

# PEOPLE'S TRIBUNE

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Protest in Benton Harbor, MI., against Whirlpool's theft of the town's lakefront property and the attack on democracy.

PHOTO/DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM

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# THE ELECTIONS: RAISE THE DEMANDS OF THE PEOPLE

[Read story on page 3](#)



Protest in Chicago for healthcare, not war.

PHOTO/DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM

## NATIONALIZE HEALTH CARE **EDITORIAL**

The recent US Supreme Court decision on the health care “reform” law is helping to more sharply pose a simple question to the people of this country: are we all going to have health care or not? The answer of the ruling class is clear: some will, and some won’t. The demand of the people must be that everyone has quality health care—not insurance, not excuses, but health care.

The people should see the health care struggle in the context of a developing international political and economic crisis. Undermined by labor-replacing technology that is wiping out jobs, capitalism is dying and can no longer provide for billions of people across the world. A handful of super-rich accumulate trillions from speculation and outright fraud, while mass poverty grows. The global economy

continues to slide into depression, and every capitalist country is forced toward fascism to control the people to prevent threats to private property. The capitalists demand that the people accept a lower standard of living (“austerity”), while the people demand that their needs be met. Another world war looms on the horizon.

This is the context in which the capitalists are restructuring health care. Under capitalism, the health care system has always served the needs of the ruling class. When the corporations needed lots of workers, they wanted them healthy and productive, so the workers got health insurance through a mix of public and private sources. At the same time, the privately owned health care industry developed into a source of profits in its own right.

Today, with technology re-

placing labor, the employers need far fewer workers, and they don’t want to provide health care for labor they don’t need. They also want to guarantee that the medical industry is efficient, profitable and privately owned. Yet the people demand health care. The contradiction is glaring. The ruling class is trying to restructure health care in a way that serves their interests, yet without arousing the people.

The health care law and the court ruling reflect their strategy. The law keeps the medical industry private. It provides for insurance, not health care, and this only for some, not all. The rulers are moving toward a multi-tiered system where the rich will have the best care, and employed workers will get some level of care depending on income. Everyone else will get little or nothing. To

prevent an effective struggle, they pit us against each other—employed versus unemployed, documented versus undocumented, with the undocumented worker denied care altogether.

The people cannot allow the capitalists to continue to dominate this process, or growing millions of us will have no health care at all. The people must demand that health care be nationalized in the interests of the people. This means a health care system that is owned by the people and provides quality care to every human being within our borders, documented or not, employed or not, regardless of ability to pay. The underlying fight is for a whole new society where we can all lead healthy, happy lives. A national health system owned by the people is a step in that direction.

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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### 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)





**Bruce Wright at “Romneyville,” a Poor People’s Encampment modeled after the “Hooverilles,” of the 1930s, located in downtown Tampa, Florida. Hundreds of poor people and others will encamp there, march, etc., during the Republican National Convention.** PHOTO/LONDON JAMES

# ‘ROMNEYVILLE’ KICKS OFF REPUBLICAN NATIONAL CONVENTION PROTESTS IN TAMPA

**By Bruce Wright**

TAMPA, FL — During the week of August 25 to September 1, thousands of revolutionaries, activists, protesters and groups from around the country will converge in Tampa, Florida to protest, demonstrate, and participate in direct actions and civil disobedience against the Republican National Convention and against capitalism itself. Socialists, communists, independents, Green Party members, progressives, anarchists, libertarians, and others will speak out and in some cases put their freedom on the line.

The city, the police, the Secret Service, FBI, and the National Guard seem well prepared to incite and provoke the people with a heavily militarized Downtown Tampa. They will be there in force with over 4000 police and 1800 National Guard, along with surveillance equipment, armored vehicles, tanks, tear gas, LRAD sound devices, pepper spray, and rubber bullets. The city has created what they call an “Event Zone” and a “Green Zone” restricting free speech,

freedom of movement, and the right to assembly, requiring permits to march or protest. But, the people will be there and we will march and we will demonstrate.

The Poor People’s Economic Human Rights Campaign is preparing for an opening march, called “The March for Our Lives” including the poor, homeless, and unemployed. We have already created a Poor People’s Encampment called “Romneyville”, modeled after the “Hooverilles” of the 1930s. It is located right in the heart of downtown in the “Event Zone”. Hundreds of poor people and others will encamp there, march, protest, and support direct actions.

We intend to bring to the forefront of the nature of poverty, race, and class, to the world. Our demands are housing, food, health care, and living wage jobs for all. We call for an end to foreclosures, homelessness, and criminalization of the poor. Money for jobs and housing, not for war!

The Campaign is part of several organizations nationwide

committed to protesting and speaking out against both Republican and Democratic Parties and their support of corporatism and capitalism. Capitalism is corrupt and must be toppled, and society must be organized around a cooperative model where everyone is equal and where housing, food, shelter, healthcare, living wage jobs, and civil rights are human rights for everyone. This cooperative society can begin to be formed as everyone begins to organize and educate themselves on the issues at hand, particularly around who owns the wealth in this country. The Occupy Movement has taught us that we the people must begin to organize and develop a community of people united to make the change happen from the bottom up. We invite everyone to come and join us in this struggle against capitalism. For more info on the Poor Peoples Encampment and March go to [www.economichumanrights.org](http://www.economichumanrights.org) or contact Bruce Wright at [bgrwright@aol.com](mailto:bgrwright@aol.com).

## PHILADELPHIANS FIGHT FOR THEIR HOMES



**Rhonda Lancaster speaks out in front of her foreclosed home.** PHOTO/ARTISTS AGAINST FORECLOSURE

**By Sandy Perry**

PHILADELPHIA, PA — People from all parts of Philadelphia are defending their homes against predatory banks. Many spoke out at the Artists Against Foreclosures Rally on July 2, and at the Occupy National Gathering. Cheri Honkala from Poor Peoples Economic Human Rights Campaign pointed out that one million families across the country are expected to enter foreclosure in 2012. This is an election year. The time is right to demand that politicians stop the foreclosures and defend our homes, jobs, health care, and education. The system is broken and the people have the right and the duty, to alter or abolish it.

**MS. GWEN.** Equicredit moved to foreclose on my home after I was dropped from the Obama Home Affordable Mortgage Program due to a paperwork problem. Even though I had a \$50,000 ELHP grant in my hand, Equicredit refused to reinstate my loan. It demanded \$63,000 – all that for what began as a \$40,000 home improvement loan taken out by my father in 1999 before he passed away.

**GLENN DAVIS.** I am from the West Philadelphia area. I have been in foreclosure for over a year and a half now, fighting with the banks, having no support, getting no leeway with them. We need to end this epidemic of foreclosures, especially now that it is not just here but nationwide. It is definitely national and we need to just stop this right now.

**RHONDA LANCASTER.** My family’s home was foreclosed on when my mother died after she could not afford her health care and got a reverse mortgage. This is not an individual problem. That is what the banks want us to think. They try to make us feel isolated, to feel shame and stigma. This crisis is not our fault!

These bad mortgages and the housing bubble were created by the banks, not by us. I don’t want people to feel bad for me. There is nothing wrong with me. They should feel bad for our country. I am a musician, but when I spoke out, I found I had a second calling. I helped to start Artists Against Foreclosures. We speak out for everyone who is losing their home.

**MS. FRAN.** I became delinquent in my mortgage when I became ill and lost my job. On July 1, 2008 I was shocked to hear them put my house up for sale in spite of a court order against it. I yelled out to interrupt the sale, but Chase Bank produced a court order dated the same day, instructing the sheriff to sell my house. This is a violation of State Law 3129 that says they have to give a 30 day notice before the sale, and also a violation of the Foreclosure Diversion law.

This should not happen in this land we call the greatest country. The politicians say they can’t help me because it is a legal matter. But housing is a basic human need. If they are not going to help people with their basic needs, why are they in office?

# Book Review: About Face: Military Resisters Turn Against War

Edited by Buff Whitman-Bradley, Sarah Lazare, and Cynthia Whitman-Bradley

By Chuck Parker

"In the past several years, tens of thousands of service members have resisted illegal war and occupation in a number of different ways: by going AWOL, seeking conscientious objector status or a discharge, asserting the right to speak out against injustice within the military, and publically refusing to fight."

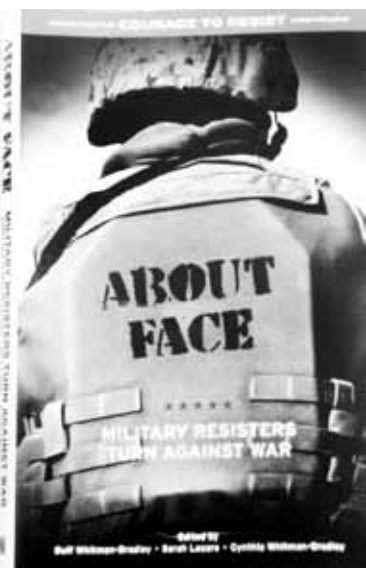
Most people are unaware that resistance inside the military is so widespread. Many people believe that this is not possible, since there is no draft. But as this book points out—it's just not that simple. Most recruits sign up when they are very young, and

they are lied to by recruiters and the media, which promote military life as a golden opportunity to better yourself and serve your country. Most of the former soldiers interviewed in this book say they joined up because they couldn't find jobs, and the military seemed like their best option at the time.

Once in the military, they awakened to the harsh realities. They must endure the indoctrination during basic training which tries to strip away their consciences, and turn them into soldiers who are comfortable, or even enthusiastic about the idea of killing. Soon they meet returning veterans who tell them stories of killing innocent people, living in constant fear, and losing comrades. In addition to resisters who decide they want out of the military before they ever see combat, there are many who decided to refuse further service after serving one or more tours in Iraq. Their understanding of

the cruelty and injustice of these wars has developed from their first hand experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Some of these war resisters have fled to Canada, others were arrested and served time in military prisons. Public support for these war resisters is crucial, as they often feel as if they are all alone against the military machine.



The most high profile case is that of Bradley Manning who is on trial for releasing documents to WikiLeaks, including a video of a massacre of 12 civilians in Iraq called, Collateral Murder. His case has generated international support, and may have speeded the

withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq. He is facing a possible life sentence. For daily updates from the Bradley Manning Support Network visit [www.bradleymanning.org](http://www.bradleymanning.org).

By resisting, these men and women are merely upholding their oath not to carry out illegal orders, as laid out in the Constitution. Their defense is a defense of democracy. With corporate America committed to a policy of increased military spending, and continuous warfare around the world, they are determined to silence any resistance. The stories of these courageous soldiers are vital in the struggle to expose the pro-war militaristic culture that is being force fed to our youth, as the enemy of freedom that it is.

For more information, or to order this book, please contact: *Courage to Resist*, 484 Lake Park Ave. #41, Oakland, Ca. 94610 [www.couragetoresist.org](http://www.couragetoresist.org) (510)488-3559



Food not Bombs at the anti-Nato protests in Chicago.

PHOTO/DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM

## Food Not Bombs AN INTERVIEW WITH AN AMERICAN VISIONARY

By Chuck Parker

*Editor's Note:* What follows is an interview with Keith McHenry, a founder of Food Not Bombs.

*People's Tribune: How did Food Not Bombs get started?*

**Keith McHenry:** Back in 1980, when I started to collect the discarded produce from my job at Bread and Circus in Cambridge, MA., I looked for people that might enjoy free food. I found a cluster of dilapidated public housing buildings a few blocks east of the grocery. Groups of skinny children and their mothers huddled in the cold on the steps of these broken buildings in the shadow of a group of modern glass towers where scientists were busy designing guidance systems for intercontinental nuclear missiles. This sure made it clear that what people really needed was food not bombs.

*PT: How do you get your message out?*

**Keith:** By sharing free food without restrictions, we illustrate the fact that there is an abundance of the things we need and that scarcity is a fiction that benefits a small minority. By always sharing our literature with the free meals under our banner of Food Not Bombs, we seek to

educate the public with a message about the national priorities of the U.S., pointing out that half the Federal budget is spent on the military while millions go hungry every day.

*PT: What about the new laws against sharing food in public?*

**Keith:** Yes, it's gotten so much worse than it was in the 90's. For example, why do you think cities like Philadelphia and Houston have passed laws against sharing food outdoors? These are cities with huge homeless populations and terrible poverty. They are trying to make you go inside so no one will see you. We have really active Food Not Bombs chapters in these cities, and we expect to be arrested, but we are getting prepared. We can't change things if we don't risk arrest.

*PT: How are you preparing?*

**Keith:** You build lots of super, super support by being well organized and staying committed to non-violence. With more outreach which illustrates that the government and the corporations don't have your interests at heart, it will make the movement bigger every time they attack you.

*PT: What will be going on at your World Gathering outside the Republican Convention in*

*Tampa August 20-26?*

**Keith:** Besides feeding the protesters, we will have entertainment such as puppet shows and street theater and music. We will be evaluating problems that have come up in the Occupations, and how to regroup. One of our most important workshops will be on improving intergroup communication.

*PT: How can people find out about the gathering and what can they look forward to?*

**Keith:** The occupations of 2011 could be the initial step in the journey towards a post capitalist society based on compassion and mutual aid. Instead of acting as a charity, we are feeding the movement to end the policies that cause poverty and hunger. The next thirty years could be crucial to building a free and sustainable future. Help us make the changes we need. For more information go to [foodnotbombs.net/gatherings](http://foodnotbombs.net/gatherings).

Please go to [www.peoples-tribune.org](http://www.peoples-tribune.org) to read the complete interview.

Read Keith McHenry's new book: *Hungry for Peace: How you Can Help End Poverty and War with Food Not Bombs*. [www.foodnotbombs.net](http://www.foodnotbombs.net)

### WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

The People's Tribune welcomes your comments, especially on our covers and editorials. Your feedback helps us stay on course as a paper that points the way forward to a new cooperative society.

Email [info@peoplestribune.org](mailto:info@peoplestribune.org) or call 800-691-6888 toll free.

— The Editors

# HEALTH CARE 'REFORM' – One step forward and two steps back

By Rita Valenti

ATLANTA, GA — The Supreme Court ruled that the Affordable Care Act (ACA) was Constitutional, sort of. Many think the ACA will provide universal health care. It doesn't. It does provide young people up to the age of 26, coverage on their parents insurance (if they have health insurance) and prevents insurers from capping or denying coverage to those with pre-existing conditions. The trade off for these important yet basic insurance reforms was the mandate that nearly everyone buy private health insurance, and the explicit exclusion of the undocumented from any purchase of insurance or protective provisions. Further, the Supreme Court defanged the Affordable Care Act's Medicaid expansion by disallowing the federal government from withdrawing all Medicaid funds from States which refused to expand their programs to everyone with incomes up to 133% of poverty level. 'Coercion', said Chief Justice Roberts.

## FOX IN THE HEN HOUSE

Insurance companies' profits, 'admin' and marketing account for around 20 % of every dollar

they spend on health delivery. The ACA (Affordable Care Act) won't change that. Marketing of high deductible health 'savings' accounts will be gussied up for the insurance exchanges. Employers will continue to drop employment-based health insurance, since penalties for uninsured workers are often less than insurance costs. The Supreme Court of the United States' (SCOTUS) support for the mandate reaffirmed corporate control of congress.

## STATES RIGHTS' UGLY HEAD

Medicaid covers specific categories of low-income folk. It's publicly funded by state and federal dollars. Medicaid eligibility varies wildly from state to state with the south uniformly having the lowest rate of Medicaid enrollment, yet the highest rates of uninsured. The expansion would cover anyone with an income of \$14,400 for an individual and \$29,300 for a family of four, about 16 million people nationwide. In Georgia alone it would insure over 650,000. Roberts' ruling allows for states to turn down the initial 100% federal funding for the Medicaid expansion, which gradually titrates to a still impressive 90%.

Governor Jindal of Louisiana



Healthcare protest in Detroit, MI.

PHOTO/DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM

has fired the opening salvo. "The president ...needs to understand what makes this country great in part is that we're not dependent on government programs." Texas and Florida are also declaring that they will not expand Medicaid. Nearly every southern state was part of the suit against the Medicaid expansion.

## PUBLICLY FUNDED- PUBLICLY RUN

Public funds provide most health coverage. But they are funneled into private for-profit systems of hospitals, Medicaid managed care, private insurers, Pharma, and now the new technology driven Accountable Care Organizations (HMOs on steroids). The delivery system of health care is being restructured, as the laws and courts reinforce capitalist relations not health care for all.

The last 4 years make clear that neither political party can solve the crisis. The Democrats wrote and passed the law and the Republican court reinforced and made it worse. Our next steps are fighting for the Medicaid expansion, continuing to fight for Medicare for All and igniting a spark for a National Health Service, a planned & publicly owned delivery system in our interests not the corporations.

# DENTAL CARE IS A RIGHT FOR ALL



A National Health Service, a planned and publicly owned delivery system in our interests not the corporations, is needed.

PHOTO/DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM

By Dr. David Apsey

DETROIT, MI — *PBS Frontline* has shot a missile across our bow over dental care in America, documenting access to care issues for children who qualify for Medicaid due to low income. These kids overwhelm the number of dentists available to care for them. The president of the Florida Dental As-

sociation stated he could not afford to treat children with Medicaid due to being paid 20% of his fees.

Dental Associations across the country have been caught flat-footed; the Michigan Dental Association donated care initiative garnered \$1 million in donated dental services in 2011-12. The Michigan Medicaid Dental program spends \$60 Million,

with only 5-10% of dentists participating due to payments of below 20% of fees. Nobody can tolerate this situation much longer.

PBS went on to show how for-profit, investor owned groups running "Kool-Smiles" now provide care for children without a dentist. Employees get bonuses for \$15,000 "production" a day to guarantee profits. Otherwise

investors close the clinics.

Kool-Smiles dentists have attracted attention of Medicaid officials who have even charged them with "malpractice dentistry" for excessive treatment in Connecticut in their drive for maximum profit.

PBS explored dental care for adults who do not have dental insurance or Medicaid. Employees of "Aspen Dental," an investor owned dental clinic chain, earn bonuses for delivering profit and lose their jobs if they don't "close the sale" on the first visit. Aspen Dental signs patients up with predatory lenders to get vital dental care. Many cannot pay the loans back in time and suffer interest rates of 30%. Dental clinics get their money up front before care is delivered.

State Dental Boards, with a mandate to protect the public health are claiming they have no right to sanction capitalist corporations, only individual dentists. This represents the end of an era when protection of public health decisions affecting people's lives were prohibited. Unless corporations are regulated, human lives

will be at risk of uncontrolled dental infections without a safety net.

Under HR 676, The Expanded and Improved Medicare for All Act, all these problems can be solved with a political solution. This National Health Care Act will provide health care to all, including dental for individuals in the United States. Investor owned clinics will be outlawed. Their unethical methods have long been known in the professions.

Health insurance companies will cease to exist along with all their policies of keeping premium dollars for themselves at the expense of medical care for people. All will have one standard of care. Medicaid funds and a new payroll tax will fund the Medicare Trust Fund to pay for all health care for residents. Health premiums, co-pays, deductibles and most out of pocket expenses will be abolished. By eliminating unnecessary insurance system administrative costs, we can cover all uninsured individuals. The time has come for all of us to stand up to the government and demand they use our taxation power to serve all of our health care needs, instead of delivering profits into corporate coffers.

# 'A LETTER FROM THE FLINT CITY JAIL'

*Editor's Note: In Flint, Michigan, the arrest of a local Minister, who was protesting water rate hikes and lack of investment in the city's poorest areas, brought new energy to confronting the Emergency (Dictator) Manager, Mike Brown and Public Act 4. The following are excerpts from a statement Rev. Reginald Flynn (pictured below) issued at a rally on the Flint City Hall lawn on May 14:*

**By Reverend Dr. Reginald Flynn**  
Pastor, Foss Avenue Baptist Church



Dear Mr. Brown,  
While confined to the Flint City Jail May 3, 2012, for what you describe as "erratic and frightening behavior" and "making accusations against you [the Emergency Manager] and your staff," I thought about the content and context of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s famous essay, *A Letter from the Birmingham Jail*. He argued that not only was civil disobedience justified in the face of unjust laws, but that one has "a moral responsibility to disobey unjust laws."

Mr. Brown, in lieu of the exaggerated and embellished report you made regarding my actions, my alleged "verbal tirade" was nothing more than a direct, non violent, civil disobedience protest against the implementation and execution of Michigan's Emergency Manager Law as practiced in Flint, Michigan... your "tirade" of executive decisions has become the veritable embodiment of "erratic and frightening behavior." To expound:

- an additional 25% water rate increase.
- increase city services fees and impose regressive taxes on those least able to pay.
- hire executive staff that make decisions regarding tax bills and service fees... who themselves are not Flint residents and share none of the tax burdens.
- authorizing over \$30,000 to the Genesee Regional Chamber of Commerce is unethical and a blatant conflict of interest.
- hire an additional Police Chief, reopen the city jail, and solicit more State Police [rather than] address or reduce the root causes of crime in our city



**Protest in Flint, MI against the Emergency (Dictator) Manager, Mike Brown, and Michigan's "dictatorship" law, Public Act 4.**

PHOTO/DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM

[such as] investing resources in African American boys.

Mr. Brown, I am not afraid to sound the alarm to confront the power structure when they injure and inflict injustices upon the poor in our community. The implementation of Public Act 4 has

created a climate of political suppression, economic exploitation and racial domination...

Michigan and America have turned back the hands of time. In 2012, citizens and especially majority populated African American cities across our state have

had their voting rights subverted by the state. In 2012, the application of the Emergency Manager Law has removed our basic constitutional protections. In 2012, the expansive use of state power and the rise of the prison industrial complex have spurred the mass incarceration of African American and Hispanic men and boys...

On May 3, 2012, I was arrested at Flint City Hall. I engaged in non-violent civil disobedience. I was not warned to cease speaking. I was not informed I was under arrest. I was not read my Miranda rights. I did resist arrest. I was slammed to the cement floor! Handcuffs were so tight my hands became numb and swollen. My arms were so restricted that my shoulders began to sting with excruciating pain. One officer placed his knee and full weight on the small of my back. Another officer placed his hands around my neck to keep my face in the cement...

As I was sitting in the Flint City Jail, I realized my actions would not have been necessary if we lived in a truly equitable and democratic society... much more remains to be done, especially in our state and city.

## Detroit Chief Counsel challenges the State of Michigan

**By Maureen D. Taylor**  
Chair, Michigan Welfare Rights Organization

DETROIT, MI — Detroit Chief Counsel Krystal Crittendon has made it clear to the State of Michigan she won't back down in her opposition to the Financial Stability Agreement imposed by the State to resolve Detroit's troubled finances. Her position is principled and a maneuver to survive her political position. Gov. Rick Snyder threatened city residents, stating that the "consent agreement is critical to addressing the city's fiscal crisis and restoring public services residents need and deserve." His office has threatened to withhold State funds should Atty. Crittendon continue pursuing these issues in court.

Ms. Crittendon's lawsuit on behalf of the City of Detroit maintains that the new City Charter does not allow the city to enter into contracts with an entity that owes the City money. The suit alleges the state owes the city \$224 million in revenue sharing funds and \$5 million for an unpaid water bill. This \$229 million would be critical during City bond negotiations. Crittendon believes the State owes Detroit residents an explanation in court, while vital life support services are being

withdrawn from residents.

City Council member Andre Spivey, who voted against the Agreement, stated that he might vote against Crittendon alleging

**The capitalist system cannot provide for us. This is proven in its long term failure to create living wage jobs, regardless of who is in power. This is not a Democratic or Republican issue and cannot be resolved under this economic system.**

, "I'm concerned we're getting too caught up in minutiae and we ought to be moving forward to get the city financially solvent." Since when are life and death matters for families considered minutiae?

We have had enough of this situation, where those in power play with our survival and destroy our future. This Agreement and the emergency manager pro-

cess are bad for Detroit. Most cities across our great nation are in similar circumstances as Detroit. The big cities have the deepest crises, as well as the most favorable opportunities for corporations who want to dominate them cheaply. If they win here, they can win elsewhere.

The only way to resolve city financial crisis in our current system is to increase revenue, by increasing taxes, but who should pay extra? The corporations and the wealthy should!

Neoliberal society models applied by Rick Snyder, the Michigan Legislature and several Detroit City officials are attempting to dictate policies to lower taxes on wealthy businesses and families, raising taxes on the poor like sales taxes, reducing regulation on large corporations to allow oil spills and other crimes to go unpunished and privatization of public resources such as the Detroit Water Department with its vital mission to provide clean, cheap water to residents of the region.

The capitalist system cannot provide for us. This is proven in its long term failure to create living wage jobs, regardless of who is in power. This is not a Democratic or Republican issue and cannot be resolved under this eco-



**Occupy Wall Street protest, Detroit.**

PHOTO/DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM

nomical system. Now is the time to demand that popular needs be met at the expense of the current political structure, which no longer serves our needs. Instead of

fighting defensively, it is time for the people to demand nationalization of vital public resources and that they be used to support the public interests.

# WHAT'S EATING PUBLIC EDUCATION?

By Robert DeWitz

Our public education is under attack! K-12, Adult Ed, Community Colleges, Cal States, and UCs are undergoing systematic destruction to make way for privatization. The failings of public schools can largely be attributed to external pressures, largely from the corporate world, at the national, state, and local levels. The purpose of this article is to give an overview of the attack on Public ED and our common struggle to save it. For the sake of simplicity I will focus on California.

It's hard to believe that less than 50 years ago, education in California was amongst the best in the world, not to mention the fact that it was practically free. We had the funding then, but what changed? In 1978, a 1% cap was placed on property taxes which mainly benefited the wealthiest of Californians at the expense of Public ED. The war on drugs, accompanied by the expansion of law enforcement and the justice system was taking shape around this time. Colleges were militarized by Campus Police and activist activities repressed. Public schools began to be occupied by law enforcement and juveniles began



Education protest downtown Los Angeles. March coincided with the Occupy May 1 event.

PHOTO/DONATED

to be incarcerated at alarming rates. Many youth in lower income neighborhoods began to be pushed out of Public ED and into the streets or jails due to the lack of funding and educational opportunities.

It can be argued that these changes were in response to the social movements of the 60s and 70s. Who benefits from privatizing public education and what are those benefits? Right now, banks are making record profits off students who've been forced into unprecedented debt in response to skyrocketing tuition costs. In 2012, student loan debt

increased to \$1 Trillion, surpassing even credit card debt. Decreasing accessibility has forced many students into private colleges. Public ED programs that supply Corporate America with jobs receive greater funding while social sciences and other programs are severely cut or eliminated. Corporate America's involvement in public education gives them greater control over the future workforce. How do they exert influence? Most often through lobbying and organizations like the American Legislative Executive Council (ALEC).

National reformation efforts such as the No Child Left Behind have been detrimental to Public ED resulting in pushing more students out of education, less funding for schools, and an increased focus on administration. Community colleges (CC) are now facing similar reformation efforts. The current economic crisis has been used to propel reformation and privatization efforts. Santa Monica College has been pushing forward a two-tiered system in which high demand courses would be offered at complete cost to students. This caught national attention

when student protest efforts resulted in the pepper spraying of students outside of a Board of Trustees meeting last April. The successful push back at Santa Monica College is largely attributable to the Southern California Education Organizing Coalition. SCEOC is a coalition of student activists from UCs, Cal States, CCs, and K-12. SCEOC is the rising student movement in So-Cal, or at the very least the Los Angeles area. SCEOC, amongst other student organizations, is developing a statewide student union to combat austerity measures and privatization.

## REVOLUTION IN SOCIETY CANNOT HAPPEN WITHOUT REVOLUTION IN EDUCATION, PART I

### *The hidden history of industrial education in America*

By Severiano Manalo

Our economy and society are undergoing revolutionary changes, but one sector of our society seems resistant to these changes—our educational system, particularly our schools, both public and private.

#### THE UNDERGROUND HISTORY OF OUR SCHOOLS

John Taylor Gatto was a New York school teacher for thirty years. He resigned on the op-ed page of the *Wall Street Journal* ending his resignation letter with this quote: "If you hear of a job where I don't have to hurt kids to make a living, let me know." Mr. Gatto went on to write a number of books critical of our educational system, the most well-known being *Dumbing Us Down: The Hidden Curriculum of Compulsory Schooling*. What did Mr. Gatto learn that was so disturbing as to make him quit

his job?

The origins of our schools go back to a man called Horace Mann. Mann wrote a report to the Boston School Committee in 1843 in which he praised the Prussian school system (upon which our American one is based) saying that it ranked number one in the world. The Prussian system was built to fill the needs of the Prussian armed forces and to instill absolute obedience to the king. Johann Gottlieb Fichte, a German philosopher in favor of the Prussian model had this to say: "If you want to influence [the student] at all, you must do more than merely talk to him; you must fashion him, and fashion him in such a way that he simply cannot will otherwise than what you wish him to will."

In 1909, President Woodrow Wilson addressed the New York City High School Teachers Association. He said, "We want one

class to have a liberal education. We want another class, a very much larger class of necessity, to forgo the privilege of a liberal education and fit themselves to perform specific difficult manual



The community rallies at last Chicago Board of Education meeting of the school year to support teachers and the Chicago Teachers Union and to demand an elected representative school board.

PHOTO/SARAH JANE RHEE

tasks." With this, Wilson states the road industrial schools would take. Our schools would not be places of critical thinking and certainly not places of creativity. Industrial school's main function

would be to instill the necessary compliance required for work in the factory conditions of early 20<sup>th</sup> century America.

Our problem is that we are living in a world very different from that of early 20<sup>th</sup> century America. The new class of dispossessed is facing the gutting of public education. Why? It's simple. The capitalist class no longer needs legions of worker bees tending "dumb" machines. What our children deserve is nothing less than a revolution in education. There are schools known as "democratic" or "free" schools. In Part II, I will explore the history of "democratic/free" schools and their present form as a possible alternative to our industrial model of education.

*We urge our readers to go to our on-line edition of the August People's Tribune at [www.peoplestribune.org](http://www.peoplestribune.org) to read Part II of this article.*



# PUBLIC EDUCATION: A child is more than a test score

By Gloria Slaughter

ATLANTA, GA — “Education is the key to the future!” This is what we hear from the political candidates. Then why are there so many budget cuts to our public school systems? What real opportunities are there to lift out of poverty, the 1,065,794 homeless students enrolled in grades K-12 in the U.S. public schools?

In the metro area of Atlanta there will be 1800 public school employees laid off due to budget cuts in the counties that make up the metro area. The DeKalb County school system had to cut \$83 million from its budget, which includes laying off media specialists, two hundred paraprofessionals, 75 administrative positions, and a 40% cut at Fernbank Science Center which houses a planetarium.

Due to the cuts, there will be six furlough days for teachers and class sizes will increase. A tax increase of one millage was voted on and approved. These measures will raise another \$14.8 million. Like other systems in the metro area, DeKalb saw a decline in tax revenue as property values, a primary component of the tax base continued their slide. Georgia Perimeter College,

which has seven campuses laid off 282 personnel – nearly 9% of its employees. Many of the cuts will affect the students this Fall when they return to school. Tenure and tenure-track faculty were exempt from layoffs, but still the cuts will affect tutoring, advising and recruiting. Tutoring is crucial for many of the 27,000 students, especially those who are older and have not been in school for a while.

With all these cuts not only in Georgia, but around the country, “value added mode” has been introduced to the new teacher evaluation systems. This is occurring at the same time electronics is displacing many workers across the country and the value of their work is declining. What profit does a teacher make? Perhaps, this is the reason that our public school system is not guaranteeing a quality education for all. No Child Left Behind and the Race to the Top are designed for schools to fail. This is a means to privatize our educational system. Charter schools can be privatized and make a profit.

The people of the state of Georgia will vote in November whether or not to have a state agency established that would be able to set up charter schools



Protest against public education cuts in Chicago. Public schools must have government funding to provide every child with a quality education. PHOTO/BRETT JELINEK

in each district, without the authority of the local Board of Education. Due to the media constantly berating the schools and the reality of drastic funding cuts, this initiative may very well pass. Everyone wants a great, quality education for his or her children. However, statis-

tics show that charter schools are not the answer.

The public school systems should not have to compete with each other such as Race to the Top requires. The Government bailed out the financial sector and the corporations during the recession. The public schools,

in order to be successful, must have the funding to give every child a quality education. The Government needs to bail out the public schools. Let us cut the Educational Testing Service budget and eliminate so many high stakes tests. “A Child is more than a Test Score.”

# TRAINING KILLERS IN THE CLASSROOM

By June Terpstra and Husayn Al-Kurdi

“If they would rather die, said Scrooge, they had better do it, and decrease the surplus population.”

CHICAGO, IL — The militarization of public schools is a subject concerning the life and death of the young people of this country and those millions across the globe they will be trained to kill, torture, and invade. The increasing need for young people to voluntarily join the US military to fight the wars for the enforcement of global capitalism as it expands its markets poses a challenge for radical educators to provide alternative scenarios. The educational system in the USA has from its inception been a site of struggle between the owning and possessing classes and those who serve them and abide by their bidding.

As Kenneth Saltman explains in *Education as Enforcement*:

*Military generals running schools, students in uniforms, metal detectors, police presence, high-tech ID card dog tags, real time Internet-based surveillance cameras, mobile hidden surveil-*



Chicago is the only public school system in the country with Air Force, Army, Navy, and Marine Corps high school academies. PHOTO/JULIE DERMANSKY

*lance cameras, security consultants, chainlink fences, surprise searches”—are all part of the investment the military industrial complex is embedding in U.S. public schools as they increasingly resemble the military and prisons. Militarism and the promotion of violence as virtue pervade foreign and domestic policy, popular culture, educational dis-*

*course, and language...This phenomenon needs to be understood as part of the militarization of civil society exemplified by the rise of militarized policing, increased police powers for search and seizure, anti-public gathering laws, “zero tolerance” policies, and the transformation of welfare into punishing workfare programs.*

The public school military

agenda offers the first steps to train young people to overcome any fear or prejudice against killing that the culture has not already dispelled via video games and films where the military is portrayed in ads as an adventure and a way to gain skills and a future education (providing one does not get killed). Chicago is one of the most militarized zones in need of

de-militarization. There are five military academies affiliated with the Army, Navy, or Marines in the Windy City. Cadets can be seen marching on an academy’s drill team, learning the proper way to fire a weapon and to shoot to kill. Military commandants from the U.S. armed services teach alongside math and music teachers in each academy. Three of these military academies were created in part with Department of Defense appropriations, funds secured by Illinois lawmakers. Chicago Public Schools is the only public school system in the country with Air Force, Army, Navy, and Marine Corps high school academies.

A militarized society from which to draw human cannon fodder is crucial to imperialist global control. The military is one of the most important sites of struggle for educators and researchers. Beyond this, an aggressive campaign that counters the cultural, social and economic program of the military is needed. We must provide an educational curriculum which facilitates the development of critical awareness of the student’s social, political and cultural conditions and conditionings.

# CABRINI EVICTIONS

By Joseph Peery

CHICAGO, IL — “A revolution of profoundest import is taking place in America. Every year our economy produces more and more goods and services with fewer and fewer men. Hard, unskilled work—the kind nobody else wanted, that made us so welcome in America, the kind of work that we “niggers” have always done—is fast disappearing. Even in the South—in Mississippi for example—95 per cent and more of the cotton is picked by machine. And in the North as I write this, more than 30 per cent of Black teenage youth is unemployed... What will a racist society do to a subject population for which it no longer has any use?” These are the words of actor Ossie Davis in his 1970 Preface to the book, *We Charge Genocide*.

Gas operated cotton picking machines introduced in the South as early as 1947 replaced labor, while northern cities like Chicago were building large scale factories in need of thousands of workers. As a result, the Black population in the Cabrini area rose from 20% in 1940 to 79% by 1950. When industry grew here, so did public housing. And industry benefited from this relationship because no matter how low they paid public housing residents, only 30% of it was charged for rent. Public housing tenants could be paid less and still survive, while employers pocketed the difference in millions of dollars of higher profits. No one in those days suggested, “public housing doesn’t work.”

By the 1970’s the introduction of electronics in production contributed to mass layoffs and plant closings. For example the area

just south of Cabrini gained the nickname ‘Ghost Town’ because of the blocks and blocks of empty buildings that once were occupied by businesses. It’s no accident that this was followed by the Reagan Administration’s cutting of funding to public housing by 78% in 1981 from \$32 billion a year to \$7 billion. Apartments emptied out and homelessness increased. When the homeless got arrested for taking over the vacant units they asked, “Why should we freeze to death when there’s all this warm housing?” The news media ran only negative stories about Cabrini Green. Laws were passed applying only to people in public housing that looked like old Jim Crow Laws out of the pre-Civil Rights era. Oppressive leases were introduced with dozens of ways to throw you on the street, while most people never got to see those parts of the lease. Finally, more public housing money was diverted to private corporations.

What else can they do to those of us who they no longer have any use for? The condo associations that have sprung up in the gentrified parts of what was Cabrini Green have adopted rules that apply to CHA families, without sharing with us what those rules are. In condo board meetings they openly declare that they want all of us out. They lobby local politicians and the mayor to demolish the last part of Cabrini that is left and remove poor families still there.

The question now is, with robotics and computers replacing human labor to the extent that even college graduates cannot find work, what’s to stop this system from doing to you what they’re doing to us?

# STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF THE GREEN PARTY

From the Editors

The *People’s Tribune* congratulates the Green Party on the occasion of their successful Annual National Meeting and Presidential Nominating Convention. The Convention, which nominated Jill Stein and Cheri Honkala for President and Vice President, presented the American people a clear, simple and much needed program to confront the growing poverty and the looming threat of war and fascism.

Our country, indeed, the

world, is slipping into crisis. The rapid deterioration of the ecology - the resultant global warming, accompanied by drought, floods, tornadoes, hurricanes and wildfires, threatens civilization.

The irreversible economic revolution is driving wage labor off the world market. The consequent decline in wages, the growth of unemployment and world poverty heralds the coming social revolution.

To meet this crisis, the corporations are tightening their control of all aspects of our social

and political life. The ugly features of police state fascism are clear for all to see. The drive by the United States to control the world’s energy resources threatens the existence of developing nations and is creating the conditions for a major war.

In this spirit the *Peoples Tribune* supports the efforts and program of the Green Party. It is time for all people of good will to begin the process of uniting to confront these dangerous conditions.

## Our magnificent Americans

By Mary Anne Morrow Barbour®

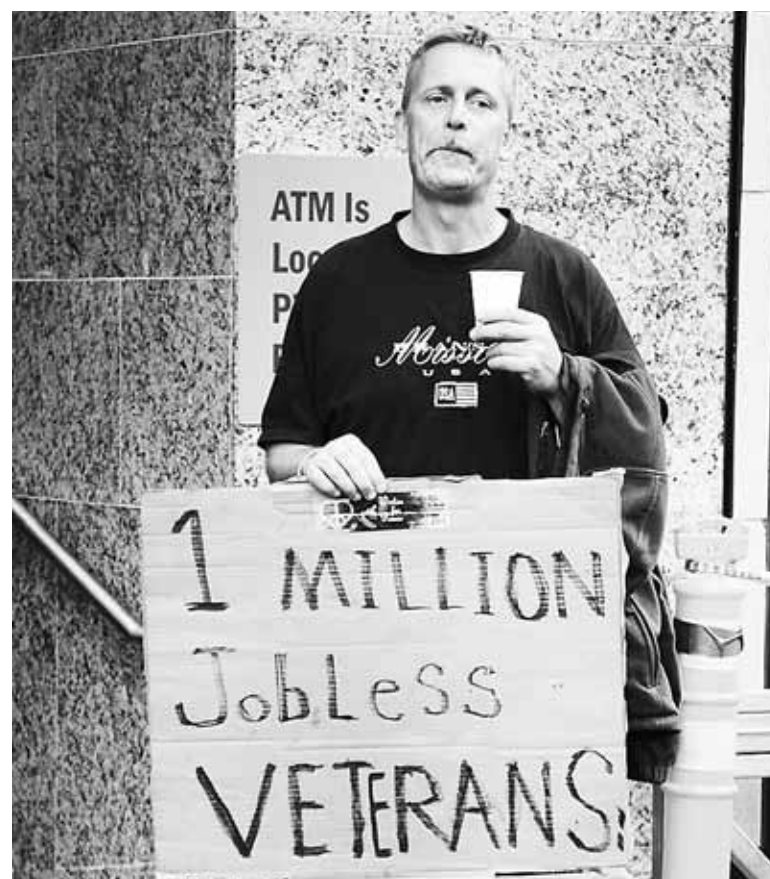
In the *Golden Child*, the old man states, “Those magnificent Americans. So much power and so little understanding of what to do with it.” Most of us are very well aware of what is wrong in America today and we have many ideas of how to restore America. So, how do we unite our powers to effect change?

The United States Armed Forces consists of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, and Coast Guard. Our military is one of the largest in numbers of personnel. As of 2011, the US spends about \$550 billion annually to fund our forces and an approximate \$160 billion to fund Overseas Contingency Operations.

When you put them together, the US comprises roughly 43% of the world’s military expenditures and the largest number of servicemen. Our Country’s Armed Forces, as a whole, possess large quantities of advanced and powerful equipment, but most importantly the highest number of competent personnel to use this equipment.

On November 21, 2011, the president signed the Vow to Hire Heroes Act of 2011 into law (P.L. 112–56). This law, among other things, creates new tax credit incentives. These incentives range from \$2,400 to \$9,600 or up to 40% of the Veteran’s wages. However, it is the businesses that will receive the tax credits, not our Veterans!

It should be our Veterans that receive these tax credits. Bring all of our servicemen home and provide them with incentives to stay in the US Armed Forces and/or tax credits for obtaining employment. Many of them may have to relocate in order to find civilian employment.



Nearly 30% of young male veterans and 36% of young female veterans were jobless in 2011. PHOTO/HOLLY NEWMAN

There are countless, efficient means to bring all our servicemen home from around the World and put them to work in America. With literally thousand Military Occupational Specialties, why should any of the more than 260,000 thousand of our Veterans be without jobs?

The engineering brigades can work on our faulty infrastructure problems. Our MASH Units (Mobil Army Support Hospital) can serve in times of national disasters as well as providing healthcare, including comprehensive health care to all Americans. These are just two of the many occupations that our Veterans could provide in our country.

Once upon a time most people did the right thing simply because

it was the right thing to do. In the Bible, Paul wrote in his letter to the Galatians: “The entire law is summed up in a single command: Love your neighbor as yourself. If you keep on biting and devouring each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other.” (Galatians 5:14 & 15)

This is precisely what is happening in America today. Corporations and businesses are the ones who are receiving tax credits (for employing Veterans), rather than our deserving Veterans. Once again the dragons of the 1% raise their ugly heads for further monetary gain. I’ll leave you with this; how do the 99% of us use our “Magnificent Power” to fight for our Veterans and for all Americans?



CARTOON/ANDY WILLIS

# AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL



May Day rally in Michigan. Undocumented workers are stigmatized and hunted down, reminiscent of the Nazi pogroms of Hitler's time. An attack on the undocumented deflects anger from the real problem—corporate control of government.

PHOTO/DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM

*Editor's Note: This article is reprinted from the People's Tribune's sister publication, the Tribuno del Pueblo.*

ARIZONA — On June 25 the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the onerous provision of the Arizona state SB 1070 law called “show me your papers.” This measure requires local police to determine the legal status of anyone they apprehend, no matter how minor the infraction.

Though the Supreme Court struck down three other repressive provisions of the Arizona state law, the door is now open for reintroducing them, or for other states to do copy cat laws.

The undocumented are criminalized for seeking what every other American worker wants: the right to contribute to society and seek a better life. They are scapegoated because the corporations that run the government don't want to guarantee a decent standard of living for any American worker they can't exploit. In truth, the undocumented are not

the cause of our financial problems, nor are they a drain on our social services. An attack on the undocumented deflects anger from the real problem—corporate control of government.

Today, work as we know it, is being eliminated by modern technology. At the same time, it is creating an unheard of material abundance. Yet that abundance is not getting to those who need it because of the profit motive. As a consequence, we are witnessing the most drastic polarization of wealth and poverty ever seen in this country.

We are on a slippery slope when we allow workers to be stigmatized and hunted down, reminiscent of the Nazi pogroms of Hitler's time. The finger is pointed in the wrong direction. When the government, courts, and police are doing the corporations' bidding and not insuring a decent standard of living for all Americans, that is a formula for fascism.

An attack on the undocumented is an attack on us all.

## Every Day is An Act of Resistance

By Lew Rosenbaum

Carol Tarlen's poems recently published in *Every Day Is An Act of Resistance* cry out at the reader that resistance is necessary but not enough. These poems describe the daily deaths that workers endure to survive. They refuse to accept those daily deaths, and reflect on a vision of what is possible. Every poem in this collection sings. While we should be glad to see this volume come out, we should also be angry that no one saw fit to publish a book length collection of hers while she was still alive.

Carol Tarlen died in June, 2004 from complications of diabetes. Her “Recovery for the Red Hearted Masses” is at once a poem about herself and about the system within which her health deteriorated. It is populated with the San Francisco characters she knew and loved well, like Crazy Mary. “On payday I give her some quarters, /A piece of fruit, a candy bar./A redbrownd smile burns in her face./ Dirt splatters ripped hands that hold/ A battered quart of half empty milk.” The narrator's failing heart leads her to bypass surgery and three months later she's out on the streets. Crazy Mary's gone, instead she sees drunken exiled



suburbanites : “Bill Gates leaks out of their half dead eyes./Escaped inmates from Phi Beta Puka.” Suburbanites who don't see the daily deaths or joys that happen to ordinary people. In the midst of being discouraged she meets her friend Jack from Specs café who gets her some water, tells her he is pleased to have sold 6 *People's Tribunes*. Cause for celebrating: “My aching heart,/ My breaking heart,/ My still beating/ Red red heart.”

The poems are direct, the

language is direct, and whether poems of love or poems of rebellion they are deeply sensual, inviting the reader in because the images are things and places we have been or want to be. “Sisters in the Flames” evokes the stark images of the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire and the drama of workers who leaped, embracing each other, to their somehow tender, transcendent deaths.

Tarlen was blacklisted because of her commitment to writing about the working class, and because she insisted on using her art to aid in furthering the working class struggle. She was arrested for feeding the homeless, was active in the union movement, the movement for women's rights. The images that stand out in her poetry draw the commonality of class interest in all these struggles. And everywhere stream forth couplets that provoke us to dream and build, as in the last lines of this book: “I trust in the mystery of future/ which is always beginning.”

The book is beautifully introduced by Jack Hirschman, with a sensitive biographical essay by Julia Stein, both poet colleagues.

Available in bookstores or from Mongrel Empire Press \$14 ISBN 978-0-9833052-9-3.

### Poem

If you don't make it on the bus  
it won't be enough to save you.  
And if you make it to the ocean  
the tide may not turn in your favor

It's only a matter of time before human volcanoes erupt  
So tell me does your revolution  
end with your coffee cup?

Society got down but it need not fall.  
And we the forgotten ones shall  
heed the call.

And as old world crumbles  
and the air screams out a thousand cries  
we shall not bend or break,  
we will only rise.

—Chase Cinder

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*From the Editorial Board of the People's Tribune*

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## Benton Harbor – A CITY STOLEN FROM ITS COMMUNITY?



Rev. Pinkney speaks out against Whirlpool Corporation's takeover of Benton Harbor at a protest against the Professional Golfers Association (PGA), who is hosting the Senior Championship at the luxury golf course recently built on part of the city's public lakefront park. Membership to the golf club costs \$5,000, yet the average annual income of the residents of Benton Harbor is about \$10,000.

PHOTO/DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM

By Rev. Edward Pinkney

Benton Harbor is one of the first cities in Michigan subjected to Public Act number 4 which allows the state to take over the running of municipalities or school districts that they deem to be in financial distress. This greatly disputed Act allows a state appointed manager to remove all power from the democratically elected city council. This raises the question: who is best suited to run a city? The people who live and work there or an outsider?

### THE CORPORATIONS

Whirlpool was born in Benton Harbor around 100 years ago as The Upton Machine Company. Most of the manufacturing was done here until the 1980's when factories began to close as cost cutting exercises. Whirlpool is now building a new campus in the city, with more than 20 million dollars in tax credits, but the jobs created by this are unlikely to help the unemployment problem in Benton Harbor. Whirlpool and other large companies are simply using their bargaining power to get access to state funding giving them cheap new developments.

### HARBOR SHORES – CREATING AFFORDABLE HOUSING?

No. This development with its golf course and plans for high-end hotels and shops was built with government funding and the backing of Whirlpool. A great place to house their new campus-based employees? It is unlikely that the majority of Harbor Shores residents will be mov-

ing there. The new buildings sell for up to half a million dollars where the average house price in the rest of the city hovers around \$70,000. The goal statement on the Benton Harbor city website seems to have been forgotten—"Our goals and objectives are to continue to develop viable neighborhoods, including decent and safe housing, for the betterment of a more suitable living environment, eliminate slums and blight, and to expand economic opportunities for the residents of Benton Harbor."—[www.bentonharborecity.com/](http://www.bentonharborecity.com/)

### DEMOCRACY

The removal of the elected officials of Benton Harbor may appear to be the installation of a fascist regime to many, but Joseph Harris, the Emergency Manager is of the opinion it is the best way for him to help the city—"Here, I don't have to worry about whether the politicians or union leaders like what I'm doing. I have to worry about whether it's the right thing to do." (New York Times, Dec 2011) However, his opinion seems off target; tying water and refuse collection rates together doesn't help people pay the bills. Surely taking away the voting rights of people already disenchanted with government makes them feel even less in control of their own lives? Especially since the cities money problems were caused by mismanagement by the previous elected officials, who were aiding Whirlpool and law suits brought by whistleblowers, mistakes which are being paid for by residents now.

*I am dedicated to the power of the people to control their own lives: and you should be too!*