

PEOPLE'S TRIBUNE

OCTOBER 2012, VOLUME 39, NO. 10

DONATION \$1



Protest at 2012 Democratic National Convention in Charlotte, North Carolina.

PHOTO/BONNIE JO MOUNT, THE WASHINGTON POST VIA GETTY IMAGES

INSIDE:

- Myth of the 'Lesser of Two Evils' 2
- The Fight for Public Education 4-5
- Green Party
Presidential Candidates 6
- Healthcare Divestment Struggle 9
- Cabrini Green: Public Housing
& the Homeless 11

THE ELECTIONS: DEMAND THAT GOVERNMENT MEET THE PEOPLE'S NEEDS

[Read story on page 3](#)

LET'S END THE MYTH OF THE 'LESSER OF TWO EVILS'

EDITORIAL

In 1956 the distinguished African American intellectual, Dr. W.E.B. Du Bois said, "I believe democracy has so far disappeared in the United States that no 'two evils' exist. There is but one evil party with two names."

As election time draws near, a frustrated and disappointed mass of workers are moving spontaneously toward breaking with the Democratic Party. As could be expected, the battle cry of "support the lesser of two evils" has been used to block any rational examination of the record of this Democratic administration. Such examination would show that it has carried out the program of the Republican Party, and gone even further. The lesser of two evils hogwash has come down to death by the velvet glove or the iron fist.

Our concerns are more than the facts of attacking the Constitution, destroying such pillars as due process and handing the President the power to arrest, disappear, torture and kill Americans without trial. It is more than breaking treaties such as those prohibiting torture. It is more than threatening and bullying countries that call such activities into question. Our concern is that the "lesser of two evils" coupled with contradictory rhetoric between the two parties, covers their common agenda, confuses the people and helps consolidate the power of fascism.

It is time to call an end to this



Demonstrators at Occupy Wall Street's first anniversary protests in New York City.

PHOTO/JAMES FASSINGER

"lesser of two evils" charade and face the real world.

That real world shows that no political law can change an economic law. Both the Republican and Democratic candidates claim they can "fix" the economy, create jobs and stabilize the "middle class." Neither dared to discuss the economic law that threw us into the "Great Recession." That law is simply this—a capitalist must maintain maximum profit or

be driven out of business. Maximum profit goes to the capitalist who produces the cheapest, thereby capturing the market. Producing the cheapest means cutting production costs to the bone.

There is a limit to how much a worker can be exploited. Therefore, there is an unending drive to create machinery to assist the worker—or in the case of robotics, replace him. If one capitalist replaces the worker with a robot, the rest must do the same. The result is the escalating, permanent replacement of workers. Every worker replaced by electronics shrinks the market for buying and selling while expanding production. Eliminate jobs and the market shrinks. More sophisticated equipment is called for, which shrinks the market more. Any po-

litical effort to "create jobs" will only expand the use of electronics and deepen unemployment.

The reality is that the rapid expansion of electronics is replacing the contradictions of capitalism with antagonism. All countries—America, Brazil, China, all the way to Zambia—are facing the same reality. Jobs are disappearing never to return. Production is increasing alongside indescribable poverty. The final correction to overproduction—a major war—could spell the end to civilization.

The reality is capitalism is through. Other systems have been replaced and so will this one. Let's drop our illusions and prepare for the difficult struggle that lies ahead.

SEND US YOUR STORY!

All editorials and cover stories (See Page 3) are written by the People's Tribune Editorial Board. The rest of the paper is composed of voices from those who are engaged in the struggle to build a new society that is of, by and for the people. Send us your story.

Why the Movement Needs a Press

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

From the Editors

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.

People's Tribune Editor: Bob Lee

Editorial Staff: Bob Brown, Brett Jelinek, Shamako Noble, Chuck Parker, Nelson Peery, Sandra Reid

Photo Editor: Daymon Hartley

People's Tribune, P.O. Box 3524
Chicago, Illinois, 60654
e-mail: info@peopletribune.org
Phone: 773-486-3551
Toll Free: 800-691-6888
Fax: 773-486-3552
Web: www.peopletribune.org

Publisher: People's Tribune
ISSN# 1081-4787

Reach us at:

Chicago 773-486-3551

Ann Arbor, MI
zettlir@gmail.com

Atlanta, GA
atlanta@peopletribune.org

Carbondale, IL
carbondale@peopletribune.org

Detroit, MI
313-438-6115

Houston, TX
P O Box 231281, Houston, TX 77223-1281

Los Angeles, CA
310-548-6491

Oakland, CA
oakland@peopletribune.org

THE ELECTIONS: DEMAND THAT GOVERNMENT MEET THE PEOPLE'S NEEDS

COVER STORY

As we enter the final weeks before the presidential election, many people are wondering what to do. How can the electoral process help move the people along the path toward a new America? The answer is, raise the demands of the people for the basic necessities of life. Raise them before, during and after the election, and don't let up.

This doesn't mean we believe the twin parties of corporate capital, the Democrats and Republicans, will respond to the people's demands. They can't and they won't. But the elections do help create the opportunity to point people in a new direction and give them a strategy for victory.

As parties that represent and defend the capitalist system, the Democrats and Republicans cannot solve the economic crisis, because it is a crisis of the system itself. At the root of it is labor-replacing technology (the computer and the robot) that is wiping out jobs permanently and destroying the market in the process. A new section of the working class is being created by electronics – people who are marginally employed or permanently unemployed, people whose needs can no longer be met by the system. Every new wave of technology added to the economy wipes out more jobs. The capitalist system is dying, and democracy is dying along with it as the ruling class turns to fascism to contain the inevitable resistance of the people.

In the long run, the needs of this new class (and society as a whole) for food, clothing, housing, and every other necessity of life can only be met in a cooperative society where the people own the means of production

– the banks, the factories, the mines, the offices – and we simply make what we need and distribute it to everyone. And in the short run, the needs of the dispossessed can only be met by the government giving them what they need.

By demanding the government meet the needs of the dispossessed, we move people in the direction of confronting the system. Whose interest will the government serve – the corporations' or the people's? Where is the people's bailout? Are we going to have a democratic society organized around the needs and

interests of the people, or a fascist corporate dictatorship that guarantees the wealth and private property of the powerful while the rest of us starve?

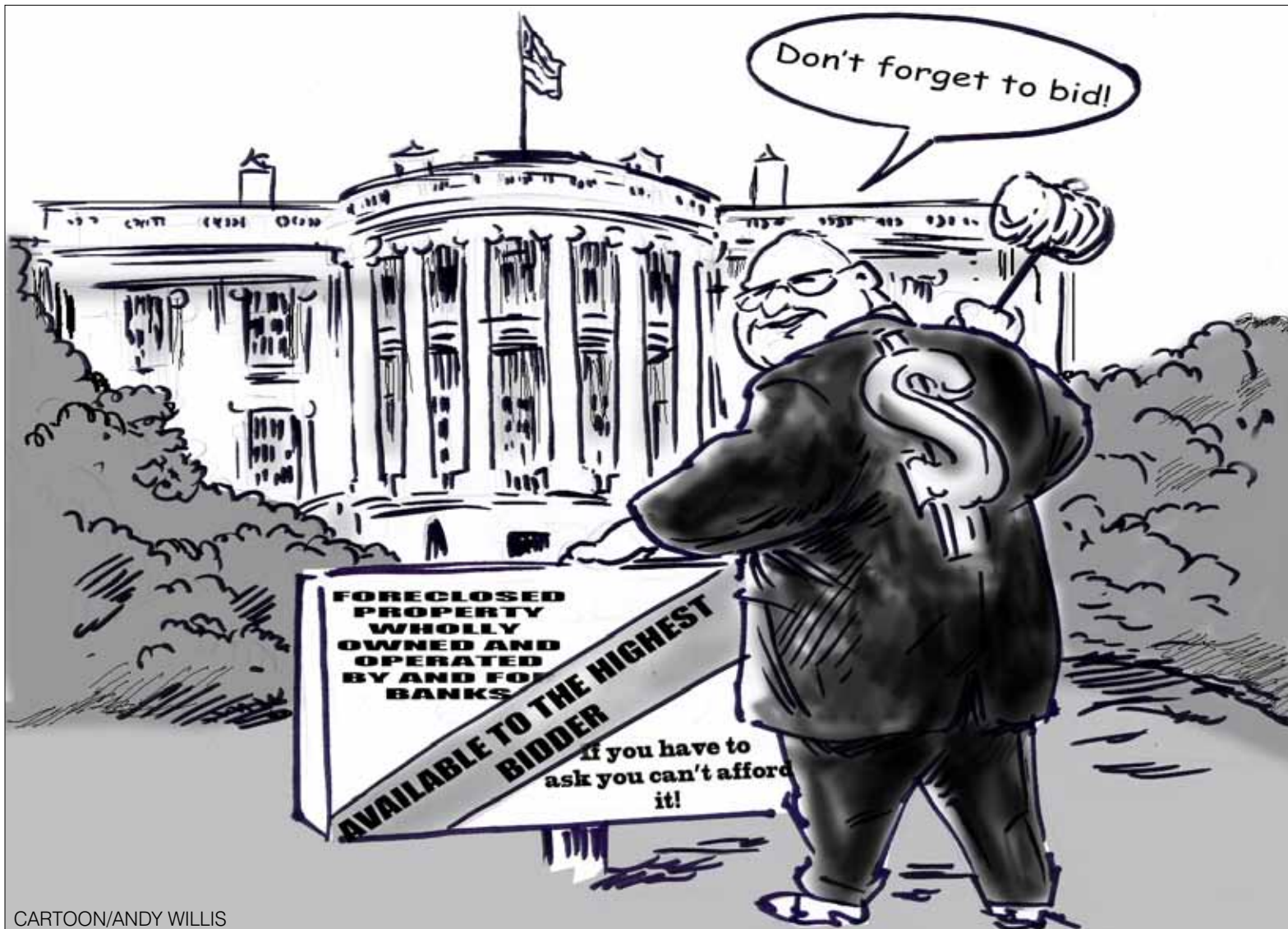
We need to stop voting for the "lesser of two evils," break with the Democratic Party and chart our own independent course (see the editorial on p. 2 for more). There is already a trend in this direction. New parties are gaining strength. We should help en-

sure these rising parties are anti-corporate and anti-fascist.

The future of America and the world is at stake. The questions of war versus peace, fascism versus democracy, and mass prosperity versus mass poverty loom before us. We must separate ourselves from the capitalists and move toward building a new America that is of, by and for the people. Let's use this election to advance that struggle.

THERE IS A CHOICE!

See *People's Tribune* coverage of the Green Party on page 6.



CARTOON/ANDY WILLIS

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.peoplestribune.org.

People's Tribune
Editorial Board

SUBSCRIBE TO THE PEOPLE'S TRIBUNE! ORDER BUNDLES

- Please send me a one-year individual subscription [\$20]
- Please send me a one-year institutional subscription [\$25]
- Please send me a bundle of _____ PTs [at 30 cents per paper]

Enclosed is my donation of:

- \$20 \$50 \$75 \$100 \$Other _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone/Email: _____

My check or money order made payable to "People's Tribune" is enclosed. Mail this coupon to: People's Tribune, P.O. Box 3524, Chicago, IL 60654-3524

Muskegon Heights, MI and its Emergency Manager

Selling a school district to a private company

Excerpts reprinted from
MEAVOICE, August 2012

For Michigan Education Association (MEA) members in Muskegon Heights, any decision by voters regarding emergency managers may be too late. This spring, the Governor appointed Don Weatherspoon to take over the financially-troubled district. His solution for taking care of the debt? Sell the entire school district to Mosaica Education, a for-profit, privately-owned charter company.

Weatherspoon said he chose Mosaica because of its “high standards for academic performance and research-based methods for supporting students that need assistance.” He signed a five-year contract with them to provide an education to the new Muskegon Heights Public School Academy.

Yet, neither Mosaica nor Leona Group has an outstanding academic record. Only one charter school from among the two companies scored above the 50th percentile in rankings based on

test scores.

Mosaica’s curriculum requires longer school days and a longer school year. And even though they have little experience running a high school, the curriculum provides for instruction in elementary through high school grades.

Mosaica bought four of the district’s buildings for \$1 each, and plans on enrolling 1,200 students in elementary through high school. The plan is to have a student-teacher ratio of 25 to one. The company is spending \$5.5 million of its own money to start the new charter district and then will be getting \$7,397 per pupil from the state to educate the students. Mosaica will earn \$8.75 million over the term of their five-year contract.

One of the first moves Weatherspoon made was to terminate staff contracts. Mosaica has been interviewing former Muskegon Heights teachers and those hired will earn \$35,000 a year with limited benefits for the “privilege” of teaching their rigid curriculum. They plan on hiring 66

teachers and three principals.

Meanwhile, the current Muskegon Heights school district will no longer exist, but would still have to pay off its \$12.4 million debt using its local millage, a 3 percent fee from the charter school company, rent from its buildings and whatever other means the state Department of Education and Treasury approve. Legislation has been introduced to allow for the use of school operating millages and emergency loans under PA 4.

This controversial move to eliminate the district’s debt signals a serious threat to traditional public education in Michigan—especially since Highland Park’s Emergency Manager has also decided to sell out all of the district’s schools, students and staff to a charter company.

Emergency Managers have the power to disband local school boards and city governing bodies, end contracts and take whatever means they decide is necessary to pay off debts.

(The question on the ballot will be “Shall PA 4 be en-



Protest in Michigan against the contested dictatorship law, PA 4. Under this law, whole school districts are being sold to private corporations. PHOTO/DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM

acted?” MEA recommends a NO vote, which will repeal the law.)

What more reason is there to vote NO on the referendum on PA

4 (the Emergency Manager law) that has taken away the rights and voices of voters in Muskegon Heights—and potentially in your own school district?

Georgia’s future: More charter schools or improved public education?



Students protest cuts on the steps of Georgia’s Capitol building in Atlanta. PHOTO/JOHN E. RAMSPOT

By Gloria Slaughter

“The provision of an adequate public education for the citizens shall be a primary obligation of the State of Georgia. Public education for the citizens prior to the college or post-secondary level shall be free and shall be provided for by taxation.” This is the 8th Article in the Georgia Constitution. But in the last decade \$4 billion has been cut from state funding towards public education and it continues to fall.

Unfortunately, many of our youth in Georgia have not been privy to an “adequate” education because of how our education is funded in Georgia. Many urban and rural areas have not had the tax base to provide the resources such as science labs, computer labs, updated textbooks, enough qualified teachers and smaller classroom sizes.

With less funding but wanting more control over spending, the state legislature passed a law in 2008 that created a state commission that would have the capacity to create and fund state charter schools. Thus, this state commission would override the duly elected board members of local school districts. This is similar to a law that is taking place

in Michigan where Emergency Managers replace elected officials in cities, towns, school boards, etc. So, do our votes really make a difference?

Seven local school boards challenged the Georgia Charter Schools Commission and the Georgia Supreme Court ruled it unconstitutional later in 2008. To get around this, state leaders and proponents of charter schools rewrote the Georgia Constitution. In November, 2012, voters will see this amendment on the ballot. It confusingly reads “Shall the Constitution of Georgia be amended to allow state or local approval of public charter schools upon the request of local communities?” Local approval is already in place and we don’t need a constitutional amendment. It will cost \$430 million to create seven charter schools per year over the next five years. Every charter school created dilutes resources available for public education.

Among those who support amending the state’s Constitution are the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), for-profit management companies interested in lining their pockets and those who support school vouchers and tuition tax

credits to private schools. Investors are also counting the dollars signs coming their way when privatization of public schools keeps expanding. This is a national movement for charter school expansion and state control. For example in Texas, charter school advocates have launched a lawsuit in Travis County to look at school finance for non-public schools. In North Carolina a new virtual charter school program for K-12 is being proposed and it is a for-profit institution. In Missouri, the Governor signed a bill that allows for expansion of charter schools.

Those who oppose this amendment are educational organizations, local school boards, parent-teacher associations and anyone else who sees that the public education system in the U.S. is at the center of its democracy. Yes, public education needs improvement, but if this amendment in Georgia passes the resources will not be there to improve it.

Vote No On November 6th AGAINST the Amendment and FOR Public Education! If this amendment passes, it will be a step toward privatization of our public school system here in Georgia.

Chicago Teachers Union strike ends — Looking ahead to the battle in schools and streets

By Lew Rosenbaum

The Chicago Teachers' Union (CTU) House of Delegates voted overwhelmingly to end their seven-day strike and submit the new contract to the membership for ratification. Delegates leaving the meeting were greeted by parents and other union supporters with messages of solidarity. Popular opinion recognizes the fact that this strike raised the level of struggle against 17 years of corporate led attacks on Chicago schools. The agreement won advances in job security, stopped the implementation of merit pay, and introduced measures that could increase the numbers of school nurses and social workers. Items such as class size were only indirectly addressed.

The epicenter of the worldwide destruction of public education is in Chicago. Everything public is being privatized: education is snatched away for the majority of people when society replaces jobs with computers. The system converts most schools to warehouses, leaving a few elite institutions to train managers of the new world order.

While this may have looked



Chicago Teachers Union strike.

PHOTO/JAMES FASSINGER

like an ordinary contract negotiation and struggle, the battle is a fight about what education for all means. The Chicago Teachers Union has embraced the common, class interests of the vast majority of Chicago. Unemployment stalks the streets of our communities; workers who once populated the industrial shop

floors have been expelled from those good, union jobs. These workers are the parents of students now in schools systematically deprived of resources as the jobs went away.

The corporate agenda refuses to concede to demands of a class united in its anger over the betrayal of its future. A world

class education for all is possible, but on one side the City bargains over a “fair” distribution of “scarce” resources on profitable terms; on the other side the people demand the funding of education according to need.

Talking with teachers on the picket line around Chicago, we’ve heard the widespread rec-

ognition that the fight will break out quickly once again around school closings, charter schools and privatization. CTU president Karen Lewis, appearing on *Democracy Now*, said: “Well, we’ve been working on [school closings] for quite some time... before we ever gained office of the union, we worked very hard against the school closings that had been going on. And we have reached out into the community, worked with parents, worked with students, and when you build relationships like that, it just grows.”

Mayor Rahm Emanuel plans to close more than 100 public schools and increase charters to include half the students in the school district. These attacks will focus on African American and Latino communities, destroying public education for working class families. The key victory will be in how prepared we are to carry on the battle for a *world class education in every community*.

“When you come after our children you come after us!”

Chicago Teachers Union strike

Excerpts from a speech given by Chicago Teachers Union president Karen Lewis to a crowd of 18,000 at Chicago’s Labor Day rally on September 3, 2012.

Thank you sisters and brothers for coming down here today. We are humbled to stand before you. Everybody knows how serious this point in time is. Brothers and sisters, we did not *start* this fight. Enough is enough!

I do want to correct something that was said—‘Karen Lewis did not get a strike vote.’ Let’s be clear. That was the hard work of every single member of the Chicago Teachers Union. This strike is not about Karen Lewis. This fight is about the very soul of public education.

By the very standards that those people over there have, and all these people that work in these buildings, that own these buildings, by their very standards, what did our students do last year? Their graduation rates soared. Their test scores soared. And where was the story about that from that office? It didn’t

suit the agenda. We did that without a longer day. And we did it after they stole our raises.

The commitment to the children of the city of Chicago is in our hearts, in our minds. It is the work we do.

A couple of blocks down the street, they are in chaos. Their chaos has not stopped us from coming together. Their chaos has torn the city asunder. But the beauty of it is—the people from outside of Chicago that come here to destroy us have met with resistance. They never thought it would happen.

A little over a year ago, they wrote us off. They said ‘we have a new law to stop you from doing anything other than what we tell you to do.’ And what happened? They got on TV and bragged about it.

They weren’t happy just stabbing us in our backs. They had to crow and tell everyone what they had done. And building by building, soul by soul we all came together to stop the juggernaut that doesn’t care about our children, that doesn’t know what we do



Karen Lewis, President of the Chicago Teachers Union.

PHOTO/JAMES FASSINGER

and that ripped off 25% of our children—*our* children.

The mayor of the city of Chicago can stand up and say that 25% of our children will never amount to anything and ‘I’m not wasting money on them,’ and then deny it. He’s a liar. The

only way you beat the police is to stand up to them.

Brothers and sisters, I want you to know, we will work as hard as we can to get our fair contract. We know there’s a finite amount of resources, but we also know we didn’t create that

problem.

Our children are not a campaign promise. Our children are not numbers on a spreadsheet.

When you come after our children you come after us. Enough is enough!

“WE BELIEVE IMMIGRANT RIGHTS ARE PART OF HUMAN RIGHTS”

Support Green Party candidate Jill Stein

The Green Party presidential candidate Jill Stein is a mother, housewife, physician, longtime teacher of internal medicine, and pioneering environmental-health advocate.

In her native Massachusetts, she has led successful campaigns to clean up coal-fired power plants, to get mercury and dioxin out of the air, water, and food supply, and to decrease the influence of corporate money in state politics.

As a candidate for the Green-Rainbow Party, Dr. Stein has run for governor, state representative, and secretary of state in Massachusetts, where she received 350,000 votes which represented the greatest vote total ever for a Green-Rainbow candidate.

The following interview was published in the September-October, 2012 edition of our sister publication, the *Tribuno del Pueblo*. (See the September, 2012 edition of the *People's Tribune* for an interview with Jill Stein on other aspects of the Green Party program.)

Tribuno del Pueblo: Where do you and the Green Party stand on

immigration?

Jill Stein: We believe immigrant rights are part of human rights. We need to create a welcoming and legal path to full citizenship. We also believe that the demagoguery that promotes racial profiling and the demonization of immigrants should be repudiated.

TP: Would you comment on the Arizona anti-immigrant law and its copycats in other states?

JS: These are racial-profiling laws and should be treated as violations of civil rights—misguided, harmful, and unnecessary.

TP: Why is it that these laws arise at a time when the U.S. has economic problems?

JS: That goes a long way to explain what's going on.

The real culprit and cause of economic struggle isn't poor people or immigrants or people of color but, rather, Wall Street and the banks that conducted waste, fraud, and abuse and crashed the economy.

In addition, the wealth and resources of the nation are concentrated in the hands of a very few, which is disaster for our democ-



Immigrant rights march at the Democratic National Convention protests. About 1000 people raised their voices for peace, justice & equality. PHOTO/STATICPHOTOGRAPHY.COM

racy and economy.

[The Arizona law] is political demagoguery that attempts to channel legitimate unrest and legitimate anxiety into a very destructive, racist framework that would target immigrants as the cause of joblessness.

TP: Can you comment on President Obama's recent deferred-action program for young immigrants without papers?

JS: I would put this in the context of the S-Comm program, carried out by this president cruelly and shamefully over his four years. He deported more immigrants in his first three years than George W. Bush deported in his entire eight-year term—over 1 million immigrants deported, families divided, children shamefully taken from their parents.

This is a human-rights catastrophe. The president's recent

action allowing two-year work permits up to the age of 30 for DREAMers is a small step in the right direction but a day late and a dollar short.

We need a welcoming path to full citizenship, not towards a worker permit plan which only covers a small fraction of the immigrants who are essential members of our economy and our community.

Interview with Green Party Vice Presidential Candidate

“Let our voices be heard!”



Green Party Presidential candidate Jill Stein and Vice Presidential candidate Cheri Honkala celebrate Occupy Wall Street's first anniversary in New York City. PHOTO/BRENNAN CAVANAUGH

The People's Tribune interviewed Green Party Vice Presidential candidate and longtime anti-foreclosure activist Cheri Honkala while she was protesting at the recent Democratic Party Convention.

People's Tribune: Will you be at the Vice Presidential debate on October 11 in Danville, Kentucky?

Cheri Honkala: I will definitely

show up, but the Commission on Presidential Debates said they will refuse to allow any alternative views to the pro-corporate party line of the Romney and Obama campaigns. The Green Party is on the ballot in 38 states and secured Federal matching funds. They are trying to silence us, but don't worry, we will find a way to be heard.

TP: Why did you accept the Green

Party nomination for Vice President? How will this help people fighting foreclosures?

Cheri Honkala: It has already helped. Our solidarity with the Tampa and Charlotte protests helped bring national and international attention to the plight of the foreclosed, the poor, and the homeless.

Romney and Obama refuse to talk about poverty and foreclosures because they plan to make them worse. Their loyalty is to the Wall Street banks and corporations. Their austerity programs will benefit the banks and punish the nearly half of all American families who now live near or below the poverty line.

TP: What is the Green Party program for addressing the foreclosure crisis?

Cheri Honkala: The Green New Deal is a comprehensive program to address America's crises in both the economy and in our democracy (see www.jillstein.org). It calls for an immediate national moratorium on all foreclosures

and evictions, principal reductions for underwater homeowners, and an end to bank bailouts. Failing banks should be reorganized and reopened as public banks. Make America's housing stock available to the people through affordable mortgages and rents.

TP: What do you say to those who claim the Green Party campaign is a diversion from the contest between Mitt Romney and Barack Obama?

Cheri Honkala: I would say that their campaigns are a diversion. I am from the Kensington neighborhood of Philadelphia, where Mother Jones once marched to protest the children losing their limbs working in the factories. Today there are no more factories in Kensington to march from. It is the poorest district in Pennsylvania, it is multi-racial, and has the third highest hunger rate and the highest homicide rate in the country. While Pennsylvania builds prisons, the city of Philadelphia is closing forty schools. People live out of shopping carts

and pregnant women sleep outside. There's barbed wire around the food bank.

Any campaign that fails to address these issues is a failed campaign and is not relevant to the future of America. I will address them because I live there. The people of Kensington are not broken. The system is broken.

TP: What is your vision of the kind of America we need to build?

Cheri Honkala: End the destruction, the austerity, the needless suffering. A moral government would ensure jobs, housing, health care, and education for every family. Martin Luther King once said America has the resources and the technology to end poverty, the only question is whether we have the will. I'm a formerly homeless mother. I have two children, and I have slept in cars and under bridges. For the last twenty-five years I have been teaching people how to build homeless encampments, take over abandoned houses, and stay alive to fight for the better world we know is possible.

Romneyville: Telling the truth about a broken system

By Sandy Perry

TAMPA, FL — The wind-whipped tents of Romneyville were the enduring symbol of America's protest against the 2012 Republican and Democratic conventions. Over 100 homeless and foreclosed families huddled in the rain from Hurricane Isaac, amid tarps and placards that blew fitfully around in the intermittent gusts. They gave compelling testimony to the human cost of the austerity policies leaving millions of Americans without jobs, housing, or health care.

Romneyville was built as a refuge for the Tampa homeless in the weeks leading up to the conventions. It was a clarion message to the world to not believe the liars in the convention halls: the American economy is broken, is destroying the lives of our people, and needs to be replaced. On Saturday August 25, protesters took their first action when they non-violently entered a vacant, bank-owned home and moved in an elderly homeless couple, Gladys and Vashon.

The high point of the protests was a march in a driving rain on August 27, the convention opening day. Romneyville organizer Rev. Bruce Wright reported:

"We left from Romneyville in an unpermitted march. We marched in the streets, led by the poor, the homeless, and the unemployed of the Poor Peoples Economic Human Rights Campaign. Women and children were in front of about 600 others, including Code Pink, Food Not Bombs, some veterans, and Occupy Wall Street and local Tampa area residents. It was peaceful and non-violent, despite the heavily militarized police, who were in body armor and had LRad, their high intensity sound device ready for deployment, as well as rubber bullet guns, batons, pepper spray and tear gas. They tried to dictate where we should go, but we marched where we wanted to and ended when we wanted to."

The march was a dramatic victory not only over the hurricane, but over the massive \$50 million dollar Homeland Security police presence in Tampa. Police out-

numbered protesters by ten-to-one, and in the week prior to the convention called a press conference to openly threaten marchers with violence and arrest.

The real question in this election is not which one of the major party candidates will win, or what they say or do. The real question is what we the people will do. Many Romneyville leaders moved on to Charlotte the next week to build an Obamaville and take their demands to the Democratic Party as well.

Romneyville's refusal to back down was the first step. The next step is to educate and organize ourselves so we know better who to fight and how to win. We face a one-party corporate system that openly refuses to address the needs of the working class. We need to unite with every expression of opposition and resistance and weave it together into a nationwide political movement that breaks with the corporate parties and defends our interests as a class.



Romneyville protesters take over a foreclosed home outside the Republican National Convention. PHOTO/SHAMAKO NOBLE

Voices from the Democratic Convention protests



Protesters at the Democratic National Convention in Charlotte, NC.

PHOTO/STATICPHOTOGRAPHY.COM

Editor's Note: The Coalition to March on Wall St. South spent close to a year preparing for the resistance at the Democratic National Convention in Charlotte,

NC in September. What follows are some voices from the Wall Street South March.

"Tomorrow, September 3rd,

1991, is when the Hamlet, North Carolina, Imperial Foods workers were burned alive as they tried to work for a living. We have to remember the struggles of all work-

ing people. We are in solidarity with this march, because we understand that Wall Street ain't just on Trinity Street, Wall Street ain't just on Chambers Street in New York, Wall Street is wherever there's corporate greed. And why not have a Wall Street South march, when this is where chattel slavery was born? Why not have it in the place where there's never been justice? Why not come to North Carolina, that has the lowest density of union members in this country? Why not come, because nobody is organizing the South?"

— Jaribu Hill is from Mississippi Workers' Center

"I'm coming from Phoenix on the No Papers, No Fear—Journey for Justice. We're tired of being incarcerated. We're used as the cheapest labor as migrants. Why? Because the U.S. has been taking care of its business, which is to exploit the rest of the planet. By doing this, we're forced to migrate, to leave our homes looking for a better opportunity. But what we're finding in this place today is: discrimination, racism, incarceration and the separation of our families. Our target is the Democratic convention to bring attention to this, but also we are traveling through the South's communities. Why? Because we

want to organize, because the real power is within the people in the community, and we have to realize that right now."

— Fernando Lopez is on the UndocuBus.

"We are home here in North Carolina of Fort Bragg, the launch pad for many of our foreign military expeditions, where so many service members are sent to fight in foreign lands, and so many soldiers come home wounded and broken... Our drones have killed so many that we have become the terrorists of the world. When children in Pakistan hear the sound of an airplane overhead or see the shadow of a drone circling above them, they see the shadow of death. What cruel and unusual punishment for a people whose only crimes are wanting some food on their table, clean water to drink, clothes on their back and a place to sleep in peace. Mr. Obama, we call on you to ... bring our troops home and our war dollars home, and ground the drones..."

— John Heuer is from Veterans for Peace.

For more information about the March on Wall Street South, go to <http://wallstsouth.org>

OPPOSITION TO EMERGENCY MANAGER LAW HEATS UP IN MICHIGAN

By Claire McClinton

FLINT, MI — The Crim Festival of Races, held annually in Flint, Michigan, gave the community a platform to resist the local “dictatorship law” imposed by Public Act 4.

At the Crim, over 100 citizens picketed to the starting line. The bright red signs and chants said it all! STAND UP FOR DEMOCRACY! NO TAXATION WITHOUT REPRESENTATION! DOWN WITH THE WATER RATES, UP WITH DEMOCRACY!!! and more. The community joined Pastors Reggie Flynn and Latrelle Holmes, along with the Flint Occupy Public Act 4 Task Force, and Stand up for Democracy.

The citizens of Flint are waking up to the shocking reality of Public Act 4. They see that the law robs citizens of its democracy by displacing local elected officials with a Governor appointed ‘Superman’ called an Emergency Manager (EM). They are now painfully aware

that the ‘manager’ can dissolve union contracts, sell off public assets, and even dissolve cities. (For example, will Pontiac, MI now be annexed between Bloomfield Hills and Auburn Hills?)

As a result of a statewide movement, Public Act 4 has been suspended for now, after a lengthy court battle to put a referendum to overturn the law on the November ballot. However, the Flint Council is waking up out of its slumber and taking the issue to court since Governor Snyder chose to revert back to the old Emergency Financial Manager Law (Public Act 72). The Hocus Pocus still leaves Flint with “Taxation without Representation,” although the Manager has less power. The day before the law was suspended, Flint’s Emergency Manager issued 30 Resolutions (i.e. edicts) on his last day as the EM. One of these was to sell a downtown abandoned building (Genesee Towers) for \$1 after the citizens of Flint had paid a tax levy of \$9 million to pay off a legal judg-

ment pertaining to it. The Uptown Reinvestment Corporation is the lucky buyer. What’s more, they will receive an infusion of federal funds (around \$750,000) to tear the structure down!

After winning the right to collectively bargain in the 1937 Flint Sit Down strike and after making ground breaking gains in the area of civil rights, who would have dreamt that we would find ourselves fighting this battle for democracy today?

Technology and outsourcing has replaced us, and our labor is no longer needed to build cars and trucks. PA 4 allows corporate interests to exploit the situation. With no citizen voice to stand in their way, and using the Emergency Manager as a corporate shield, they have a clear shot to levy oppressive water, garbage, and street light fees on citizens who can ill afford it. They are changing union contracts by edict. They aim to expropriate assets such as golf courses, our senior centers, and even public parks. Like vultures, they are af-



Calling for an end to emergency manager “dictatorship” rule in Flint and across the state, people rally against Public Act 4 on the lawn of Flint City Hall. PHOTO/DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM

ter the assets that we the people have built and maintained for decades. The people of Flint are tough and resilient. Our history has proven this.

We refuse to be a “dispos-

able” class, subject to the agenda of corporate forces. We have an opportunity to make our case on November 6 with a No vote on Public Act 4.

OCCUPY RETURNS TO WALL STREET

This article is written by the editors from material sent by New York correspondent Andi Sosin.

“What about the homeless?
What about the daycares?
Can’t we get a break?
We’re not gonna take it
Is anybody okay?
No, no one is safe.”

“So you’re gonna shut our schools down and our shelters and our welfare.

They get all the favors and the sweet deals, and we get foreclosed.

6100 teachers getting laid off because of your greed.

Worried ‘bout our children ‘cause they won’t have the programs they need.

People, are you listening? It’s a crime scene.

Stand up and fight back!”

These were some of the chants used by protesters who gathered on September 17, the first anniversary of the Occupy Wall Street encampment in New York City. Protesters attempted to block access to the New York Stock Exchange with a “People’s Wall.” Organizers planned the protest to show that the Occupy movement still had vitality, and to ex-



One year anniversary protests by Occupy Wall Street in New York. PHOTO/JAMES FASSINGER

press continuing frustration with the economic system which benefits the rich and the corporations at the expense of the people. The police arrested 185 people, including many photo journalists according to the New York Times. Some journalists were not even told what their “crime” was. The violent attacks on OWS shows that the powers that be are fearful of any challenges to the

system.

Protesters, nonetheless, marched though the streets, waving banners and banging drums while accompanied by bands playing “Happy Birthday.” At several points during the morning, crowds of protesters numbering in the hundreds briefly blocked intersections before being dispersed. Several demonstrations took place

outside financial institutions. Some people were arrested at a Bank of America branch opposite Zuccotti Park. Later the police arrested about a half-dozen people who sat down in front of Goldman Sachs headquarters on West Street while a crowd chanted “arrest the bankers.”

“To mark the one year anniversary of Occupy Wall Street, a coalition of students, educa-

tors, and community groups will host a second Free University Week—creating education that is democratic, critical, and accessible to all in Madison Square Park from Sept. 18 - 22. Participants will gather in solidarity with Occupy Wall Street’s one year anniversary, as well as the recent Chicago teachers’ strike, the recent victory of the ‘Hot and Crusty’ workers’ occupation in New York city, and the recent victory of the Quebec student movement that defeated a 75% tuition increase and ousted Premier Jean Charest.” (from the Occupy Wall Street Newsletter.)

The OWS anniversary protests continue to announce to the financial rulers of America that “we are here, we have our eye on you and we will not allow you to proceed without taking our needs into consideration.” These protests express the deep division in society between wealth and poverty and will continue to attract the dispossessed, those whose labor is no longer needed by the high tech economy. The solution is for the people to get hold of the corporations and reconstruct society on a new cooperative foundation.

Visit Occupy Wall Street at <http://occupywallst.org>

FIGHTING FOR DIVESTMENT FROM CORRUPT PRIVATE HEALTH INSURANCE INDUSTRY

By Katie Robbins

Leading advocacy organizations dedicated to single-payer health care are committed to pursuing a divestment campaign from private health insurance companies in order to transform the treatment of health care as a commodity into a basic human right for all people in the U.S.

“We are responsible for our investments, and particularly as health care workers and patients, we see the immorality of the private health insurance companies as they deny payment for care in order to create huge profits for shareholders,” states Dr. Rob Stone, M.D.

The Presbyterian Church (USA) became the first major institution to take steps towards divestment from private health insurance. On July 7, the church’s national assembly unanimously passed a resolution stating they will “evaluate the variance between church principles of universal access and affordability on the one hand and corporate objectives on the other.”

The resolution passed after moving testimony was delivered by Rev. Dr. Johanna W.H. van Wijk-Bos, the widow of the original author of the resolution,



Rev. A. David Bos who passed away from a sudden case of pneumonia last year, stating before the committee:

“As he lay in the hospital, struggling with the oxygen mask provided to give his lungs the air they needed, he spoke haltingly what would be his last words on this earth: ‘How much will this cost?’ He died six days later. Three weeks after his death a

representative from our health insurance company informed me in a telephone call that they rejected the claim to pay for my husband’s hospitalization and medical costs because of a ‘pre-existing condition.’”

On the heels of this successful endorsement from the Presbyterian Church, activists gathered inside and outside the pension fund giant TIAA-CREF’s shareholder

meeting in New York City to call attention to their holdings in private health insurance. Members of TIAA-CREF were shocked to learn that private health insurance companies are considered part of their socially responsible investment portfolio.

Sandy Fox, psychiatric social worker from Pittsburgh, PA, received applause from the other attendees when she asked Presi-

dent and CEO Roger Ferguson, Jr. about these holdings:

“How do you justify including health insurance companies—CIGNA, Humana, Aetna, Coventry, and WellPoint—in CREF-Social Choice? Private health insurance companies add enormous cost but no value to health care. Furthermore, these companies violate three of the five social criteria for inclusion in the fund including:

- 1) NOT “devoted to human rights;”
- 2) NOT “dedicated to producing high-quality and safe products;” and
- 3) NOT “managed in an exemplary and ethical manner.”

...We come to you today to demand that you immediately divest from these ruthless companies.”

As the Campaign’s mission statement says “**We have nothing to lose. Health insurance companies have everything to lose as their stock prices drop and their influence wanes.** Go to your religious organization, your union, your pension plan, your 401k advisor, your university endowment, your city council, your friends and neighbors, and tell them it’s time to get the health insurers out!”

1493: Uncovering the New World Columbus Created by Charles C. Mann

Book Review

By Chuck Parker

This book tells the story of how a new world was built after Columbus first landed in the Americas in 1492. The trade that was established between the previously isolated continents connected the world into a single economic system—now referred to as globalization. It also transformed the biological life of the world by transporting plants, animals, and even deadly diseases to continents where they had been unknown. The biggest problem facing the ruling classes of Europe was where to get enough labor for the mines and plantations they envisioned.

In 1493 the American continents were populated by millions of indigenous peoples. Between 1550 and 1840, 11.7 million Africans were brought over as slaves, and only 3.4 million Europeans immigrated. The inadvertent introduction of diseases such as

malaria, and smallpox were devastating to the Indian population, which had no immunity to them. Some West Africans possessed an acquired and inherited genetic partial immunity to malaria. They were more “cost-effective” than either the Indians or the European indentured servants who often died from the disease in their first year of slavery.

The book demolishes the myth that the slaves passively accepted their fate and did not resist and rebel. Everywhere slaves ran away to the mountains, forests, and swamps where they lived with Indians and fought the slave-owners. The largest settlement was in Brazil and had 30,000 residents. It endured 90 years despite repeated attacks.

When the slave trade began the racism of the Europeans was not color-based. The Spaniard’s racism was against Muslims whom they had been fighting for hundreds of years. Many of the conquistadors were of African descent. Nor were they preju-

diced against the Indians because of their dark skin. Spain’s King ordered his men to convert Indians to Christianity and marry them in church weddings. Later by 1600, the Spanish elite found themselves surrounded by a population of mixed ancestry, and they feared that they were losing control. They began to impose color prejudice with scores of regulations. The English, Dutch and French plantation owners followed suit.

The book “1493” teaches us the true history of human suffering and death endured by our ancestors at the hands of a ruling class blinded by their drive for wealth. Today the world is on the verge of another period of monumental change. We must struggle to gain conscious control of the forces which are changing our world. Nuclear war, global warming, and industrial pollution join the ancient threats of disease and starvation to compel us to act decisively in defense of humanity.

Speakers available on the 45th anniversary of the Detroit Rebellion and the League of Revolutionary Black Workers

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

— Darryl “Waistline” Mitchell

General Gordon Baker and Darryl “Waistline” Mitchell, and others are available to speak. For information, contact Speakers for a New America. Call 800-691-6888 or email info@speakersforanewamerica.com

HOUSING RIGHTS CAMPAIGN RISES FROM THE ASHES OF OCCUPY NASHVILLE

By Will York and Mary Anne Morrow Barbour®

This is an interview with William P. York, Attorney at Law and member of Nashville Housing Rights campaign.

NASHVILLE, TN — The Nashville Housing Rights Campaign was naturally born as an outcropping of Occupy Nashville. People interested in housing justice issues said in about December 2011 that they wanted to begin a group, arranged a meeting time and place, and advertised it to other organizers. A huge benefit of horizontal organization—like we experienced with Occupy Wall Street—is that mobilizing people is quite easy when it isn't coercive.

Through the Housing Rights Campaign's efforts, a 78-year-old woman's home was kept from foreclosure by J.P. Morgan Chase after we accumulated 105,000 signatures on an online petition. We believed—and still believe—that a handful of dedicated people can change the way we look at property rights and housing issues. We also assisted a number of other Nashvillians and helped them avert the foreclosure process altogether. Near the beginning of 2012, we turned our attention to empowering tenants and focusing on issues related to homelessness. Around this time the Tennessee legislature passed their draconian anti-homeless law (HB 2638), which made it a crime to sleep or appear to camp on state property.

The Housing Rights Campaign, together with concerned citizens, protested at Nashville's Legislative Plaza. We slept in the cold to bring attention to Tennessee punishing the homeless—a crime for which the state should

be penalized.

Cities like Nashville, preoccupied with public perception, pass laws that make it a crime to panhandle or sleep in parks. These cities fear the loss of revenue. When revenue is deemed more valuable than the existence of people, this is the instant you know capitalism has failed us.

As part of the Housing Rights Campaign's efforts, we occasionally offer a "Know Your Rights" seminar where a law professor and I talk to tenants about their rights under state law.

We live in a world corrupted by capitalism. We must expose the weaknesses of capitalism in regard to America's current crisis: foreclosures, banking, homelessness, debt, elderly, etc. We empower tenants on how to organize themselves to fight for housing justice. Focusing on tenants' rights issues reframes the discussion on property rights. A union of tenants, uniting to fight for fairness and respect—and eventually the abolition of the rent system—helps to equalize the power. Then the united tenants find a sense of purpose in their actions and are more willing to stand up for their interests. It's time, since the interests of the 1% have been served long enough.

One great thing about Nashville Housing Rights Campaign is that we are able to meld different interests. If I am able to play a role in the legal system or deal with tenants on their legal issues, then that's one for the 99%. Access to quality legal representation is incredibly difficult for the poor, who may be less likely to understand the law.

I feel incredibly gratified to be on the front lines. My work for the oppressed is where I find the most meaning in law and my life.



Demonstrators march against evictions and foreclosures in Chicago.

PHOTO/BRETT JELINEK

The vultures are circling Buyers of thousands of foreclosed homes threaten San Francisco's North Bay region

By Dave Ransom

SAN FRANCISCO, CA — The vultures circling over San Francisco's North Bay aren't just the feathered carcass-eaters anymore. Now they include venture capitalists feeding on the region's thousands of foreclosed homes and families—and they are positioning themselves to gorge on many more.

Oakland-based Waypoint Homes, for instance, calls itself "a next generation real-estate company." It holds title to more than a thousand homes. And it is attracting serious capital to buy several thousand more—\$2 billion from Silicon Valley venture capitalists and real-estate investors.

One of the biggest is the \$6-billion venture-capital firm GI Partners of Menlo Park. GIP's founder, Rick Magnuson, won his spurs as a financier at Merrill Lynch and at the Japanese global investment bank Nomura.

Waypoint buys foreclosed homes from banks or in auctions on the courthouse steps, gener-

ally at a steep discount. After fixing them up, it rents them out for a good deal less than the original mortgage payment.

That sounds good until you realize that, if the banks had offered the families living in the homes the same deal they offered Waypoint, those families could probably have avoided foreclosure entirely.

McKinley Capital Partners, another Oakland-based, company now owns hundreds more Bay Area homes—and thousands nationally. They are buying "as many as they can possibly get their hands on," says their rental manager.

McKinley's billion-dollar backing comes from Och-Ziff Capital Management, a New York based, \$29-billion global investment firm founded by a finance banker at Goldman Sachs.

But McKinley has its own strong connections with big banks and big politicians. Executive director Laurence Pelosi handled real estate for Morgan Stanley—after he left the big real-estate developer Lennar Corporation. And Pelosi is a nephew of House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, herself (with her husband Paul Pelosi) a major investor in Bay Area real estate.

Across the country, other bil-

lion-dollar investors are lining up to buy thousands of homes at a steep discount. They expect to make money hand over fist—an average 8-percent annual profit from rents alone—at a time when 10-year Treasury bonds are paying less than 2 percent.

Big holdings of rental homes are becoming "a new asset class" for investors, they say—ranking with stocks and bonds.

This spring, the Obama administration announced a plan to sell foreclosed homes owned by the government's housing agencies—Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, and the FHA.

But the hedge funds and private-equity firms are pressuring the administration to offer them cheap financing and guarantee they will be bidding on lots of as many as a thousand homes at a time.

Who currently holds the mortgages to these homes? We the People do—the 99%. Fannie Mae, Freddy Mac, and the FHA—all government backed and bailed out by the taxpayers—hold half the country's mortgages, dumped there by the banks when the housing bubble burst.

Why sell them to the hedge funds? Why not own them ourselves?

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@peopletribune.org or call 800-691-6888.

CABRINI EVICTIONS: Feds pay Chicago Housing Authority for empty apartments while homelessness grows



Former Cabrini Row House resident Henry Warfield points to windows improperly boarded up by the Chicago Housing Authority. The glass has been removed, allowing snow and rain to seep in and cause water damage, mold infestation and blight. Many residents say this was done purposely in order to force demolition. This translates into more contracts for private corporations.

PHOTO/JOSEPH PEERY

By Joseph Peery

According to an analysis done by the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless (CCH) there were 105,338 homeless people in the city of Chicago during the 2011-2012 school year, a 12% increase over last year. Add to this the fact that there are still 40,000 families on a Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) Family Wait List in need of housing. And yet the CHA after tearing its high-rise buildings down, continues mass evictions and relocations of families keeping almost 20% of its 45,000 units offline.

An exposé in the July/August *Chicago Reporter*, entitled "Home Evasion" by Angela Caputo, shows that the Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the federal agency that oversees public housing nationally, continues to pay the CHA millions for the unoccupied units as if they were occupied. On page 9 the article points out that 1) the bulk of the units are empty for planning

purposes, which is against written federal rules, 2) justification for keeping them empty is because of court litigation, though most of them aren't named in a lawsuit, and 3) the majority of offline units sit on prime North Side real estate.

The Cabrini Homes Row Houses sit on and are completely surrounded by "prime North Side real estate." It is only about 1/2 mile from the Gold Coast, an area that has been referred to as the highest concentration of expensive real estate in the United States. Of the 586 total apartments in Cabrini, not 20%, but 79% of them are vacant. About 452 of the apartments went into litigation after CHA broke its promise to renovate them and move needy families back in. Instead a 10-foot fence was put up around them and they're now targeted for demolition. The CHA was notorious for not repairing anything in the apartments even when people lived in them. The vacant units are in need of even

more repairs now because the CHA didn't board some of them up properly, leaving them open to snow and rain resulting in water damage and mold infestation.

About five years ago, 146 apartments on the west end of Cabrini were renovated at a cost of \$46 million. The math works out to just over \$315 thousand per unit. For that kind of money, each poor family could have moved to the Gold Coast and owned their own home. Instead, private corporations made a killing, while Chicago's homeless face misery and death on the streets. People were left scratching their heads when they found out the CHA intends to demolish the part of the row houses that was just renovated. Understanding that we live in a capitalist system which is meant to benefit capitalists, not the poor, clears up all that confusion.

Merced County Union High School board has contempt for the 99%

By Sister Occupy/Christine Meeusen

I made a complete nuisance of myself at a school board meeting at Merced High in May. I went an hour early to stand in the sun on a busy corner and protest with the bus drivers who lost their jobs and the families and teens who were suddenly deprived of a sacred and necessary service. I held a sign that said "Your school board spent \$4.7 million on swimming pools this year and now they are laying off bus drivers?"

Approximately a dozen people spoke to the school board under the 'three minute' rule. Half could not get through their speeches without tears. One young girl sobbed. One man told of his two Downs' syndrome children that can manage a bus, but not the long walk to school safely. Another spoke of the pedophiles and the road dangers. It was heart-wrenching and made me angry. Down the block in the Beachwood Franklin area, a group of "concerned citizens" are going after State grants to make the routes safe for kids to walk to school. The

more the people talked, the more I watched the faces of the school board. Stone cold. Don't care. Not their problem. Enraged by their lack of response, as each of the last six speakers concluded, as the applause died down, I said, "But we have new swimming pools!" It was my way of returning contempt for contempt.

The school board here doesn't answer to the people. The voices of the people don't go in their meeting minutes and the board members don't answer any accusations or questions from the public. No one thought to write in the minutes that "Twelve concerned citizens, directly affected by our bad management, got up and gave us hell." That would be transparency, something this board doesn't practice. The response, every time, to an outraged public is, "no comment." How's that for public servant-hood?

Funding that was previously available is being removed via state budget cuts. If we can't bus our farm-kids to school, perhaps an attempt with the State to recognize Merced's unique impoverished situation would have al-



© James Fassinger | stillscenes.com
Occupy Wall Street, New York City.

PHOTO/JAMES FASSINGER

lowed a plan that pumped the money into improving what we have, keeping and expanding bus services, making the streets safe to bike and walk to school. We don't know if any attempt was made to negotiate with the State in regard to modified plans and the grant money because our

school board operates behind closed doors and just announces its decisions with an unsettling arrogance.

Our school board and all of education across the valley are under attack. The taxpayers voted against all the propositions that would have closed

the funding gap. Yet, we have a new school coming, we have new swimming pools, we have fifteen newly unemployed families facing poverty, and a whole lot of kids who just lost their basic right to attend school without walking five miles to get there.

THE NAACP IS NO LONGER RELEVANT

By Rev. Edward Pinkney

The NAACP is doing very little to organize and help the African American community. They are living in the past and reaping the benefits of our ancestors. Our ancestors have been betrayed by a group of greedy, dishonest, members of the African American middle class. The majority of them are concerned about material things and fronting for the status quo.

Too many African Americans have been forced out of the NAACP, ignored by the NAACP, expelled from the NAACP and labeled by mainstream media because they work to achieve the NAACP goals. The NAACP is not operating in good faith. The NAACP is robbing the Black community. The NAACP is misrepresenting the Black community.

We demand Corporate America and other institutions stop giving the money to the NAACP with the intent of helping African Americans. We demand the NAACP publish the names of institutions and the

amount of money received from corporations during the past two decades.

We demand corporations in all states publish the amount of money given to the NAACP at the local, state, regional and national levels.

We demand the NAACP stop putting money before members and African Americans.

Now is the time to change the rules of the game to ensure that African Americans understand how the NAACP operates.

NAACP lost influence by allowing corporate dollars to control them. The NAACP no longer supports the communities.

The NAACP IS NO LONGER RELEVANT.

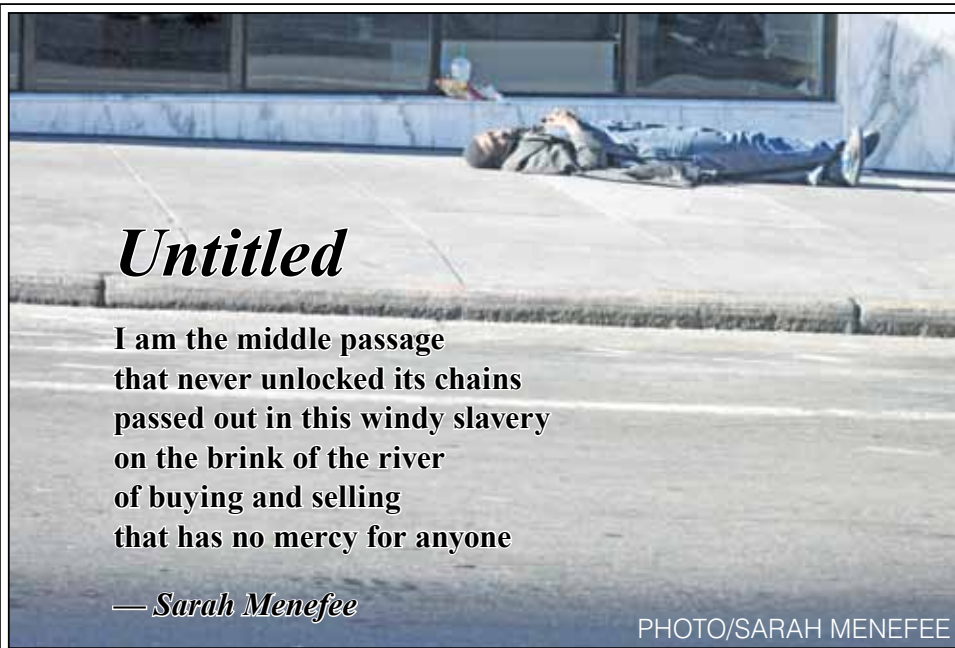
In Benton Harbor, Whirlpool purchased the NAACP. Corporations all over the country are buying out the NAACP.

The NAACP is selling you out. I am calling for a boycott of the NAACP and for all members to burn their membership cards.



Rev. Edward Pinkney at a protest in Benton Harbor, MI. PHOTO/BRETT JELINEK

Pastor Emeritus Dr. Jeremiah Wright will speak in Benton Harbor on November 10 2012, at 7pm at the Fabulous Crystal Star Square Entertainment and Conference Center 1134 Crystal Avenue, Benton Harbor, MI. Donation: \$50. This is a fundraiser for Black Autonomy Network Community Organization (BANCO). Send check payable to BANCO, 1940 Union, Benton Harbor, MI 49022. Call 269-925-0001 for information



Untitled

I am the middle passage
that never unlocked its chains
passed out in this windy slavery
on the brink of the river
of buying and selling
that has no mercy for anyone

— Sarah Menefee

PHOTO/SARAH MENEFE

HELP DISTRIBUTE THE PEOPLE'S TRIBUNE!

The *People's Tribune* prints the truth. Call 800-691-6888 or email info@peopletribune.org to order a bundle of papers to get out in your city. We ask for a donation of 30 cents per copy. We get no grants and have no paid staff. Send your check to PT, PO Box 3524, Chicago, IL 60654-3524 or order via paypal on our website www.peopletribune.org

Appeal to People's Tribune readers

As an independent press, we rely exclusively on donations. The *People's Tribune* offers its pages to those in the movement who want to get coverage of their struggles out to others. At the same time it offers analysis, direction and solutions to the problems our society faces. We tell the truth!

We operate on a shoestring budget, with a dedicated all-volunteer staff. Printing, shipping and mailing costs have continued to rise. While donations and sustainers are increasing, they are not meeting our expenses.

Simply stated, we need money. We need to raise \$15,000. Your regular donations, large and small are the only solution. For instance, 26 sustainers at only \$25 per month, plus 60 sustainers at only \$10 per month equals \$15,000 annually.

Please become a consistent, regular donor to the *People's Tribune*. Become a monthly sustainer now. Donate via pay pal at www.peopletribune.org or send check to PO Box 3524, Chicago, IL 60654-3524.

Thanks in advance.

From the Editorial Board of the People's Tribune

People's Tribune
P.O. Box 3524
Chicago, Illinois 60654-3524
Return service requested

PRESORTED
STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
CHICAGO, IL
PERMIT NO. 874