

# PEOPLE'S TRIBUNE

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Chicago Police strike out against protesters and journalists during the week of action protesting against the NATO Summit.

PHOTO/PAUL WEISKEL

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## THE MOVEMENT CONFRONTS THE FASCIST POLICE STATE

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# Why immigrants are under attack

## EDITORIAL

“Why did they kill Daddy?” asks the six-year-old son of Anastasio Rojas. Anastasio was tortured and beaten to death by border patrol agents in 2010. A newly released video shows Anastasio screaming for help as he is corralled by agents, hogtied and handcuffed, tasered multiple times, and beaten so severely that he died days later. Anastasio Rojas lived in San Diego for 27 years and was a father of five.

This murder is part of a series of brutal attacks targeting America’s immigrant community. Since 2010, agents killed nine other residents of border communities. New laws criminalizing immigrants are being enacted in state after state. Undocumented children are held in detention centers for months at a time. Immigrant families are denied healthcare and education. Immigrants face raids and deportations in the workplace. Families are torn apart, and children left parentless.

Is this the kind of America we want? To transform society, we have to get at the root of the problem.

These events must be seen in the context of the division of society around wealth and poverty. New labor-less tools of production—computers and robots—are eliminating millions of jobs, permanently, and destroying the foundation of the capitalist system.

As a result, 50 million people in the U.S.—immigrant and non-immigrant—or one in six, are without healthcare when enough quality healthcare exists for everyone. Millions struggled to put food on the table last year at a time when mountains of food are produced. Growing numbers of people are going without water or heat in their homes at a time when energy corporations are making billions in profit. Something has to give.



Chicago demonstrators marched for immigrant rights and workers’ rights, joining protests around the world on May 1, 2012, International Workers Day.

PHOTO/BRETT JELINEK

Anger at the corporate-state is rising among wider sections of the population. This is a threat to capitalism. Above all, the capitalist class must prevent unity from developing among the working class. A culture of fascist violence, hatred and disregard for human life is fostered to stop upsurges and to keep the workers from uniting against their common oppressor. Thus we are told: immi-

grants, jobless youth and “trailer trash” whites are a threat and they need to be jailed or killed.

Nonetheless, as the poverty increases, and as the social privileges of one section of workers over another are stripped away, a spontaneous motion toward unity is little by little developing. However, given the history of this country, unity isn’t automatic. It has to be fought for by

conscious people. This is where the active role of revolutionaries comes in to play.

It is revolutionaries who must bring the people an understanding of their class interests and a unifying vision of the free, prosperous and just society that is possible only if the people hold power. A starting point toward the new society is the defense of immigrants.

### “Illegal” in an unjust world

My ancestors built a resistance that was illegal. The white families who hid them, and the pastors who gave them safe harbor, chose to become “illegal” with them. Today, new laws take their wording from the fugitive slave laws of 150 years ago—criminalizing anyone who assists undocumented immigrants. The same people leading this fight are also decertifying unions, and passing laws to make it more difficult for poor people to vote. Will we betray the legacy of those who risked their lives to fight for our liberty? The defense of the immigrant is the defense of a deeply-held belief: that human dignity cannot be at odds with the law – and when it is, the law is wrong, not us.

— Ted Quant, a long-time labor and civil rights organizer

## Why the Movement Needs a Press

### From the Editors

We are sometimes asked “Why does the movement to build a new America 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.PeoplesTribune.org](http://www.PeoplesTribune.org)

## 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 500 words. We reserve the right to edit articles to conform to space limitations.

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People from around the world filled the streets of Chicago to protest the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and austerity.

PHOTO/BRETT JELINEK

# THE FIGHT TO IMPOSE PEACE ON THE WAR MAKERS

## COVER STORY

There is a hurricane coming. The world took another step toward it with the NATO summit in May in Chicago and the G8 meeting at Camp David. These gatherings were simply a bunch of gangsters coming together to decide how they will continue to loot the world, and to strategize about how they will suppress a humanity that is fighting for peace and economic survival.

The whole world is polarizing, and the NATO summit marked another step toward that polarity. The dictionary says polarization is “a sharp division into opposing factions.” Every society is at some stage of splitting into two camps, with the ruling class on one side and the

mass of the people on the other. This polarization is the necessary prelude to revolution.

Vast economic changes are driving this process forward. Technology—the computer and robot—is replacing labor in the production process, stripping millions of their jobs permanently. In the U.S., millions of people who have never known poverty are becoming destitute. These dispossessed have no way to survive under capitalism. On the other side are the capitalists—a handful of billionaires, millionaires and giant corporations growing richer and richer by the day.

Under capitalism, the jobs aren’t coming back. The dispossessed are compelled to fight for a new, cooperative society where the people control the economy and everyone is given

all that they need for a civilized life. They are forced to demand an end to private control of the economy—an end to capitalist private property. For them, it’s a matter of life or death.

The capitalists also face a life or death fight. They must rely on fascism to protect their power and their property. This is not a choice they make—if they are to keep capitalism, there is no other way. And they have put us on a path toward world war. The U.S. is resorting to war to try and maintain its dominance in the world. The militarized U.S. economy adds to the drive toward war by making war profitable. The slaughter of human beings has become an industry.

This is the polarity, between a dying capitalism driving the world toward fascism, poverty

and war, and the mass of the people who must finish off capitalism if they are to live. The fight of the dispossessed for a new society is at the root of every struggle—for income, health care, education, housing and peace. The thousands who gathered in Chicago represented a convergence of many struggles. Money spent on war today is food taken out of the mouths of our children. The battles for peace, democracy and economic survival are fused into one struggle for a new society.

As the crisis deepens, the ruling class will become more violent against the people, and the resistance of the people will grow. For the resistance to be successful, the people must become conscious of who they are fighting and what they are fighting for. The task of revolutionaries is to

bring class consciousness to the struggle. History is on our side. No number of soldiers can stop an idea whose time has come.

### Sister/Brother, can you spare \$20?

The People’s Tribune brings clarity to the growing movement. It unites the movement 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](http://www.peopletribune.org).

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# WORLD COURTS OF WOMEN AND A NEW VISION FOR A NEW FUTURE

By Ethel Long-Scott

OAKLAND, CA — On behalf of the Women's Economic Agenda Project, lead organizer for the U.S. Western Courts of Women on Poverty, I thank those who came together to bear witness and document the increasing suffering of our people as an exploding wealth and income gap shakes our country to the core.

Our starting point for this people's public hearing was the central role of poverty as a cause of so many major crises in workers' lives. We struggled to gain clarity on the cause of that poverty, focusing on the economic revolution shaping global capitalism and reshaping our nation. In song, in poems, in heartbreaking personal stories, we heard how the destruction of society weighs disproportionately on the shoulders of women. Women have responsibilities on the work front,

the family front, and the community front. Slashing resources, whether through budget cuts, job cuts, health care cuts, foreclosures or other "austerity" measures results in further shredding of the tattered safety net, removing us from access to resources we need to raise our families.

As juror Professor Marguerite Waller noted, "We have been reminded that we come from a long history of exploitation, expropriation, slavery and genocide. As we deliberate about the violations and violence of poverty in the U.S. today, the weight of those histories grows heavier and their meanings deeper... As we have listened to this rich testimony about foreclosures, homelessness, health care, food security, the environment, education, the drug wars, incarceration, the formation of a buffer class, the culture of death, we have learned of the depth and extent to which the

system is broken—the system has always been broken. That its apparent success was due only to the labor, blood, and tears of generations of people who are not, and have not been broken; people who have found ways to not only survive but to... stay connected spiritually, intellectually and in the community."

Our resolutions declared we refuse to be silent in the face of escalating violence and destruction. In the face of the massive restructuring of our society to favor the 1%, we are committed to use the powerful new tools of electronic production to end poverty and the violence it causes to insure the economic security, safety and justice for women and their families.

Doing that requires a massive workers' movement dedicated to putting the resources the 99% need into the public domain. The reality is that powerful corporate



Women console each other after testimony at the World Courts of Women on Poverty. PHOTO/AUSTIN LONG-SCOTT

interests have mounted an unrelenting assault on U.S. democracy as they rush to reorganize our government to benefit corporate agendas. We declared ourselves in opposition to this theft of our government, advancing a vision where every human being mat-

ters, attaching ourselves to measures that put human beings first. To that end, we are dedicated to building a broad movement aimed at transforming our economy so that we might direct ourselves to helping to heal our families, communities, and our planet.

## Culture rocks the World Courts of Women

By Hip Hop Congress

The cultural participation in the World Courts of Women Conference was powerful in lifting the spirits of the attendees.

Day 1 featured performances provided by Hip Hop Congress (HHC)/RDV. The day started with the West Coast Director of HHC, Rahman Jamaal (RDV). Youth Speaks also made an appearance. Lunch kicked off with Donae Johnnican, playing live guitar, with beatbox from HHC president Shamako Noble (RDV). Zeno blessed the stage with "9 months," depicting the struggle of a young woman faced with the reality of pregnancy. Janice, a single mom currently facing homelessness, blew the audience away with a

song that brought many others to tears. Rahman again spit a series of brilliant rhymes & things closed with Shamako performing the relevant song "Broke."

Day 2 performances amplified the energy. YDMC (RDV) & Kalizay came through to show solidarity, CHAM Ministry Associate Director Sister Adrian brought the audience to the edge of their seats with Gospel. That evening HHC/RDV held "Grind Relax & Give Back" showcase with the All-Star lineup of majority women. Things began with La Mantia (Trinidad), vocalist of a steel drum band getting hype. Lady Unique who was once signed to Death Row Records & has toured with Keyshia Cole, shared an inspiring verse.

Kelda Muzik, founder of the Bay Area's first reality show, Diva TV, shut it down. Keyanna Bean (RDV) spit bars about injustices against Black women. She was later joined by fellow RDVcrew/Oakland rapper DLabrie to perform "It Aint EZ" featuring San Quinn. Rahman rocked with special guest Kanetic Source, MC of Grammy Award Winning "Ozomatli" who shared that his five-year old son was diagnosed with the worst type of terminal brain stem tumor (DIPG). He said, "I do this for my son; he has outlived doctors' expectations with the medicine of Dr. Burzynski so there is hope," before jumping into "Futuristic Funk." The Mamaz (Persia & Aima) blazed the stage with High Energy Alternative Lady

power anthems. Then Sacramento's first lady Marvaless who has worked with 2pac/C-Bo, spit her new song "Black Queen," & for the finale CMG half of pioneering socially/street group "Conscious Daughters" performed her classic song, "Fonky Expedition," which features her recently deceased rhyme partner, Special One. The night also included Unrestricted ft KashwitaK, Diamond The Solid 1, Hardspitta's, Breathless aka Honey B & a coordinated montage by a Family of 3; Kianta Noble, Donae Johnnican & Marquel Adams.

Day 3 hosted explosive performances, from start to finish. Things started with an all-female Puerto Rican drumming collective Las Bomberas De La Bahia.

They motivated many into chanting along/dancing. Afterwords, Antique brought the house down with beautiful harmonies. During lunch, Miguel Alvarez spit cool revolutionary poetry, followed by heart wrenching vocal displays from Hope (707 Island Express) & Miss Jada Simone (Smart Mouth & the Know It Alls). HHC Records dropped two quality smooth, militant tracks. Next, DLabrie rocked It Aint EZ inviting Jada Simone up for improv vocals, finishing off with Hard Labor backed by Donae Johnnican's beatbox. Lunch closed with the eclectic Revolutionary Poets Brigade. Hip Hop/Soul/Funk band Soulful Obsession ft Big Murph (RDV) brought the day home with ease & joy.

Day 4 (Mother's Day) after post program spoken, DLabrie who is also National Outreach Director of HHC, concluded by screening It Aint EZ Video which follows a young Black woman from the hood through her college/daily life struggles. DLabrie presented a purpose of video +hosted Q&A session with his mom, Barbara Webb, speaking about her history in music/education/activism.

Arts/culture program of WCW brought together several forms of cultural expression in alignment with class conversations +intersection of personal struggle/political awareness.



(Above) La Mantia, UnRestricted, Keyanna Bean (RDV), Marvaless, Diamond The Solid 1, The Mamaz, CMG, Conscious Daughters at the World Courts of Women "GRG" Showcase PHOTO/RDV PROMO, HIP HOP CONGRESS

(Right) Performer with Revolutionary Poets Brigade. PHOTO/JANNY CASTILLO



# First-ever World Courts of Women in the US

By Austin Long-Scott

OAKLAND, CA – A 10-person jury at the first-ever World Courts of Women in the U.S. spent four days in mid-May listening to typical working women and men tell painful stories of the violence that poverty forced into their lives. At the end they declared:

“We, the Jurors of the U.S. Courts of Women on Poverty Western Region hold the United States government and corporations responsible and accountable for the multitude of gross human rights violations that have barred the way to basic human rights such as affordable housing, health and mental health care, quality education, right to justice and dignity, and the right to exist and thrive in a free and true democracy.”

The jurors were chosen for their first-hand experience with poverty. They unanimously blamed transnational global capitalism and the maximum security state for a “. . . system of profit-making (that) denies the people housing, destroys the hope of the young, elderly, disabled and ‘abled.’” They issued a statement saying:

“We, the Jurors have heard the people’s cry for non-violent civil disobedience to the existing system.” This system, they said, “will no longer be allowed to walk all over us.”



Ethel Long-Scott, Director, Women’s Economic Agenda Project (left). Corinne Kumar (right), one of the founder’s of the Courts of Women. PHOTO/AUSTIN LONG-SCOTT

The emotional testimony was more than just moving. It opened windows on a world that gets little public discussion, a world where ordinary working people shared their struggles to surmount the obstacles the system puts in their way, stories that made many audience members

think differently about how they were living their lives.

A legal aid attorney said she was through helping foreclosure victims through the process. Foreclosures need to stop, she said.

An immigration attorney said the testimonies showed her she has to think differently about

how she fights for immigrants’ rights. The law requires families to be torn apart, she explained, and that’s not right. Unjust laws need to be opposed.

A young hip hop artist who was shot on at least three different occasions while he was growing up in Oakland, said, “It

humbled me to see other people concerned about the same situation that I grew up in.”

Many artists celebrated visions of a better future. Sister Adrienne Lawton won a standing ovation for her song about people who cannot speak about the unspeakable things done to them.

A university professor said she now tells her students about the testimony of one speaker, Marian Kramer, who laid out the history of corporations getting what they want from U.S. political leaders when it is in their interest. In the years when corporations industrialized the Detroit area with automobile factories and suppliers, Kramer said, they built housing and schools. Now, when industries have left the Detroit area, neither they nor the government seems to care how workers are faring.

We are dealing with not just matters of race but also economic class, said university professor Doctor Jean Kennedy.

The jury said “We bear witness to the violence of battery, criminal injustice, homelessness, mental illness and physical violence, food insecurity and economical genocide indeed, the extreme violence perpetrated by poverty and the capitalist system. . . We plant today the seeds of vision for a new world to grow—a world that moves beyond capitalism.”

## TEENS STRIVE TO MAKE COLLEGE FREE

By Carolina Burciago, Oakland Unity High

OAKLAND, CA — Tough times, skyrocketing tuition and difficulty securing enough college loans and scholarships have led a lot of students to hold back on attending four-year universities even though they’ve been accepted to one.

A group of Oakland Unity High School and Life Academy of Health and Bioscience students decided to try to put a stop to this by making college free.

With help from two American Government teachers—Kara Duros from Unity and Suneal Kolluri from Life Academy—seniors in the Class of 2011 wrote a ballot initiative called the College for California plan. It would make college free for California residents who have lived in the state three years and who attend University of California or California State University full time.

“I’ve seen a lot of talented

youth settle for the cheapest way to get a grasp on education, and I don’t feel that education should have a set price, especially not as high as it is now,” said Unity High senior Iris Perez, who is involved with trying to get the initiative on the ballot.

If the group is successful and voters approve the measure, Perez would not see a benefit until her junior year of college.

“I’m not doing it only for me,” she said. “I’m doing it for every one of the following generation of kids that deserve a chance to better themselves.”

The likelihood of Perez and other California students getting a free college education through such an initiative may be low.

In order for the proposal to appear on the November ballot, initiative leaders face a big task.



Roxanna Ceja and Cintia Ochoa, 9th grade students at Oakland Unity High. PHOTO/KARA DUROS, OAKLAND UNITY HIGH

“We have until June 21 to get a little over 800,000 signatures,” said Duros. “We have a couple thousand.”

Many current students and alumni of both schools are gathering signatures and spreading the word through social networks like Facebook and Twitter.

The group also plans to do a petition drive during an upcoming women’s conference at Laney College, Duros said.

Under the proposal, students who received a free college education would still have responsibilities. They would need to maintain a 2.7 college GPA or perform 70 hours of community service.

The funding would come from revenue

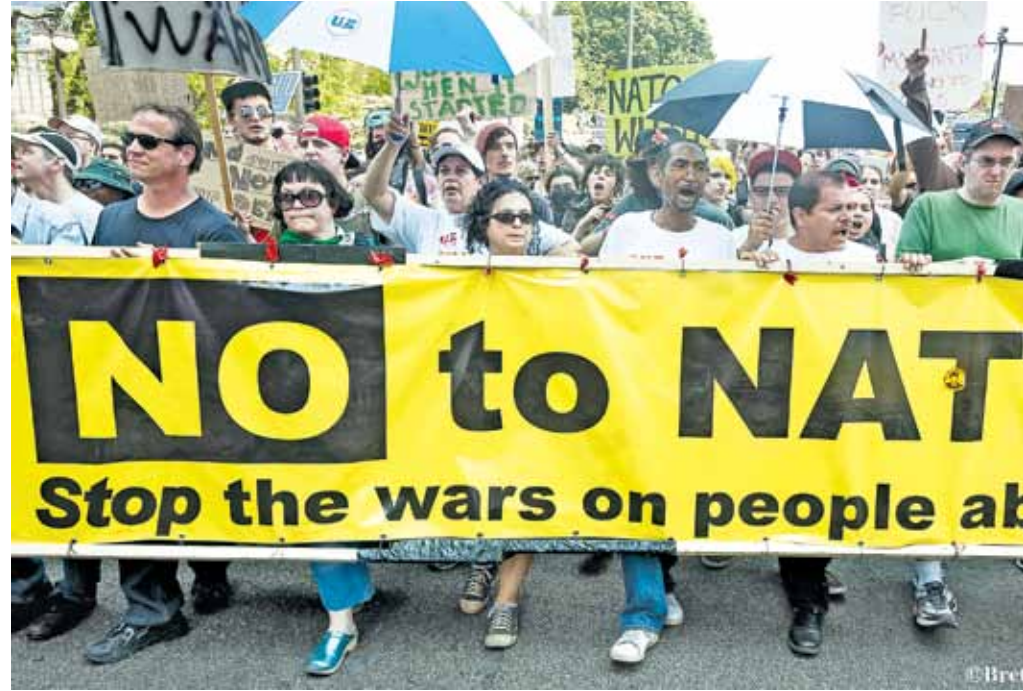
generated by a tax increase for those with yearly incomes above \$250,000.

College for California would increase the state income tax rate from 9.3 percent to 10 percent for those earning taxable income from \$250,000 to \$500,000 per year and from 9.3 percent to 11 percent for those earning more than \$500,000 in taxable income annually.

Duros and other supporters say the initiative would not only help college students, but it would also aid the economy.

“We need more college-educated workers,” she said. “They tend to gain more money and pay more in taxes, which helps the state. And if people from other states were to move to California to gain residency, they will also be paying for taxes and contributing to California.”

To get more information about the College for California proposal go to [www.collegeforcalifornia.org](http://www.collegeforcalifornia.org).



## WAR VETERANS SPEAK OUT!

By People's Tribune

At the head of the huge antiwar protest in Chicago on May 20, were about 45 Iraq and Afghanistan war veterans. They sent a powerful message to the NATO ministers when, one by one-by-one, standing on the stage in front of thousands of supporters, they threw their War on Terror medals toward McCormick Place, where the NATO ministers were meeting. What follows are quotes from a few of those veterans.

rate machine, for being made to do harm and cause destruction that was unnecessary, and for being made to defy the very things that make us human as we become part of a highly functioning killing machine..." (From Jonathon Anderson's facebook profile)

"I was in Iraq in 2003 and believe me, I don't want to suffer this again, and I don't want our children to suffer this again, so I'm giving this back..." (Veteran speaking from the stage)

"A Navy veteran showed up just to see what we were all about. During the ceremony, he couldn't hold back his tears. He realized that he could connect with us because he lost five other service men to suicide. He ended up becoming part of our organization, realizing that there is a movement, and that the GI's do have a voice." —Alejandro Viltor, Iraqi Veterans Against War (IVAW.org). (See full interview with Alejandro in the July edition of the *People's Tribune*)

"Starting a war on a premise of [weapons of mass destruction] (WMD) and then not immediately recanting and pulling out once no WMD were found is immoral."—Shawna Foster (IVAW.org blog)

"Our enemies are not 7,000 miles from home.. they sit in board rooms. They are CEOs. They are bankers, they are hedge fund managers. They do not live 7000 miles from home. Our enemies are right here and we look at them everyday. They are the millionaires and billionaires who control this planet and we've had enough of it. So they can take their medals back." (Veteran speaking from stage)

"When it came time to throw the medals, all I could feel was anger for the situation that we were in, for being lied to, for being made into tools of a destructive corpo-





## Reflections on NATO protests

By Brett Jelinek

I took to Chicago's streets during the NATO protests, not just as a photographer, but as someone who vehemently opposes the militarism that NATO stands for—the ways that powerful countries use their militaries (and hire private militaries) to inflict collective punishment upon so many nations and peoples around the world to assert their dominance; the murders, displacements, disfigurements, and malnourishment that are the direct result of NATO policies; the increased militarization of our own country.

So many of us put our bodies on the line in Chicago. We filled the streets as far as the eye could see. We are regular people from all walks of life who took a stand, just hundreds of yards away from officials who control the most vile and devastating weapons that can destroy all the life on earth many times over.

And we are not alone in opposing NATO! In addition to the thousands that took to the streets of Chicago, dozens of solidarity demonstrations took place around the world. Our protests have sparked a global

dialogue about NATO and its policy of never-ending war.

Another world is possible, and it is being born. The social motion building now is just the beginning of a mass movement that can and will replace NATO, replace the bankers, replace corporations, and replace our sell-out politicians. We will build our political independence, take over this country which has become so corrupted, and rebuild our society and economy into one that has all people's well being as its priority and that will promote ecological sustainability and preservation.

Another world is possible and is coming, but our future is not predetermined. Its beautiful possibilities are not inevitable. The corporations and politicians can and will destroy humanity and this planet. We must envision the world that we want and struggle every step along the way to make it real.

In the streets of Chicago, where I bore witness to so many people standing up to NATO, the world's most brutal killers, I have renewed faith in this movement to build the future we need for humanity to survive and prosper.

Isulong! (Forward with the struggle!)



PHOTOS (left to right, top to bottom):

**Veterans lead the march, throwing out their war medals near the NATO Summit/DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM.** **More than 10,000 protesters gathered from around the world to fill the streets of Chicago/BRETT JELINEK.** **A young child holds a hand-drawn antiwar sign/DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM.** **Demonstrators continued to protest peacefully as police dispersed the crowd/BRETT JELINEK.** **Anti-NATO protesters fill the streets/DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM.** **Chicago police armed with assault rifles at protest/DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM.** **Police protect the headquarters of major military contractor Boeing/DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM.** **Police beat and pin protester to the ground during arrest/CHRIS GEOVANIS, INDYMEDIA.** **Demonstrators march to Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel's home to protest the closing of six public mental health clinics/DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM.** **Police choke demonstrator/JAMES FASSINGER.**

# Chicago Housing Authority Evictions: ABUSIVE OF ONE STRIKE POLICY

By Joseph Peery



Rosie Bryant coming out of her son Lennel's school, Truman College Middle School. PHOTO/JOSEPH PEERY

CHICAGO—The Chicago Police Department, the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) and private management firms are all working together to aggressively evict public housing residents from their homes, even when not warranted. The main tool they use is the **One Strike Policy**.

An example of this is the attempt to evict Rosie Bryant and her family from Parkside mixed income. One day while at school, Rosie's son Lennel and five other students found a book bag. They took it into the washroom, looked inside and then left it there. The owner of the book bag got it back and found that nothing was missing. According to the principal and school security personnel, they could not tell which student picked up the book bag when they looked at the security tapes, only that he had on a red shirt. However, even though more than one of the students had on red shirts, Lennel and Lennel alone was arrested a few days later on July 11, 2011 for theft. Lennel is also the only student involved who lives in CHA public housing.

When Lennel went to court, the case was immediately dismissed. After all, no theft had taken place. That fact did not prevent Holsten Management and the CHA from giving a 10-day notice for termination of tenancy to the family based solely on that arrest. "My court day was 9-6-11," said Rosie. "I tried to explain to the judge that my son's

case was dropped, but he told me to stop talking and get a lawyer and then he let the CHA lady speak. The CHA lady thought this was funny. She looked at me and laughed. It was so unfair, to have to go through eviction and have my face washed with her laughing." Rosie is a Christian woman and attends church two or three times a week. "I also didn't like the comment in my summons," she said, in reference to the lawyer who submitted it. "It reads *'Wherefore plaintiff prays that this honorable court enter a judgement removing defendants from the property...'* How can he want to see any family homeless? How can he sleep at night?"

The answer to those questions is we live in a class society

where class war is being waged against us the working class by them the capitalist class. While many of us pray for jobs, homes and peace, they pray for the opposite. They pass laws like the **One strike** which are nothing more than their will written down on paper. They don't care that such policies are unconstitutional, they just make sure that the Supreme Court says it is. For now, the Bryant family is safe. The eviction case against them was dismissed on May 3, 2012. But the powers that be intend to get rid of public housing no matter how many of us it makes homeless. Do we sit on our hands and let it happen or do we take advantage of our large numbers and do something about it? That choice is up to us.

## Juneteenth A working class memorial

From the Editors

On June 19<sup>th</sup>, 1862, President Lincoln signed the first emancipation proclamation, which freed slaves held in the territories of the United States. In spite of threats of impeachment on the part of the "Copperheads" and "Peace Democrats," threats of assassination and the possibility of arrest by the pro-southern Supreme Court, Lincoln firmly set this nation on the path to freedom. This day, known as "Juneteenth" is still celebrated as the beginning of the end to slavery.

Karl Marx summed up the historical significance of June Teenth. "In the United States of North America, every independent workers' movement was paralyzed so long as slavery disfigured a part of the Republic." Juneteenth represents more than the freedom of the slave. It was a plateau in the struggle for the emancipation of labor. The central fight of the American labor movement moved from the struggle against slavery to the struggle against its legacy—segregation, Jim Crow and color discrimination.

What is the status of that fight today? Let us look at Chicago, as a concentrated expression of the American city.

Chicago has become two cities: One wealthy with good schools and safe communities for Asian and white citizens, and the other poor with horrible schools and dangerous neighborhoods for Black citizens.

- In Chicago, three out of 100 Black male youth earn a college degree by age 25.
- The average 17-year-old Black student has the reading and math scores of the average 14-year-old white student.
- At comparable educational levels, Black men earn 67% of what white men earn.
- White males with a high-school diploma generally earn just as much as Black males with college degrees.
- The median net worth of a Black family is \$6,100 verses \$67,000 for a white family.
- Blacks account for about 13% of drug users, constitute 35% of all arrests for drug possession, 55% of all convictions on those charges, and 74% of people sentenced to prison for possession. (These statistics were compiled by The Black Star Project.)

The Peoples Tribune celebrates Juneteenth, and is dedicated to finishing this struggle.

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## Community college students propose "Chop from the top"

By Ianthe Philips

*This interview was done on May Day at 5<sup>th</sup> and Broadway at the Occupy rally in downtown Los Angeles.*

*Ianthe Philips: Whitney, what are you doing out here today?*

**Whitney Blakeman:** I'm with Occupy El Camino College and we decided we had to be out here today.

*IP: What kind of issues do you feel it is necessary to bring out?*

**WB:** We fight for a lot of education issues. They're cutting our courses and cutting our classes at the same time our administration

is getting raises. So it's kind of a 1 to 99% ratio on a smaller scale in the education system. This is my main issue now.

*IP: Are there other issues or other action issues at El Camino College?*

**WB:** Well we're proposing chop from the top. I don't know if you've heard about this. We're trying to get the administration to cut 20% of their salaries and distribute that money toward courses.

*IP: So why did you feel it was important to join here today in the Occupy May Day Rally?*

**WB:** Well, because we're strik-

ing for May Day and we're in solidarity with the whole Occupy Movement. We felt it was imperative that we are down here.

*IP: What are you studying in school?*

**WB:** Social work and psychology, I want to be a marriage counselor.

*IP: So is there anything in particular you want to tell other students?*

**WB:** I think more people need to participate. More students at my school are needed, Everyone needs to care and hold their apathy because it affects us all. Not everyone seems to understand that.



# MICHIGAN: ATTACK ON OUR DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS CONTINUES

By Marian Kramer

On May 17, 2012, the Stand Up for Democracy Coalition, which includes unions, commu-

nity organizations, religious and faith-based organizations, went before a panel of three judges at the Michigan Court of Appeals. We are fighting for the certifica-

tion of some 226,000 signatures on petitions collected to repeal the State of Michigan's, Public Act 4—the Emergency Management, fascist, dictator's law.

When asked when we would get the court's answer, Judge Kutis T. Wilder told our Attorney Herbert Sanders, "You will hear from us."

Last month the Coalition made an appeal before the Michigan Board of Canvassers, but because the petitions were not certified there, we moved to the Court of Appeals. The Michigan Board of Canvassers had accepted a challenge by the Republicans and Tea Party on the sizes of the fonts in one sentence on the petition. Their argument was that the font for the sentence needed to be 14 points.

Attorney Sanders spoke against this and defined our democracy with his eloquent presentation before the panel of judges. He stated some of the following: "Why are we fighting over the size of the font, when we know this is not the problem? This is a matter of philosophy that was fought years ago. This is politics. We should not be here arguing fonts and the size of it. The more time we are here the less time we have to

get the repeal of the petition on the ballot. The Michigan Secretary of State has implemented the same rules for some 30 years concerning petitions. Why are we being confronted with this today?" We are what democracy looks like today.

As long as they delay things and keep these Financial Managers and Public Act 4 in place, they can at the same time continue to attack places like Highland Park and Benton Harbor, Michigan. They can continue to dissolve publically managed water or take over the water for the benefit of the private corporations. Today, people in Detroit cannot control their own water. The control over the water goes through a regional committee that represents the interests of the corporations.

We, the people, are a thorn in their side. We are forging a unity among organizations and communities that hasn't existed here in years. Each step they take in trying to stop the opposition to Public Act 4 brings more and more people out. The people are pledged to continue this fight.



Marian Kramer speaking at Detroit protest.

PHOTO/DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM

## REVEILLE: A wake up call for all Americans

By Mary Anne Morrow Barbour ©

I have experienced many things in my life. However, never, would I have imagined that our own government would have the audacity to attack Veterans' Benefits.

This article is about the egregious efforts of Congress to slash their vows to our Veterans; these valiantly won and well deserved benefits. There is a famous quote by the great Spanish philosopher, George Santayana (1863-1952), who said, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." Unfortunately, Santayana's quote is heartbreakingly true.

Beginning with the American Revolution, Veterans had to fight for their pay, benefits and, even more outrageously, their individual honor and integrity. Most of the Continental Army of the American Revolutionary War was demobilized without pay.

In 1783, war Veterans marched on Philadelphia, then the capital, surrounded the State House where the U.S. Congress was in session, and demanded their pay. Congress fled and several weeks later, the U.S. Army expelled the war veterans from the national capital.

Does any of this sound horrifically and tragically familiar?

Since time immemorial, U.S. Veterans of all races, cultures, faiths, etc., have fought not only for the welfare of their country. They've had to turn around and fight for their own compensation.

These are the promises that President Obama made to American Veterans in regard to Veterans' Affairs on March 19, 2009:

"For their service and sacrifice, warm words of thanks from a grateful nation are more than warranted, but they aren't nearly enough. We also owe our veterans the care they were promised and the benefits that they have earned. We have a sacred trust with those who wear the uniform of the United States of America. It's a commitment that begins at enlistment, and it must never end. But we know that for too long, we've fallen short of meeting that commitment. Too many wounded warriors go without the care that they need. Too many veterans don't receive the support that they've earned. Too many who once wore our nation's uniform now sleep in our nation's streets."

According to the Associated Press, President Obama reneged on his promises made on March 19, 2009. They report that "McCain supports President Obama's proposal to start charging older

military retirees a \$200 annual enrollment fee for TRICARE for Life." In addition, "McCain urged the Supercommittee to consider restricting working-age military retirees and their dependents from enrolling in TRICARE Prime."

In addition, the fate of military benefits remains unclear and our veterans' benefits are still subject to "Friendly Fire" by the U.S. Congress. If there was ever a time for Veterans to march on Washington, the time is now.

How dare anyone, especially our own government, do anything that is not in the best interests of America's Veterans? All Americans are called to duty in this fight. What will this say to our children and grandchildren, if we don't fight this?

These vile attacks by Congress against Veterans' must not come to pass! This dishonor to our Country's Veterans is disgraceful, especially to our remaining WWII Veterans.

Freedom is Truly Never Free. My fellow Veterans and Americans: Flag Day is June 14 and, as my granddaughter Ella says – "I have a great idea!" I urge every concerned citizen of the United States to fly their Flag at half-mast on Flag Day in protest of these atrocities.



Mary Anne Barbour (right) with Billie Denu, a WWII Navy Veteran who served at Walter Reed Hospital and refused to be discharged until her last patient was discharged.

PHOTO/DONATED



“House Keys not Handcuffs” March in San Francisco in 2010, organized by the Western Regional Advocacy Project (WRAP). PHOTO/SANDY PERRY

## Fed up with housing policy

By Western Regional Advocacy Project

SAN FRANCISCO, CA— More than 1.46 million households are currently living on less than \$2 a day per person in the wealthiest country in the world, more than double what it was in 1996. This shameful fact has had an especially harmful effect on children, whose numbers in these households ballooned from 1.4 million to 2.8 million. Two dollars a day is the figure the World Bank uses to measure global poverty.

For people scraping by on \$2 a day, public housing, Section 8, and other HUD rental assistance programs are lifelines, very thin lifelines. And yet both Congress and the White House are now proposing raising minimum rents to as high as \$75 a month. According to an analysis by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, the proposed hikes could expose nearly 500,000 households—which include 700,000 children and 40,000 elderly or disabled people—to extreme hardship and even homelessness. These proposals reveal a political establishment far removed from or indifferent to the daily

sufferings of those left behind by the new economic order.

Adding insult to injury, the Obama administration’s 2013 budget request for public housing, Housing Choice vouchers, and Section 8 project-based rental assistance is \$1.7 billion below the grossly underfunded spending bill of 2012. The automatic cuts to discretionary programs authorized by the Budget Control Act beginning in January 2013 will tighten the noose even more.

Poor people are not responsible for the country’s fiscal woes; it is Washington, D.C. and Wall Street. And yet it is poor people who are being targeted to suffer the most. Over the last several decades, Republicans and Democrats alike have dismantled affordable housing programs, deregulated housing finance, and passed legislation enabling privatization of public housing. These policies are part of a larger political agenda that ensures benefits flow to the top 10 percent while people at the bottom, especially people of color, immigrants, and the un-housed, are left with private charity, workfare programs, and the criminal justice system.

We can’t put our hope in politicians and organizations that attempt to smooth out the edges of terrible legislation while people lose their homes and programs are gutted. In communities across the country, groups are joining hands to build a movement for the human right to housing. We’ve all seen what can happen when a community defends a homeless encampment because no other shelter exists, keeps a family from losing their home through illegal foreclosure practices, and stops an SRO building from being turned into luxury condominiums, or a public housing development from being bulldozed. The organizers behind these victories are beginning to connect their local housing struggles to one another. They are also doing the difficult work of organizing across issues by linking housing to education, health care, dignified work, immigrant rights, and economic security. Together we will reclaim our communities from the greed and willful neglect emanating from the nation’s capitol and create a society based on social justice.

# D.C. GOVERNMENT PROPOSAL TO KIDNAP CHILDREN

## 1.6 MILLION HOMELESS AMERICAN CHILDREN



A 38% INCREASE SINCE 2007  
SOURCE: <http://bit.ly/homeless-kids>

By Eric Sheptock

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Well, it’s austerity budget season again and the D.C. Council is balancing the budget on the backs of the poor, which has been their pattern since the fall of 2008 when the economy went south. A recent report has stated that Washington, D.C. had 6,954 homeless people as of January 26th, 2012—up 21% from 2007. About 1,600 are children. But while homelessness increases, Mayor Vincent Gray is proposing a \$7 million budget cut to homeless services that would essentially cut them in half.

The city would go from having year-round shelter for homeless singles to only having shelter for the five coldest months of the year. Food programs and transitional housing would be cut in half. Families with small children are already turned away from shelters.

DC government is considering a new policy wherein, if a family applies for shelter and there is none available, they will be asked if they have anyone with whom they can stay. If they say “No”, then Child Protective Services will be called to remove their children.

Though it hasn’t been a written policy, D.C. has taken children from their homeless parents. I have a friend Denise who was taken from her mother in 1990 when her mother became homeless. She aged out of foster care at 21 years old in 2005 at which time she had a one-year old daughter who was taken from her. Unable to access shelter after giving birth to a son in February

2011, she slept in the Greyhound Station, her storage unit, and the stairwell of an unsecured apartment building. She and her son have since been housed.

One aspect of fascism (a form of government which is characterized by the unity between the government and corporations to protect corporate private property) is the destruction of the family unit, and the D.C. government is moving in that direction. During Denise’s fifteen years in foster care and six years in homelessness, she was never offered job training or life skills. This is a system which doesn’t care for its constituents and is not interested in educating them or giving them job training.

Once the word gets out about this new policy, many homeless parents will not seek assistance for fear of having their kids taken away, in effect, causing them to live in the streets of D.C. Many parents will go berserk as their kids are taken away.

The only silver lining in this dark cloud is that this makes it more likely that people will galvanize around the plight of homeless families and be open to moving to a higher level of political consciousness. We have this same budget fight year after year as the crisis continues to deepen. Advocates are shifting from demanding that the government maintain social programs that shelter and house the dispossessed to demanding that government force landlords to bring the rent down. The government is reluctant to knock heads with the free market, but it is time to place human rights first ahead of property rights.

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— The Editors



Protesters who had encircled a San Francisco Wells Fargo after their release from jail.

PHOTO/SARAH MENEFFEE

# The siege of Wells Fargo

By Mark Lipman

SAN FRANCISCO, CA—Nothing ever goes according to plan. Our group was not supposed to get arrested, but that all changed when we arrived on the 15<sup>th</sup> floor of San Francisco's Merchant Exchange Building, for Wells Fargo's annual shareholder meeting, on April 24, 2012.

Our group, a coalition of members from National People's Action, was simply supposed to maintain a supporting role for the larger body that was planning to disrupt and takeover the meeting.

That all changed when arriving early we were the only shareholders to be allowed across the police barricade.

About half an hour later, you could hear the drums approaching. "Boom... Boom... Boom... Wells Fargo, here we come... Boom... Boom... Wells Fargo, we're here," 2,000 protestors cheered in unison. Those up front, one hundred and 99 disgruntled shareholders, all in suits and ties.

Protestors circled the building. Within minutes demonstra-

tors attempted to chain themselves to the doors. After a brief showdown they were taken away by police.

About ten minutes later a group of four activists again evaded the barrier, and set up a human chain in front of the door. They began to lead a chant, "Wells Fargo Got Bailed Out, We Got Sold Out," with thousands of others in perfect harmony.

After clearing the protestors the riot police came in with helmets, batons and shotguns at the ready. They sealed off the entire area, while 186 Wells Fargo employees pulled from their cubicles, were marched past the police to stack the room.

Soon we could hear a chant from the street, "We are shareholders. Let us in!"

Finally, after a lobby takeover by 50 activists, they herded us through the registration process and sent us up to the 15<sup>th</sup> floor, now loaded with indentured servants in dark suits and a squad of riot police.

We scattered ourselves around the room.

Then, just as John Stumpf, the CEO began to speak, one protes-

tor stood up and said that "Wells Fargo needed to start paying its fair share of taxes," having paid no tax on \$18 billion the last three years. He was motioned out of order and removed by police.

After a minute, another stood up to decry Wells Fargo's investment in the private prison industry, which routinely violates people's civil and human rights. She was removed.

Then John Stumpf continued, "It has been a good year for Wells Fargo..."

"... But it hasn't been a good year for all those families you foreclosed on," another spoke out of turn.

Then the Mic Check started, where one after another echoing their grievances were quickly arrested and replaced by another brave voice.

All the while the drums and chants of America 15 floors below, encircling the building, penetrating the windows and walls, resounded throughout the room, into the ears of all in attendance, "Wells Fargo, you have profited off of the destruction of our lives. Now, it is time for you to pay your debt."

## JUSTICE FOR STEPHON WATTS IN CALUMET CITY

By Samuel Barnett

CALUMET CITY, IL—On the morning of February 1, 2012, two Calumet City police officers shot and killed 15-year-old Stephon Watts, in the basement of his parents' home. Stephon, who at nine was diagnosed with Ausberger's Syndrome, a severe form of autism, refused to go to school and became agitated. As he became difficult to control, his father, as instructed by social workers, councilors, and doctors, called the police for assistance.

According to published reports, officers William Coffey and Robert Hynek shot Stephon in his leg and torso when the teenager cut a third, unnamed officer, with a kitchen knife. Coffey and Hynek were placed on administrative leave until cleared of any wrongdoing by Cook County State's Attorney Anita Alvarez in mid-April.

Media reports quickly pointed out the ten previous encounters between Stephon and the Calumet City police over the past two years, including an incident where Stephon was subdued by a taser gun. Many reports noted



Stephon Watts.

PHOTO/DONATED

Stephon's large size at 5'10" and 220 pounds and his past violent outbursts. And many commentators have asked why not a more restrained use of physical force by police to subdue Stephon. But the critical question is missing from public discussion: Why was this family forced to resort to the police to tend to the needs of their sick child?

The answer is to be found in the chilling militarization of our society that protects the fortunes of the few while the public's access to necessary services like mental health is restricted. In Chicago, the closing and privatization of public mental health centers will result in more people who should be receiving profes-

sional medical care having more encounters with the police.

For the People of Calumet City and beyond, the murder of Stephon Watts was an awful reminder at the beginning of Black History Month of the dispensability of young Black life in America. The vigilante murder of Trayvon Martin served as a further reminder. At the core of both instances is a hatred and contempt for human life that denies our economic and moral responsibility for the well being of all people. The Watts family and their allies are keeping Stephon's memory honored while they continue to raise awareness about autism and demand justice. Activists have held vigils in front of the Calumet City police station and are calling for a village-wide boycott until officials address the murder. Stephon's mother successfully sued to have the names of officers who murdered her son made public and has recently filed a six-count lawsuit against the two officers and the village of Calumet City. Stephon's sister created and maintains a blog at <http://justiceforstephonwatts.tumblr.com/> with current updates.

### Time

Time  
time is not at rest  
time has its contradictions  
time pushes, clenches its fists  
is soaked in sweat  
time opens its arms  
its hands tense on the horizon shores  
it sweats, complains, screams!  
its pain is deeper  
time  
is extremely dilated  
time  
begins to break  
to bleed  
time  
lets out its last sign  
a new sun  
a new moon  
has begun  
its birth

Translated from Quecha (Kitchua) and Spanish by Marisa Estelrich

This poem is from the book, *Sing, Poetry from the Indigenous Americas*, edited by Allison Adelle Hedge Coke. Published by the University of Arizona Press, Tucson, Arizona 85721

# Chicago Artist who promotes “art for change” dies

By Lew Rosenbaum

CHICAGO, IL — Last month we reported on the award given Chris Drew in the fight for freedom of speech. In accepting the award on April 7, he noted, “I’m dying,” while making an appeal to continue his fight. One month later, on May 7, Chris died of lung cancer.

Chris died as he lived, fighting all the way for the dispossessed and marginalized among us, for the right of artists to speak their mind and to survive. He died struggling to make sure the art patch project continues, and there are a number of artists organizing to make sure the project does continue. He died urging that the legal battles he entered not be dropped.

Before there was a national dialogue on behalf of “the 99%,” Chris devoted his life to providing the artistic means for people to discover their creativity and to



participate in the transformation of society. A long time colleague of Carlos Cortez, Chris lived the aphorism that Carlos was fond of telling as we sat around his dining room table: “Never become an artist to make a living. Become an artist to make a life!” While advocating for artists’ individual rights to make a living by their art, Chris never strayed from using art for

change for all, and never left the section of society with and for whom he advocated.

Chris touched many people in his journey. We will remember his strength, his audacity, his willingness to sacrifice, his ingenuity and persistence. We will remember his creativity, his art. As long as we are here, he is still here. The next time you see another artist printing an art patch, when you see another art patch on a book bag or a jacket decorated with art patches, remember: Chris is still here.



Rev. Pinkney leads a protest against the Professional Golfers’ Association (PGA) and Whirlpool Corporation.

PHOTO/DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM

## BENTON HARBOR, MI: VICTORY FOR THE PEOPLE, PGA FAILURE

By Rev. Edward Pinkney

Occupy the PGA was a tremendous victory for the people of Benton Harbor, Michigan. Hundreds of people came to Benton Harbor to support the residents. The crowd was five blocks long. People came from Mexico, Denmark, Finland, Costa Rica, Korea, Japan, New York, California, Colorado, Boston, Chicago, Flint, Traverse City, Detroit, and elsewhere around Michigan and the country.

As concerned citizens of Benton Harbor, with tremendous support from our allies, we protested the exploitation of our community by Harbor Shores Development, Kitchen Aid, Whirlpool, Mercedes Benz and the PGA of America.

The Harbor Shores Development came about only through the undermining of democracy, political pressure on public land for private profit, the destruction of rare ecologies, the theft of water from the public, and the continuing destruction of the fabric of the predominately Black community of Benton Harbor, which is already politically disenfranchised and economically impoverished.

In April 2010 and again in 2012, the city commissioners of Benton Harbor passed a resolution withdrawing support from the Harbor Shores Development, Whirlpool, Kitchen Aid, and the PGA of America. The Senior PGA chose to ignore this voice of a democratically elected body and proceed with the tournament. We demand the cancellation of the Senior PGA tournament for 2014 in Benton Harbor, Michigan. We make the following additional demands on the 2014 Senior PGA:

- Stop Harbor Shores from stealing water

and pay your share of the water usage.

- Transfer 50% of the 2014 Senior PGA profits to the citizens of Benton Harbor as partial rightful compensation for the stolen land and water for the purpose of meeting budget deficits and building affordable homes for the residents.

The protestors marched 2.5 miles on Saturday through Benton Harbor to the golf course and Jean Klock Park. The “Death March” was slow and solemn with an intermittent drumbeat. Four pallbearers carried a casket with banners that said, “Benton Harbor Residents” on each side. It symbolized the death of democracy for the citizens. Many marchers held anti-Kitchen Aid, anti-Whirlpool, anti-PGA, anti-Public Act 4 Emergency Manager signs (the dictator law). An international occupier, Diego Contreras said, “In Mexico, Whirlpool is doing the same thing.”

On Friday night, Chief Lange and Sheriff Bailey attempted to remove our group and me as we walked on the sidewalk. Chief Lange stated, “You must have a ticket to walk on the public sidewalk.” It ended in a heated confrontation and may result in a lawsuit.

The PGA was forced to give large amounts of tickets away to get people to attend. Several St. Joseph and Benton Harbor merchants said business has been awful this week and are expecting to lose money because of the PGA. They said the Senior PGA Championship is not what they expected.

The occupation was a major victory for the people. We need to let the PGA know that if you refuse to meet our demands, we will return in 2014, stronger than ever. Just remember: there is never a change without a struggle. Occupy the 2014 PGA.



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