

# A NATIONAL CALL

# To Create — Build & Multiply People's Power Assemblies

*Things are already bad —  
and they are about to get  
a lot worse!*

The people must prepare to defend ourselves against the life-threatening and ever-intensifying economic and social misery that Wall Street and its politicians are imposing on us, including endless war.

**WE, THE UNDERSIGNED**, propose to all who are concerned about defending the economic, social and political rights of the 99%, that this period, starting with the conventions of the major parties at the end of the summer, through the elections and into 2013, be dedicated to the convening of People's Power Assemblies, at the local and regional level, and when ready, at the national level.

Reverend Cortly "C.D." Witherspoon, president of the Baltimore Southern Christian Leadership Conference, said at a rally in Maryland for Trayvon Martin: "The political establishments, both local and national, have proven to be bankrupt; they have done virtually nothing to protect or serve the people. **It's time for the people to organize themselves and to build people's power.**"

He was speaking not only of specific circumstances in Sanford, Fla., that allowed George Zimmerman to walk free for more than 40 days after killing Trayvon Martin, but of the fact that politicians and other officials at every level of government have failed to defend the interests of working people in this country, especially the most affected, most of whom are people of color.

**There is a dual crisis at play.** One aspect is the crisis of the economic system, which is global. More than merely a crisis of the financial markets, it is of the system of capitalism itself. And it is the workers who suffer acutely, for workers are thrown out of the workplaces, from their homes, and left destitute. From Greece and Spain to Detroit and Los Angeles, the banks' demand for more and more money is crushing the lives of workers and poor people, especially young people. Funds for weapon systems, however, and continuing or new wars such as in Syria and Iran, are guaranteed.

**The other crisis is political.** The cold and brutal truth is that no matter who wins the 2012 Presidential Election, cutbacks, wage cuts, and unemployment are going to get 10 times worse in the future. So-called "democracy" as practiced in the U.S. has never been more meaningless than now. The word is little more than a cover for the dictatorship of the big banks.

No major institution or government entity is protecting workers, especially the most disenfranchised, Black, Latino/a, Native and other workers of color who have faced historical oppression. Both political parties go along with cutting back programs that address important social needs. Both are attacking public- and private-sector unions, allowing foreclosures to continue at a rapid pace, closing and privatizing schools, continued destruction of the environment, deporting undocumented immigrants at an unprecedented pace, and sitting back while youth of color face rampant police brutality and a jobless, uncertain future.

**What is to be done then?** Regardless of what button or lever is chosen in the elections, the primary factor in ensuring change is action and struggle. The eight-hour workday, Social Security, Civil Rights, the right to vote, unionization, Unemployment Insurance — every progressive law or right was won and secured through struggle in the streets. In this period, the Occupy Wall Street movement opened the door, but it's just the beginning. More is necessary to widen and sustain the rebellion against the 1%'s "take no prisoners" war on the rest of us.

**A higher level of organization is called for:** a block to block, neighborhood to neighborhood, city to city, state to state, region to region approach; a national network of **People's Assemblies** — assemblies designed to empower at every level, that take up the interests of working people, especially the most disenfranchised, assemblies that defend our rights and fight for real democracy, assemblies where the least of us is made whole by a deepening social contract that puts working people's needs and rights before the interests of the wealthy, corporations and financial institutions.

Such an organization would be the highest expression of democracy. **The People's Power Assemblies** are the vehicles through which we struggle, whether it is defending a home-owner from eviction, occupying a school from being closed, seizing vacant property, fighting against racism, sexism or LGBT oppression.

*Let the PPA be what the government has failed to be. Onward. Build People's Power Assemblies.*

The organizations below urge you to sign on to this call. Please reply right away the call so that your support will be reflected when it is re-issued during the Republican and Democratic party conventions.

■ **Rep. Cynthia McKinney** 2008 Green Party Prez Candidate ■ **Rev. C.D. Witherspoon**, Brd. Chair Baltimore SCLC ■ **Chris Silvera**, Secty. Treas., Teamsters L 808 ■ **Sharon Black**, Baltimore Peoples Assembly ■ **Victor Toro**, La Peña del Bronx ■ **Clarence Thomas**, Int'l Longshore & Warehouse Union L 10 ■ **Larry Holmes**, Occupy for Jobs ■ **Bryan Perlmutter**, NC State Univ., SDS ■ **Walter Smith**, Pres., Nat'l Postal Mail Handlers Union, L 334 Charleston, SC ■ **Community-Labor United for Postal Jobs & Services-CLUPJS** ■ **Committee to Stop FBI Repression** ■ **Eddie Oquendo**, Nat'l Postal Mail Handlers Union SC L 334 ■ **Philippine Forum Baynihan Community Center NYC** ■ **Zaina Alsous**, UNC Chapel Hill Student Action w/ Workers ■ **Brenda Stokely** Million Worker March Movement ■ **Pam Africa**, Int'l Concerned Families & Friends of Mumia Abu-Jamal ■ **Deloyd Parker**, Exec. Dir, Shape Center Houston ■ **Larry Hales**, PPA Staff Organizer ■ **Delbert Jackson**, Occupy Houston, Occupy the Hood ■ **Leon Purnell**, Pres., Baltimore SCLC ■ **Jersey City Peace Movement** ■ **Ramona Africa**, MOVE Org. ■ **John Parker**, Strg Com., So. Calif. Immigration Coalition ■ **Moratorium On Foreclosures NOW** ■ **Lucy Pagoada**, Coordinadora, HondurasUSAResistencia ■ **Sara Flounders**, Int'l Action Center ■ **MECAWI-Michigan Emergency Coalition Against War & Intervention** ■ **Messiah Rhodes**, NYC Unemployed Council ■ **Teresa Gutierrez**, May 1st Coalition; IMA ■ **Parents to Improve School Transportation-PIST** ■ **Puerto Rican Alliance Los Angeles** ■ **Texas Death Penalty Abolition Movement** ■ **Bob Carter** Fder, Justice for Palestinians ■ **Chelsea Coalition on Housing** ■ **Wisconsin Bail Out The People Movement** ■ **Rev. Luis Barrios**, IFCO/Pastors for Peace ■ **Alberto Lovera Bolivarian Center** ■ **Bishop Filipe Teixeira**, OFSJC, Diocese of St Francis of Assisi, CCA, Brockton, MA ■ **Women's Fightback Network**, Boston ■ **Rhode Island People's Assembly** ■ **Ed Childs**, Chief Shop Steward, UNITE-HERE L 26, Boston ■ **Steve Gillis**, Vice President, USW L 8751 Boston School Bus Union ■ **Steve Kirschbaum**, USW Organizer & Chair, Grievance Committee, USW L 8751 ■ **Brian Shea**, Disability Rights Activist, Boston ■ **Jim Grant** Human Justice Coalition, Wilson, NC,