone who has expertise or special knowledge, whether it be scientific or experiential, such as farmers, gardeners, soldiers, workers, scientists, consumers, etc.

The testimony was varied and compelling. It ranged from a member of the Sierra Club, with information on the use of Round Up Ready crops planted in the Crab Orchard Wildlife areas, to

farmers with frightening stories of Monsanto's strong arm tactics, to moms with heart-wrenching tales of the search to find answers to the mysteries of their children's illnesses, to a lawyer's tale of going up against Monsanto, and a special presentation by 'Chickadee, Squirrel, Coyote, and Bees,' to illustrate the impact of the criminal pollution of our ecosystem from contamination by PCB's and other chemical poisons. Other testimonies were given by surrogates speaking of the impoverishment of the farmers in India from the debt laden enslavement to Monsanto seed and pesticides, many of whom have committed suicide by drinking bottles of Round UP, forcing their families to move into the slums of the cities. Another spoke of the connection to Latin and South America, where Monsanto has introduced genetically modified soya, destroying rain forests at an alarming rate, all with the goal of exporting to the richer nations to feed cattle, not the local populations.

All speakers expressed the need for society to gain control over these profit hungry monster corporations. Steve Hixon, farmer and seed saver from Claremont, Illinois, verbalized an urgency to get control of our government, which has been taken over by the corporations. The findings of the three citizen-judge panel unanimously agreed that Monsanto should be held accountable. One of the judges called the collaboration between Monsanto and government, which has not protected us from

the abuses of this powerful adversary, "corporate fascism."

For more information, read Jeffrey Smith, author of "Seeds of Deception." He provides compelling scientific evidence for the outright ban of genetically modified organisms. A visit to his website, www.responsibletechnology.org provides a wealth of information. Another is F. William Engdahl's book, "Seeds of Deception." He reveals how a small socio-political elite (global capitalist class)

centered in America seeks control over our very means of survival, food. As Dr. Arpad Pusztai, biochemist, formerly of the Rowett Research Institute, Scotland, the scientist given the task of researching the potential of GMO's back in 1995, fired for publishing his negative findings on the ill effects of GMO's, states: "What is so frightening about Engdahl's vision of the world is that it is so real. In this new age of 'free markets', everything-science, commerce,

agriculture and even seeds—have become weapons in the hands of a few global corporation barons and their political fellow travelers."

If you would like to hold a similar hearing in your community or for more information, visit www.midwestradicalculturecorner.net, www.carbonfarms.us/monsanto, or email Sarah Lewison, sacamixta@gmail.com. The next venue will be in Iowa City, Iowa. Date is not yet determined.



Farmer's protest against Monsanto Corporation in NYC in January. One protester's sign says East St. Louis, Il is the site of Monsanto's PCB manufacturing plant which has the highest rate of fetal death and immature births in the state.

PHOTO/OLESYA MANEVICH

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Coyote

Mon. Santo. Mon Santo. My saint. Oh, but you are no saint of mine. There is nothing holy in your works, no mercy in your hands. Your heart does not sing the Great Song; it does not shine with Being—it does not even beat; I cannot speak to you in the World of Peoples . . . but I hear you, I see you, I taste you. You have action, you have consequence. You are no saint, but we can round up your sins and tag them one by one, a catalog of sins.

Monsanto, you, too, have a catalog. "Genuity® Bollgard II® with Roundup Ready® Flex represents Monsanto's newest wave of innovation with two second-generation traits stacked into one seed." One seed. Fedco seeds, Dekalb Corn, Roundup Ready soy beans. Roundup Ready canola.

Roundup, Bullet, Lariat, Harness, Roundup PowerMax, Warrant.

Warrant. But who will arrest you? Stop you in your tracks? Death—she is coming for us all. Sweetly or softly or with electric heat she cuts through the breath of each and each. Oneself and another. She walks with me often these days—trots with me through the brush and across fields and roads. Even death can grow lonely through the senseless overwork that is the burden of these times, your times.

And you—you here—you think are going to change all this through your judges and your trials, through your questions and your evidence. Do not be fools! The violated seed, the poisoned water, the toxic mouse and silent bird—the poisons in my liver and the sorrow in all our hearts—they are linked, each and each to your tangle of courtrooms, and prisons, and cities, and schools, and sterile, white coated laboratories. Linked to the human fear of hunger and cold, of the wild. Linked to your fear that the world, that the bodies of others and the maiden of death are all beyond your control. They are all beyond your control.

Monsanto does not end in a courtroom! It does not end with the triumph of rational minds! It ends when you sit in the pitch black fear of your heart and ask to learn my language, to sing my song. It ends one by one with the courage to join the breath of the world, to become whole, to become animal.

It is not too late. Enter this small distance between us. Open your voices. Enter! Learn now! Sing now! Learn my language now! [howl]

— By Susannah Bunny LeBaron

Occupy Houston and the Challenges

People's Tribune correspondent Maria Elena Castellanos interviews Chris Moratis, one of a few "occupiers" working full-time to keep the Occupy Houston occupation at Tranquility Park going.

Maria Elena Castellanos: What are your thoughts about the importance of seizing and occupying a public space—such as Tranquility Park?

Chris Moratis: Why not occupy Tranquility Park? It's in the heart of what and who we're up against. You got City Hall, Wells Fargo Bank, Bank of America, Shell Oil, Chevron Oil, and the Chase Bank Tower, all within walking distance and in eyesight.

MEC: What made you get involved with Occupy Houston (OH)?

CM: I've always had a problem with our government and knew it was screwed no matter who was in office. I fell in love with the movement and the great friends I met at Tranquility Park and the ones I met when we went to Washington DC.

MEC: How old are you? What kind of job would you like to have?

CM: I am 35. And if I could do anything I would wanna direct a program for the homeless that supplies all the needs a homeless person has,

like most importantly a place to sleep. A place to get the things like identification, birth certificates, bus passes, proper healthcare. A place to eat. A place to learn new trades to help find a job. It's a shame that Annise Parker, our mayor, can do so much to help the homeless, but does nothing except say how she wants to get rid of them. Speaking as someone who used to be homeless, I know how hard it is to dig deep down looking past the obstacles you face as a homeless person here in Houston.

MEC: What are the challenges in keeping the "overnight" occupation going?

CM: Not in any particular order, it would have to be keeping the occupiers fed, having the proper bedding, safe environment at all times, and dealing with the Houston Police Department (HPD).

A hungry occupier is an unhappy occupier. It's hard to get into something when all you can think about is when you're going to eat next. If you have no place to sleep and no sleeping bag, blanket, or air mattress you're not gonna want to stay overnight. And as far as the conflict between us occupiers and HPD, yeah they may work for the 1%, but they're a part of the 99%.

I don't know if they know what the 1% and 99% even is. But they're a layoff away from finding out. I think if they realized that we're not against them and that we're fighting for them [that is, for the individual policemen] too it might help with the relationship we have with each other.

It's a shame that the people who get paid to protect and serve us are the same ones we have to fear. Most of these "people of justice" don't realize that we're standing up for their rights too. We're not going through a phase, nor will we easily give up. We are the 99%. They are also the 99%. The sooner they realize that we're on the same side the better it'll be for everyone.

In conclusion I wanna bring up the fact that I speak for myself as a full-time occupier and NOT for Occupy Houston. The opinions expressed are mine alone. Even if others may agree with me. And I want to thank you for the opportunity to put my thoughts and ideas on paper.

Maria Elena Castellanos is a correspondent for the People's Tribune from Houston, Texas and she is a member of Occupy Houston.



Chris Moratis, a member of OWS in Houston, envisions a world where people are not hungry, homeless and living in fear of the police.

PHOTO/MARIA ELENA CASTENALLOS

OCCUPY PICCOLO! Parents sit in to prevent school privatization



Piccolo, Casalas, and ORR Academy students joined with parents and community members to protest the "Turnaround" of their schools. The process of "turning around" a public school into a private charter school costs taxpayers an average of \$7 million per school. PHOTO/BRETT JELINEK

By Brett Jelinek

CHICAGO, IL — On Friday, February 17, Chicago parents took a stand to prevent the privatization of their schools. The parents of Piccolo Elementary and Casalas Elementary, both in Chicago's Humboldt Park neighborhood, have been trying to work with Chicago Public Schools (CPS) for months to prevent their schools from "Turnaround," a costly process (average of \$7 million per school) that replaces the entire school staff and faculty, turning public neighborhood schools into private charter schools.

The Academy for Urban School Leadership (AUSL), which has strong ties to the Mayor's office and corporate backers, is the organization behind the Turnaround process. A study by *Designs for Change* show that schools "turned around" by AUSL do not perform any better than average CPS schools in the long run.

I joined a group of parents and community supporters in taking over an unused classroom of the school on Friday evening, refusing to leave until parents had a meeting with Mayor Rahm Emanuel, CPS CEO Brizzard, or members of the Board of Education. Hundreds of parents, students, community members, and supporters

formed an encampment in front of the school—40 people braving the sub-freezing temperatures overnight—in solidarity with those occupying the classroom inside.

Students from ORR Academy, turned around by AUSL in the last two years, showed up to protest the spread of AUSL's turnaround plans. One student even risked arrest by occupying the classroom.

Rather than risk the bad press of arresting parents inside a school, CPS attempted to starve us out by refusing any food into the building—even refusing medication needed by a mother with diabetes and high blood pressure.

On the second day of the occupation, the events at Piccolo Elementary pressured the Board of Education Vice President Jesse Ruiz to agree to a meeting between parents of Piccolo and Casalas schools with the entire Board of Education.

Despite parents' short term victory of winning a meeting with the board, Chicago's unelected Board of Education unanimously voted to turnaround Piccolo, Casalas, and eight other schools and to close seven schools.

Parents, students, teachers, and community organizers have vowed to continue the fight against the widespread privatization of Chicago's public school system.

OCCUPY THE BALLOT BOX

By Andi Sosin & Joel Sosinsky
Remember the Triangle Fire Coalition

NEW YORK, NY — While Republican candidates, bolstered by enormous billionaire-funded super-PACs, pander to hard-right-wing voters, most Americans continue to live through the most devastating recession since the Great Depression. In times like these it can be instructive to remember the ways an earlier Gilded Age softened the hard edges of economic inequality with rags to riches stories. Back then, popular Horatio Alger novels about a ragged boy who by sheer pluck and opportunity ascended from poverty into wealth captivated America's imagination. Today opportunity is scarcer than it ever was, but PAC-money-fueled sophisticated and omnipresent advertising uses present-day Horatio Alger fantasies to divert citizens' consciousness of systematic unfairness. Even as Romney deflects criticism of his huge personal wealth by darkly calling his critics envious, in a rebuttal to President Obama's State of the Union speech, Tea Party Republican Governor Mitch Daniels gave a folksy talk about how regular Americans don't resent rich people but prefer to think of themselves as "the soon to be rich." However appealing Daniels' scenario may be in updating Horatio Alger's rags to riches yarns, for the vast majority of Americans, economic opportunity is an oxymoron—exactly the opposite of what really happens.

Today, as Occupy Wall Street makes clear, 99% of us see fewer and fewer opportunities and a dwindling portion of this country's wealth. Politicians who extol the private sector as the main engine of American prosperity and rail against anti-business regulations (particularly those that actually protect workers and the planet) are boldfaced lying to the public. They spout Orwellian double-speak, and while giving lip service to protecting the "middle

class," enact tax cuts for the rich, demonize and bust unions, privatize public services and schools, and pretend that private sector "job creators" will put the unemployed back to work. Instead of strengthening our social safety net and advancing civil rights for all, these right-wing libertarians are intent on dismantling social justice progress. Americans should be asking critical questions like why honest politicians, (the classic oxymoron) stress the ideal of opportunity yet downplay offshoring good jobs.

This election year we must *Occupy the Ballot Box* to elect politicians sworn to push forward the 99%'s agenda of dignified work in a fair and regulated economic system that provides adequate comfort and prosperity for all, with universal health care, education and environmental conservation. Even in today's political atmosphere of toxic media and corporate lobbyists there are still progressive politicians who will address the obscene distortion that has skewed this country's income distribution, threatening the very existence of many families. The voices of the 99% must be heard, with government empowered to make the changes necessary to re-balance the unfair system and repair the damage done by the financial gamblers and criminals who brought our economy to the brink of disaster. The election of 2012 is crucial to reversing America's slide into poverty. If voters allow themselves to be hoodwinked by bought politicians, or sit on their hands on Election Day, this country will have squandered its opportunity for democratic renewal.

The Remember the Triangle Fire Coalition is campaigning for a permanent memorial to the victims of the fire and to the activists whose work in the fire's aftermath established the workplace protections we take for granted today. Remembering the Triangle fire and



Occupy Wall Street protest in New York City.

PHOTO CREDIT/JOEL SOSINSKY

how solidarity and political activism led to progressive policies should remind us that in a democracy when citizens get together in

common cause they can improve their lives, the lives of their children, and their prospects for the future. Contact the Remember the

Triangle Fire Coalition at Info@rememberthetrianglefire.org.

Heart Patient Beaten by Security Guards in Chicago Hospital

Chuck Parker, for the People's Tribune, interviews James Stidle who tells the alarming story of how he was badly beaten by hospital security officers at Stroger Hospital in Chicago on August 9, 2010. Stroger Hospital, previously called Cook County Hospital, is a community-based public hospital. The senseless violence which took place on that day illustrates a deep-seated hatred toward the poor, and in particular toward the African Americans, by some in law enforcement. Everyone is in jeopardy when those responsible for such incidents are not brought to justice.

People's Tribune: Why were you going to Stroger Hospital that day?

James Stidle: I was going to see my

cardiologist—he's a great doctor—he's helped me through six heart attacks and nine angioplasties.

PT: But first you had to get past the security guards?

JS: That's right. They are a bunch of untrained head busters down there.

PT: How did it start?

JS: It started in the revolving front door. At first I couldn't go in because there was a man with a cane just inside holding the door. When I was able to go in I saw this lady cop holding that man. I walk with a cane also. I turned and walked toward my doctor's office. Then before I knew it, that same lady cop was screaming at me, "Sir! Give

me your fucking I.D!" I turned and said, with my cane hanging from one wrist and my palms up, "You can't mean me? Is this how you treat heart patients?" And she yelled louder, "Shut the fuck up and give me your I.D." I told her, "You can't tell me to shut up," and kept walking.

PT: Then what happened?

JS: I was tackled from behind by several officers. They slammed my chest and face into the floor so hard it broke my dentures. They took my backpack and choked me with one of the straps. The officer sitting behind the desk pulled his gun and ran over. Then I was handcuffed and one of them used a knife to cut the strap off my neck.

I was taken to the holding cell.

PT: Security officers in a hospital carry guns, and they have a holding cell? What happened in there?

JS: The lieutenant choked me with his baton and he had me down on the floor. He told me he would kill me if I moved again. He left me chained to a bench. All the officers were sitting around writing reports. The one who had pulled a gun on me asked, "What was this all about?" I told him, "You mean you pulled a gun on me and you didn't know what it was about?" Another one of them said he thought I was homeless. Is that a reason to beat or kill someone?

PT: How did it end? Were you ar-

rested?

JS: No. After the lieutenant had watched the video, he came back to the holding cell, tore up the reports of the officers, and came over and tried to shake my hand. Then they let me go. I saw my cardiologist, who sent me to the ER, and I was admitted to the hospital.

PT: Are you still suffering any after effects?

JS: Yes, almost every night I have horrible vivid nightmares. They start where I hit the floor so hard. The deeper I am into sleep the harder it is to wake up. It's getting more and more wicked. I'm lucky I haven't had a heart attack in my sleep.

When the Government Won't Help, We Need to Come Together

By Lenette Evans



ST JOSEPH, MI — Last week in St. Joseph, Michigan, as I was standing in the card aisle, two men were

talking. One said he has not had a job and worked in seven years. The other guy mentioned he has not had a job and went back to college to get his masters degree. Since he has had his degree, he has not been able to find a job anywhere.

This was heartwrenching to say the least. But this is the one of many millions of people throughout Michigan and around the world that you will hear say they do not have a job and homes are being foreclosed. Many people are without a place to live and people are either trying to live with someone or living in an abandoned building or a vehicle or other places. How about living under a bridge? or in a dumpster as a home to live in because there is no place to go!

Just imagine if you lost your job today and had to live no place but under a bridge. What would you do? how would you survive? especially if your friends and family are unable to help.

Our economy needs to get bet-

ter and people need jobs. Our government needs to help its people.

Southwest Michigan continues to see home values decline as the area's housing market works towards rebalancing itself in the wake of a recession. The recession has touched every corner of American life from factory workers to those in finance. Americans have been shaken by a contracting economy that has shed 4.4 million jobs since December 2007.

Forbes magazine shows that the best places to live for jobs are: Fort Collins, CO, Lexington, KY, Nashville, TN, Houston, TX, Des Moines, IA, Provo, UT, and Raleigh, NC in December 2010. Michigan had an 11.1 percent employment rate, meaning unemployment fell 1.8 percent over the 12-month period. Many of those jobs were retail and seasonal positions for the holidays. Regardless, Michigan is a bad state for employment. There are better opportunities living in or closer to a metropolitan city. But still, our government needs to straighten up and help. This is a time when people need to come together.

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SHOCK DOCTRINE — a book by Naomi Klein

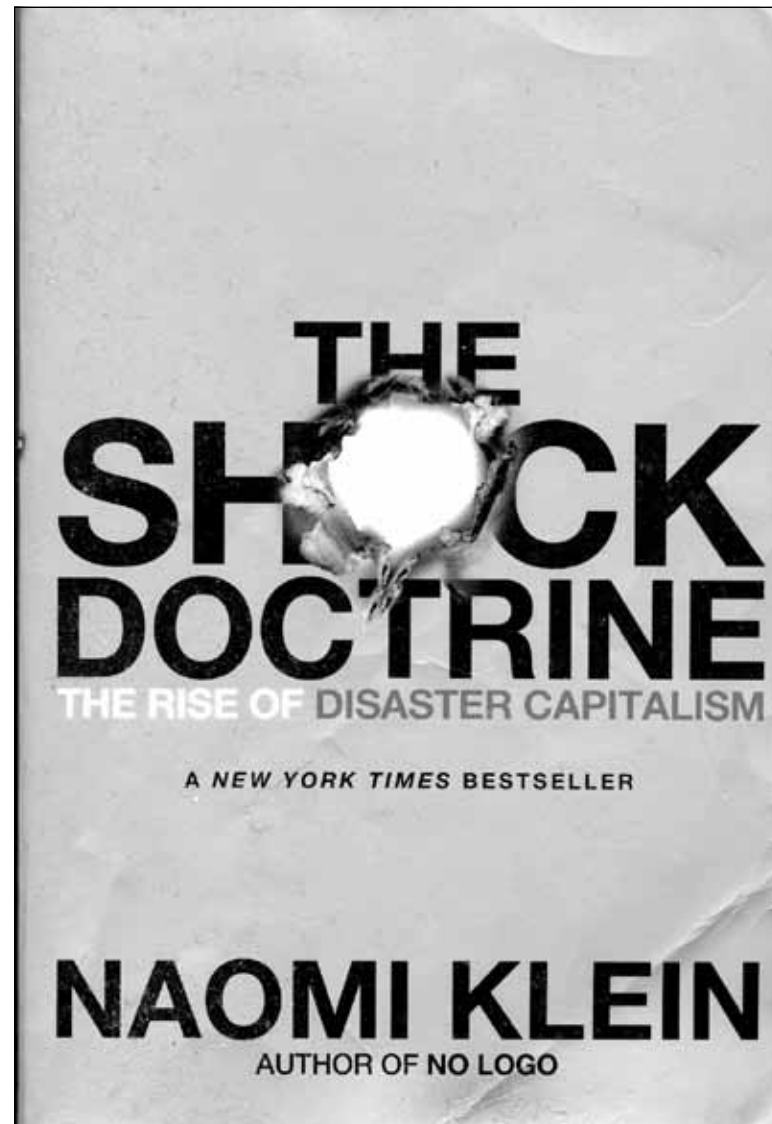
BOOK REVIEW

By Chuck Parker

In her 2007 book, *Shock Doctrine*, Naomi Klein exposes the economic agenda of a powerful gang of corporate leaders within the U.S. government, the International Monetary Fund and World Bank in every crisis for the past 40 years. Summed up, their "Shock Doctrine" has sought to take advantage of moments following disasters such as hurricanes, financial crises, and wars, to push through their unpopular economic program while the people were paralyzed and unable to fight back. This program is centered around privatization, deregulation, and massive cuts in social spending. In every example it has meant the elimination of the public sphere, total liberation for corporations and skeletal social spending. In other words it caused massive unemployment, destruction of public education and healthcare, and widespread hunger and homelessness.

The book demonstrates how they developed their core modus operandi by combining the torture research of a CIA doctor, with the economic theories of Milton Friedman of the University of Chicago. From the 1960's to his death in 2006, Friedman trained thousands of economists known as "Chicago Boys." Following the elections of Reagan in the U.S. and Thatcher in England during the 1980's, the Chicago Boys were catapulted into leadership positions at the International Monetary Fund and World Bank. At the IMF they drafted the "Washington Consensus:" a set of rules for loaning money to countries in crisis. It amounted to extortion. If you want loans to stabilize your currency you must radically restructure your economy by selling off all public assets and removing any barriers to foreign capital coming in and taking over. The book makes all these complicated financial maneuvers understandable by telling the story in a clear factual way. And while it was not always Chicago Boys who drafted "shock therapy" in every country, it was Friedman's blueprint that was followed. Jeffrey Sachs from Harvard drew up the plan in Bolivia, Poland, and the Soviet Union. And it was the economists known as the "Berkeley Mafia" that guided the bloody shock therapy in Indonesia during the 1960's.

Naomi Klein's book, *Shock Doctrine*, is a challenge to Friedman's claim that unregulated



**The Shock Doctrine:
The Rise of Disaster Capitalism**

By Naomi Klein

Paperback: \$16.00

ISBN: 0312427999

capitalism and unfettered markets are the result of freedom and democracy. This book shows how capitalism has consistently been brought to power by the most brutal forms of coercion along with the destruction of democracy in countries throughout the world.

And here in the U.S., only three months after Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans, Milton Friedman himself published an article urging the federal government to take advantage of the "opportunity to radically reform the education system." Quickly the right-wing think tanks backed by millions of dollars from the Bush Administration moved in and auctioned off all 124 public schools, fired 4700 unionized teachers and nullified their contract, and established 31 private charter schools in their place. And since the financial crisis of 2008, public employees have been attacked in Wisconsin and Ohio, and budget cuts to social services are being implemented in

most states. In Michigan democracy is under attack with the emergency manager law and 40,000 families are threatened with being cut off social services during the worst economy in decades. Clearly "shock therapy" is being brought home to the American working class.

This book offers a powerful weapon to educate the people about these cruel measures that serve only to make profits for the global corporations. By exposing Friedman's "ideas" as lies, and uncovering the secret history of their brutal implementation, this book will help clear the ground for revolutionaries to show that a new cooperative society is finally possible. With the capitalist economic system unraveling due to the permanent elimination of jobs by automation, the only solution is for the people to take over the corporations and run them in the interests of society.

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Emergency Manager Places Benton Harbor Radio on E-Bay for \$5,000

By Rev. Edward Pinkney



BENTON HARBOR, MI — It is our constitutional duty as Americans to hold our elected officials accountable for their words, as well as their inactions and wrongdoings.

However, Mr. Joseph Harris, the Emergency Financial Manager in Benton Harbor, is not an elected official. He is a dictator who serves Whirlpool Corporation and

not the community or the residents. Joseph Harris does everything within his power to destroy the city of Benton Harbor and the residents while favoring the corporations.

For example, Benton Harbor's books are still in the red. Contrary to Harris's prediction, the city ended the fiscal year with a sizeable deficit. An audit by the Grand Rapid based Rehmann firm shows accounting mistakes, and that the pension fund is being mishandled. During a town hall meeting in June, Harris stated the city of Benton Harbor would have a \$400,000 surplus. But instead, the city is worse off now than ever

before, thanks to Joseph Harris.

And, now for the latest outrage. The city of Benton Harbor made MSNBC's Rachel Maddow show again. Joseph Harris put the city's radio station's equipment up for sale on eBay for \$5,000, supposedly as a cost-cutting measure. The plan was to auction it off to the highest bidder. Clearly, the purpose was to try to silence the community. Benton Harbor's radio station, WBHC-LP 96.5 hosts religious broadcasts, community programs, music, and talk radio programs.

However, the equipment had to come down from eBay because the FCC has to

approve the sale on a radio station license. It is an illegal sale if you do not have their permission. Without their permission, Joseph Harris could be locked up, just like I was for no reason. I was put in inhumane conditions, served cold food, put on lock down and had visitation rights taken away and phone calls blocked.

The actions of the Emergency Financial Manager should be a call to action on the part of every single person who is part of the 99%. That includes you!

Upcoming in Benton Harbor: **OCCUPY THE PGA**



Protest the corporations and bankers at the Senior PGA Championship tournament at the Benton Harbor golf tournament May 23-27, 2012. We are the 99% and the 1% will be there. Saturday, May 26 is the big day. Join us! Call Rev. Pinkney, President, BANCO at 269-925-0001 for information. PHOTO/BRETT JELINEK

Occupy DC: Torn Down But Rebuilding

By Eric Sheptock

WASHINGTON, D.C. — On February 4, the National Park Police began a partial teardown of the Occupy DC encampments. The occupiers, however, continue to meet and are reorganizing. Occupiers are meeting in smaller groups at indoor locations and continue to come together for general assemblies. The societal ills, which the occupiers are reacting to, haven't gone away and neither have the occupiers.

Many groups are planning to converge on the U.S. Capitol beginning on March 30 for a "DC Spring". They will demand jobs, the right to housing, full systemic change and an end to government corruption, and militarism. Others are meeting with members of Congress to draft legislation which people hope will create jobs, and housing for women, children and families—though fully aware that capitalism is in its final throes. They are under no illusion that

the system can be saved.

D.C. mayor Vincent Gray held his \$600,000 "One City Summit" where 2,000 Washingtonians were polled on what they felt needed to change in the city. Three biggest concerns were affordable housing, government corruption and income inequality. Washingtonians have reason to doubt that the mayor will meet their concerns. Nonetheless various local groups are galvanizing around these issues and plan to hold local officials accountable. Also, there is a definite connection between local and national issues — and City Hall is only a mile from the U.S. Capitol.

Furthermore, local law requires the mayor to release his budget for the next fiscal year by April 1—just two days after the start of the "DC Spring". The timing of actions, which target the local and federal governments overlap. This promises to be an interesting spring in our nation's capital.

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