

# PEOPLE'S WORLD

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## Out of mouths of babes

By Frank Chapman



**T**his story is a familiar one: Michael Brown, an African American teenager, and his friend are walking in the street. There is an encounter with the police, not because a crime has been committed but because they have been racially profiled by a white police officer. Words are exchanged and there ensues an alleged physical tussle. The two unarmed teenagers run. The officer shoots at them several times. Michael Brown stops running and with hands in the air shouts out, “I don’t have a gun, stop shooting!” The police officer continues shooting; Brown collapses into the street and bleeds to death under the broiling, August sun.

No matter what version or twist the police put on this tragic unfolding of events in Ferguson, Missouri, there is one unalterable fact and that is an unarmed teenager was shot multiple times by a cop who was bent on killing him. One who is trained in the use of firearms does not shoot an unarmed person with their hands in the air unless he intends to murder.

The media has focused on the so-called “rioting” and the police with dogs, clubs and guns ready were poised for making the usual blood bath to put down the rebellion. But the determined will of the people to stop police crimes also erupted in organized mass protest and cries of “no justice

no peace!” We can say to our sisters and brothers in the struggle in Ferguson thank you for not being quiet and tame in the face of death stalking our communities like a hungry lion. Thank you for your outrage and for finding the courage to stand up too police who are more and more behaving like an organized lynch mob. Criminals who operate under the authority of the badge are the worst kind of criminals because the system will not jail them or prosecute them when they commit crimes

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against African Americans and Latinos. So we say to the powers that be don’t you dare counsel us about “rioting” until you stop these lawless acts of cops who kill and brutalize our people with impunity!

**It seems like police are about to go to war with the people.**

Who do you think you are that you can murder and abuse us and spew your racist venom at us and then chide us about being outraged?

The population of Ferguson is at least 60 percent African American and its poverty is double Missouri's average. While Black people are struggling with poverty there is also in Ferguson Emerson Electric, a \$24 billion company with 132,000 employees all around the world. In an area where there are billions of dollars in revenue, poverty is commonplace and police repression rampant. This is the reality of the United States of North America, which claims to be concerned about democracy in Iraq but can't take a stand against the unwarranted violence perpetrated against its own citizens and residents.

We must make this a political struggle because we are confronted with political repression with a racist cutting edge. In our righteous anger, we must not just engage in rants of rage. We must start now to organize people to force our political representatives to enact laws that will empower

the people to hold the police accountable for the crimes they commit.

We need a strong democratic voice through an elected Civilian Police Accountability Council. That's what we are fighting for here in Chicago, but police crimes are not confined to Chicago we must fight for this everywhere. Ferguson included.

We must call upon and demand that local, state and federal government outlaw police crimes and establish civilian control over the police.

In the aftermath of the rebellion in Ferguson, where police fired rubber bullets and tear gas at non-violent protestors, an 11-year-old boy said to a local news station, "It seems like police are about to go to war with the people."

The insight of this child should resonate in the White House, the statehouses, and city halls because the time to stop this war is long overdue.



**Frank Chapman writes for Peoplesworld.org.**

## **Golden Gate Bridge workers authorize a strike**

By Mike Hall

**Management receive increases in their salaries, while workers have fallen 12 percent behind for cost of living.**

**T**he 450 workers in the 13 unions that comprise the Golden Gate Bridge Labor Coalition have authorized a strike if a new agreement cannot be reached. The ferry deckhands and captains; bus servicers and mechanics; bridge ironworkers and inspectors; and construction tradesmen and women have been working without a contract since July 1.

While the workers who operate the bridge, buses and ferries in San Francisco Bay have authorized a strike, the Labor Coalition continues to bargain in good faith, and no strike date has been set.

The Golden Gate Bridge Highway and Transportation District, employers of some 450 workers, proposed a three-year contract that would increase the cost of employees' health care premiums, negating a minimal wage increase.

During the recession, employees agreed to lower wages and no raises in response to the district's financial concerns. Tolls have increased 20

percent; toll takers were laid off; and coalition concessions led to large reserves and increases in management's salaries while the workers have fallen 12 percent behind the Bay Area cost of living, Alex Tonisson, co-chair of the coalition, said:

There is still time to turn this around. The public can make its voice heard that no one-not commuters, not the district and certainly not the workers-wants a strike. It is a last resort, but we are prepared to do that.

The Golden Gate Bridge Labor Coalition includes the following unions: International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE) Local 21, the Inlandboatmen's Union-ILWU (IBU-ILWU), Teamsters locals 665 and 856, Machinists (IAM) Local 1414, Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association (MEBA) (Captains), Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 6, Laborers (LI-UNA), Operating Engineers (IUOE), Plumbers and Pipe Fitters (UA), Carpenters and Plasterers and Cement Masons (OPCMIA).

# NAACP blasts court refusal to halt voter restrictions in North Carolina



Special to PeoplesWorld.org

**O**n Friday, a federal judge denied attempts by North Carolina Gov. Pat McCrory and his administration to have the N.C. NAACP's legal challenge to the massive voter suppression law dismissed. Instead, he ruled that the case will be set for a full trial in 2015. Judge Thomas Schroeder also declined to issue a preliminary injunction that would have stopped the many restrictions on voting to go into effect this November. He said he did not think it would cause irreparable harm to allow the law to be enforced this year. Many voters will almost certainly be disenfranchised this fall, because of the cuts to early voting, the elimination of same-day registration, straight ticket voting and cutbacks of provisional ballots for people who mistakenly turn up at the wrong polling site. In response to Judge Schroeder's ruling, Rev. Dr. William J. Barber, II, president of the North Carolina NAACP, issued the following statement:

"If one elderly or young person, black, white or Latino decides she won't vote because of the shorter early voting weeks, the elimination of same-day voting, the confusing ballots without straight party voting and other sections of this voter suppression law that are still standing because of today's court decision, that is indeed an irreparable harm. The N.C.

NAACP understood when we moved for a preliminary injunction, that the bar we had to jump over was quite high. We knew we had to persuade the Court the harm this cruel law would do to African Americans and other minorities would be irreparable if it were allowed to be enforced during the 2014 November election. The Court found that allowing election officials and others to ask voters whether they had a photo ID—even though such ID's are not required for two more years—would not cause irreparable harm. "The franchise is not a partisan issue. It is a fundamental issue of our rights as guaranteed to us by the 14th and 15th amendments to the U.S. Constitution and by the 1868 Reconstruction Constitution here in North Carolina. It is a moral issue. North Carolina was the first state to pass a discriminatory voting law since the Supreme Court's *Shelby Co. v. Holder* decision on the Voting Rights Act, which stopped the enforcement of Section 5 last June and reduced critical protections for voters of color. "This case proved that Section 4 must be fixed so that the Voting Rights Act can guarantee Southern states are covered by preclearance," said Barber. "This case exposes the level to which extremist groups will go to suppress the vote.

**Judge Thomas Schroeder declined to issue a preliminary injunction that would have stopped the many restrictions on voting.**

## LOCAL NEWS

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### Voting Rights Act signed

By Mike Hall

Forty-nine years ago President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and that has been a cornerstone of the civil rights movement, by ensuring that every American citizen, regardless of race or language, has equal access to the vote. But about a year ago, the U.S. Supreme Court gutted the Voting Rights Act. In addition, the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights warns that states and localities around the country are making changes to elections that would take away the right to vote for some people based solely on the color of their skin or the language they speak. Since 2010, 22 states have passed laws restricting the right to vote. There is a bill in Congress that would restore the ability of the Voting Rights Act to protect voters nationwide from discrimination at the ballot box. The Voting Rights Amendment Act (H.R. 3899/S. 1945) was introduced in January and, except for one Senate hearing, has seen no further action in the Senate or House. Top of Form

You can help. Click here to sign a petition to your Senate and House members urging them to move forward with the Voting Rights Amendment Act. Every day Congress fails to live up to its constitutional obligation to protect the right to vote, it gives a free pass to voting discrimination.

### Guatemala: Conservación de Áreas Protegidas Marino-Costera

AGN

Guatemala inauguró el proyecto Conservación y Uso Sostenible de la Biodiversidad en Áreas Protegidas Marino-Costeras (APM), con el objetivo de resguardar las especies del Pacífico y Caribe guatemalteco, así como lograr el desarrollo de las comunidades que habitan esas áreas. Esta iniciativa fue presentada por el Ministerio de Ambiente y Recursos Naturales (MARN), el Consejo Nacional de Áreas Protegidas (Conap) y cuenta con el acompañamiento del Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo (PNUD) y el Fondo de Medio Ambiente Mundial (GEF, por sus siglas en inglés).

Este nuevo proyecto se basa en tres ejes primordiales, el fortalecimiento del marco legal y político, mejorar las capacidades individuales para conservar ecosistemas, y atención de amenazas en sectores claves, tales como pesca, turismo y desarrollo urbano.

Este plan será implementado a lo largo de cinco años, de enero del 2014 a enero del 2018, en los departamentos San Marcos, Retalhuleu, Escuintla, Santa Rosa y Jutiapa y se enfocará en la población más vulnerable al cambio climático, de manera que se mejoren los servicios básicos como el acceso al agua, saneamiento y servicios de energía renovable, entre otros. La inversión económica del proyecto será de 5.3 millones de dólares (41.3 millones de quetzales), los cuales serán ejecutados en cinco años.

Según la titular de la cartera de Ambiente Michelle Martínez, el trabajo conjunto con Conap ha sido clave en la realización del proyecto.

“Queremos que se lleve un trabajo sinérgico con los propósitos del Conap y con la política marino-costera nuestra”.

La línea costera de este país centroamericano se extiende 402 kilómetros, de los cuales 254 corresponden al Pacífico y 148 al Caribe, donde conviven 1.012 especies de fauna, principalmente cordados (69.33 por ciento), moluscos (27.67) y artrópodos (3). El representante del PNUD, Mauricio Ramírez, calificó la iniciativa como un paso importante para el manejo de los recursos naturales, poniendo el bienestar humano.

Las amenazas más significativas a la biodiversidad marino-costera, particularmente en el Pacífico, de Guatemala son: a) pérdida de hábitat y cobertura natural debido al desarrollo no planificado, b) contaminación causada por el desarrollo costero no planificado (expansión urbana, industrial y turística) y transporte marino no regulado, c) erosión y sedimentación, d) sobre explotación de recursos marinos costeros, incluyendo prácticas de pesca no sostenibles, e) especies exóticas invasoras (EEI) y e) cambio climático (CC), según un informe presentado por Conap. La misión de Conap: “Asegurar la conservación y el uso sostenible de la diversidad biológica y las áreas protegidas de Guatemala, así como los bienes y servicios naturales que estas proveen a las presentes y futuras generaciones, a través de diseñar, coordinar y velar por la aplicación de políticas, normas, incentivos y estrategias, en colaboración con otros actores.”

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