

"COLOMBIA" FROM PAGE FOUR

Almost as a rule, those communities that live in areas of great natural wealth tend to live materially poor lifestyles when measured by western standards. Though when outside interests come in with stories of development, these previously poor communities become impoverished and no longer live sustainably, but are now just barely surviving. •

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BE THE MEDIA!

State of Disunion

NUMBER OF AMERICANS living in poverty in 2000:
5,400,000

NUMBER OF AMERICANS living in poverty in 2006:
36,500,000

NUMBER OF UNINSURED Americans in 2006:
47,000,000

NUMBER OF DOLLARS of the national median income, 2006:
48,201

PERCENTAGE OF REPORTED INCOME that the top 10 percent of Americans collected in 2005:
48.5

NUMBER OF PEOPLE below poverty in the Northeastern US:
6,222,000

NUMBER OF PEOPLE below poverty in the Southern US:
14,882,000

PERCENT CHANGE in income inequality in the US from 1947 to 1998:
15

NUMBER OF DOLLARS of the Mesa County median income, 2007:
37,700

PERCENTAGE OF HOURLY EARNINGS of 80 percent of American workers that has risen since 1979:
1

* Sources for the State of Disunion can be found at www.gjredpill.org

CALL TO ACTION

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IF YOU WANT TO KNOW THE TRUTH TAKE

GRAND JUNCTION,
COLORADO

The Red Pill



FIGHT

THE RICH

JUNE 2008

VOL. 6 NO. 9



DO NOT PASS GO

The game of Monopoly is fair. Everyone starts out at "Go," with the same amount of cash. Everyone rolls the dice and takes their chances. Opportunities abound. Everyone who passes Go collects \$200. Unfortunately, life in America is anything but fair.

Some are born with huge wads of cash, already owning hotels on Park Place and Broadway. Some are born with little or no cash. Some are born in jail. If one of the very wealthy doesn't like his roll, he rolls again and again 'till he likes what he sees. The poor

only get to roll one die. Such is our system.

Imagine a room full of ten people. A pizza arrives with ten slices. The rich man takes out one slice, hands it to the other nine to share, and keeps the other nine for himself. This is the state of American economics; 10 percent of the population owns 90 percent of the wealth.

There is a scale of measuring wealth inequality called the GINI Scale. A score of one means absolute wealth inequality. Most Scandinavian countries rank between .35 and .40. The U.S.A. is a whopping .83,

"GO" ON SECOND PAGE

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"GO" FROM PAGE ONE

very close to China, in fact, who score .88.

Who are these rich people? On average, they have a net worth of 12.5 million dollars. Chances are near 100% that you don't know any of them in Grand Junction. A very wealthy Grand Junctionite is worth about two million, chump change to the truly wealthy.

They live in private, gated communities, with servants, drive-in limousines, travel by private jet and vacation in very exclusive private resorts. They don't want to be seen. They remember what happened to Marie Antoinette and keep their mouths shut, except when it's time to call a national politician and ask for a tax break.

In 1980, CEOs averaged thirty times more income than production workers. Now the difference is 145 times the average worker. In fact, in real dollars, wages have gone steadily down since 1973 for the majority of the population. Workers

average two percent a year (not keeping up with inflation); millionaires have seen their incomes raise 243 percent since then.

So what does it mean really, aren't the working class just sore losers? No, it affects us all. Lower wealth means worse schools. Worse schools mean a poorly educated workplace. There's a reason that Japanese math and science whizzes are so good at attracting new businesses.

This is a lot of information that serves to depress people and make them feel helpless. While it is dire, it's not hopeless. Remember Custer and his arrogance with the Sioux? Our weapon would be the general strike. Your work makes the rich money, and you striking would take it away. It definitely will take a lot of work. But like legendary Joe Hill said before his untimely death, "don't mourn, organize."

What do you get the man who has everything for Christmas? I say fuck 'em, what's he getting me?•

CHANGE STARTS WITH YOU

POETRY BY

KRYSTA MONIQUE MANZANAREZ

I walk around my little town
And I'll tell you what I see
I see clowns with paint on their frowns
Fads and trends that can fill the sea

Materialistic ways that suppress a change
Tied by this bind
From the truth we are blind
Happiness in forms of bottles and pills
Women only care about sex appeal
But can you tell me what is real?

I see metal, I see rap
I see a reason to adapt
But we still stand divided
Please, tell me why we are sided?

The reason why we suffer
And the reason it gets tougher
It isn't because of them
It's because of you
Tell me who is the fool?

Pointing your finger won't make a difference
Blame yourself for lack of interest

Blame yourself for sitting at home
Blame yourself for being alone
Blame yourself for doing nothing

All you can do
Is make an excuse
That just means your lips are loose
And you need to think about things before
you choose

Read, write and educate
Talk, discuss and even debate
Volunteer
Far and near
We can all make a change

With every second we influence the youth
With every second we change the future
So next time you feel the need to bitch
Come to realize your life must switch
From being passive to active
Transforming thoughts from small to
massive
And look at yourself before you feel the need
to attack this.

SERFDOM IN THE SAN JUANS

Telluride, CO: The words hippie, festival, carefree, ski-bum, and progressive come to mind. But what about serfdom? Telluride, Colorado is central to modern wage-slavery due to the infinite million/multimillion/billionaires who have their multimillion dollar vacation homes in the rustic San Juan Mountains. Insanity rules the landscape; gigantic homes used for two weeks out of the year, recycle bins that are disposed of in the trash, and imported fine foods and drinks to appease the million-dollar-bourgeois appetites.

I was an honored American serf last winter when I was hired on a cleaning crew for these elitists. It was winter break, and nothing here in Grand Junction beat twelve bucks an hour for a poor college student (I made just over \$4000 last year and accumulated almost \$5000 in debt, thank-you, college). So every day for the duration of the holidays, my boss and fellow slaves traveled 65 miles (one way) on treacherous roads. If you remember, Colorado was hit pretty hard with a few storms around the holidays, and it was the norm to drive 35 mph on snow packed roads. Keystone was always the scariest; rich bastards headed up to ski for the day are usually not in the mood to deal with underclass workers trying to safely get to work.

Picture this: you and your crewmates are cleaning a house for 5 hours, all the while looking out a gigantic window that just-so-happens to face the ski slope. I've been a skier/snowboarder since 7th grade, and let me tell you, it was one of the most degrading experiences of my life. There's nothing like slaving for the bourgeoisie, all the while daydreaming about the six inches of powder dropped the night before.

The work was easy, and my boss relaxed, but everyday I went home feeling like a little less of a person and a little more of a slave. The bourgeois mansions were something my mother only dreamed her doublewide trailer house could look like. All the houses – the Smith's, the Hunter's, and others – have that distinct Telluride/Western feel to them. Buffalo skin chairs and 'antique' wood were the norm. In one house we cleaned (and raided the fridge of) had a statue of a monkey holding a

platter sitting in the corner of the mud room when you walked in the back door. The statue was made of some ritzy kind of wood, and was hand carved in Mexico. Retail price - \$35,000. I bet you anything the guy who carved it got twenty bucks. The monkey house was outrageous. My boss told me there wasn't a piece of furniture in there they didn't pay less than \$10,000 for, except some of the kitchen appliances. In another house, my coworker and I were scrounging for food when we found a delicious basket of red apples. Unfortunately for us, they were fake (we found that out the hard way by biting into wax). I've never seen a wax apple look so real.

The serfs who work in Telluride are mostly Hispanic, but everyone I worked with was poor, white, and from a small town 65 miles away. As the days progressed into weeks, the stories we made up about the owners got more intricate. At one house, we made up a story that the guy was cheating on his wife. This was based on the fact that we found a dark hair on the bedding and his wife is blonde. It was fun to think about rich people's pain while we ourselves were busting our asses and cleaning their man-piss off the toilets and massive amounts of foundation off the shiny countertops.

Deception is what we housekeepers were all about. We used environmentally friendly cleaning products (according to my boss's boss and his clients). Yeah, if you consider Clorox clean-up and Windex environmentally friendly. We would never take anything from any of the houses, they said, except for the lovely organic dinners I brought home to feed my parents, and all the yumyleft-overwineandbeerfrom'business' parties. And, best of all, we recycled... if you call dumping the box of recycles into the trash can right next to it recycling.

Telluride and Mountain Village are beautiful places to be, especially if you want a taste of fresh Colorado mountains. I urge you to visit this fine place so you can support wage-slaves like myself who work so hard on keeping unused, totally refurbished, constantly heated (or cooled), multimillion dollar second homes intact for the bourgeois billionaires who own them. There's nothing like wasting precious energy on secondary homes.•



EVERY MONDAY • 5:30PM

A Voice of Reason, the local peace group meets to organize local actions to end the war in Iraq.

For more info call 245-3720

EVERY FRIDAY • 7PM

A yet-to-be-named youth activist group meets to change the world and encourage youth participation.

The Bistro on 15th and Chipeta
Grand Junction, CO

RED PILL LOCATIONS

You can pick up your copy of The Red Pill at the following locations: Planet 9, Heart of the Dragon, Third World Imports, Planet Earth, Moe Ping's Kool Things, The Hot Tomato, Kleen Sting, Colorado Java, Himalayan Feeling, Contemporary Glass Works, Change Skateboards, Coffee Muggers, Triple Play Records, Pretty Things, Dream Child Entertainment.

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A GOVERNMENT OF, BY AND FOR THE ONE PERCENTERS

The basic myth of American democracy holds that our elected officials represent our interest. But it really comes down to the fact that most, if not all, members of the U.S. Congress are millionaires. Bush and Cheney are millionaires. Ken and John Salazar—both millionaires. Governor Ritter, you guessed it a millionaire.



Now think about it people. How many millionaires do you know personally? Now how many people do you know that are worth \$100 million or more?

Now really how representational is that?

It's not a surprise that the Democrat-led Congress again chose not to begin hearings to impeach Bush for lying to this nation about the war in Iraq. Nancy Pelosi, the current Speaker of the House, said back in 2006 right after the Dem's regained control of the house that impeachment proceedings were "off the table." The election of 2006 seemed like a victory for our sad state of the union; the Dems might actually try to impeach, they might try to cut off funding for the illegal occupation of Iraq, they might even try to reign in monster corporations that are getting fatter and fatter while Americans get poorer and poorer. But they didn't. Not that they couldn't. They just didn't. And they won't because the oil executives, war profiteers, and Bush and Cheney are the same people that the "liberals" dine with, golf with, and vacation with. They share the same general interest. The interest of the Rich.

We need leaders who have had to stand in welfare lines or have eaten in a soup kitchen. Senators that have flipped a burger, worked temp labor, who have had to choose between food and electricity. We need a President whos kids fight in the infantry. We need to elect representatives that do not belong to the haves, for in reality, most of us are have-nots, hell most of us are in a deep hole of debt owed, ironically, to the wealthiest banks and money houses in the world. Unfortunately when we head to the polls in November we will not have the choice to elect representatives that have anything in common with the working class. •

AMERICA'S SPECTATOR SPORT

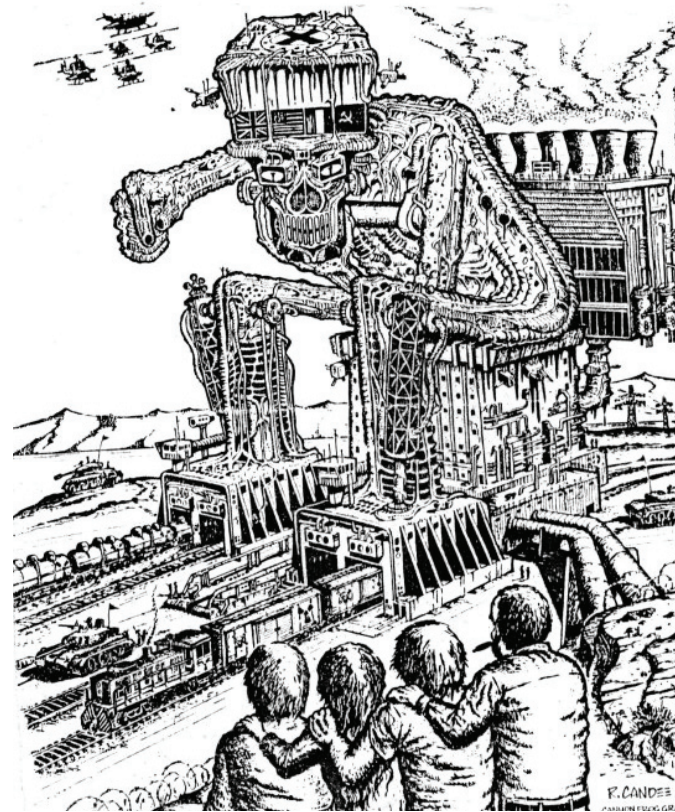
The middle class is disappearing—and those who are still there are surviving on debt to keep up the illusion that they have money—to live like the rich. In 2005, the savings rate in the U.S. was below zero for the first time since the Great Depression. That means people are spending more than they make. Seventy percent of our economy is based on consumer spending, but with rising gas prices and continued rising personal debt, many more people are spending less on frivolous purchases and more on just trying to get by. This in turn hurts what little U.S. manufacturing we have left.

In the past seven years, the U.S. has lost one in five manufacturing jobs—that's about 3.5 million workers trading a good paying job with benefits, such as

health insurance and pensions, for a lower paying service industry job with little or no benefits. Service industry jobs are on the rise—the lower classes serving the upper classes. Many more households have both adults in the workforce, not because they want it that way, but because they both have to work to survive and take care of the family. It is much more difficult today to have a one income household.

It's been said so much, it's almost a cliché, the rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer. However, no matter how cliché it is, it's the truth. A Congressional Budget Office report released in 2007 shows that income for the bottom half of households only rose six percent since 1979, but for the top one percent, incomes raised 228 percent

since then. Non-rich people are working more and getting paid less, despite the fact that worker productivity has increased throughout the years. Corporate profits are at an all-time high, but none of those profits are being transferred to the workers—so much for the Reagan era trickle down theory. If minimum wage kept up with worker productivity and corporate profits, it would be about double what it is now. Paul Krugman writes, "It's a great economy if you're a high-level corporate executive or someone who owns a lot of stock. For most other Americans, economic growth is a spectator sport." For more regarding working class struggle read, Steven Greenhouse's *The Big Squeeze: Tough Times for the American Worker* and Barbara Ehrenreich's *Nickel and Dimed*. •



Saturdays 1:30PM

Get involved with The Red Pill, we have weekly meetings.

Coffee Muggers

644 Main St. Grand Junction, CO

Aug. 25-28th and Sep. 1-4th, 2008

Protests at DNC in Denver and RNC in Minneapolis-St. Paul. Check out www.recreate68.org and www.mcwelcomingcommittee.org for info.

Wednesday, July 2nd, 2008 • 5PM

Drinking Liberally Get together

Kannah Creek Brewing

12th and Walnut, Grand Junction, CO

Upcoming Issues

Homelessness: July 26, War on Terror: August 16, On the Road Issue: September 13

Submissions Welcomed!

COLOMBIA: WEALTH, LAND, AND POVERTY

BY NUTRIA

Colombia is not poor. It is actually quite wealthy. It has a species diversity that ranks in the top three in the world and has the planet's most biodiverse ecosystem, the Pacific Coast Andean foot hill forests. Columbia has more bird species than all of North America and third in reptile species and second in Amphibian species in the world. In terms of mineral, hydrological and other natural "resources," few other places have the variety and the amount. As for all the economic, trade and production that signifies wealth to... well capitalists and industrialized perspectives, yup that is here too. In terms of cultures, history and languages, again few compare. The country has 82 surviving indigenous nations that have been able to preserve 64 ancestral languages, none of which is español.

Then why the poverty? Of approximately 48 million people living within the false borders of Colombia, about 42 million are considered to live in conditions of poverty. Of those 42 million, 38 million are considered to be in absolute poverty. While there are many ideas, thoughts and arguments on the why,



lets reflect on distribution of wealth, of resources and of who has access and control of these. The richest 10 percent of the Colombian population owns over 80 percent of the national territory while the other 90 percent of the population owns less than 20 percent of the land. Only Brazil has a larger discrepancy in its distribution in wealth as far as Latin American and Caribbean countries go. So what do all these mind numbing numbers and statistics mean? Among other things, poverty is not inherited because of territory; it is forced on the populace.

The pacific coast is a great contradiction.

Even though it encompasses a great amount of biodiversity, water, minerals and territory, it happens to be the poorest region in all of Colombia. It also happens to be about 90 percent Afro-Colombian, 8 percent indigenous and 2 percent mestizo. Like many regions in Colombia, the pacific coast is intersected by a variety of multinational interests in everything from oil palm plantations for the production of biofuel, to gold mining and the creation



of a new inter-oceanic canal. The incredible amount of wealth that the pacific coasts live amongst cause their territories to be of high interest and their existence in the region seen as an obstacle to accessing this wealth. The full-on exploitation of the natural beings that multinational companies see as resources is what has brought the armed conflict into these regions that previously were relatively untouched by the state and violence. By western standards, these communities are poor; they have little infrastructure, healthcare, or education as well as other public services. When the companies or politicians come with their "development," the results are usually communities or parts of communities that are displaced with violence that usually ends in massacres and whatever part of the community survives and does not leave... usually slowly suffers the consequences of private and military intervention in their region. Other results include environmental destruction, drug trafficking and addiction, forced prostitution, alcoholism, the weakening and breaking of the social weavings of families and communities, gang violence and unemployment in communities where previously the people could live from the ancestrally sustainable practices like farming, hunting, fishing, gathering and barter. In the cases where displaced communities have been able to return to their territory on the Pacific Coast or near the Gulf of Urabá on the Caribbean, they find that their territory, which the communities have collective rights to and could not be sold, bought or rented under constitutional law, have been turned

into oil palm plantations. Communities that were once self reliant, sustainable and autonomous become peons in their own territory, working the land for the economic interests of foreigners. In some cases, the paramilitaries come to communities and do not displace, they inform that the land will be converted to plantations and if the people want to live they must work for the plantation.

Going northeast, approaching the Venezuelan border is the Guajira, an arid peninsula that juts out into the Caribbean Sea. La Guajira is the ancestral territory of the indigenous Wayúu people who, between both Colombia and Venezuela, number about 500,000. Dry, sandy and hot, to an outsider the region does not look like an area that has much wealth of any kind, other than sunlight. The department of La Guajira receives more gifts and monies for development projects on behalf of multinational companies than any other region in the country. While the Wayúu still live in relative poverty with little access to healthcare, education or potable water, the millions of dollars that is generated in La Guajira from energy interests and tourism is evident in the houses and SUVs that local politicians, gangsters and paramilitaries own. In La Guajira, the Antonio Ricaurte natural Gas Pipeline, the Wind Mill Park Jeripachi and the world's largest strip coal mine, the Cerrejón, are all development projects that



have come into direct conflict with the communities living in the area. While Vice President Santos toured the region earlier this month speaking of tourist development projects, what he failed to mention in the scouting of new locations for franchise luxury hotels is that the Wayúu have been able to etch a living from "rough" tourism in their territory, and will be displaced by the interests of these transnational hotel franchises that send most of their profits to their home country and not as investment into local communities.

In North America, we think of space and poverty and the 'hoods and barrios in the major metropolitan cities. The parts of the city that will never appear in the tourist brochures, what is Liberty City to Miami, or parts of the

Bronx to NYC? When money or development does arrive to urban territories, it's to replace the existing community with a wealthier, whiter one. While the conditions that rural whites live in, in the States in areas such as Appalachia are also conditions of poverty, those on the sovereign territories that are now referred to as Indian



Reservations remind those who have escaped the USA's borders of what conditions many of consider of the "Third World." As opposed to beautification and development that results in displacement known as gentrification in its urban context, in the rural context, the projects are "out of sight" and, like the massacres and development projects in Colombia, consist of an heavier dose of environmental racism since they are not in the field of vision of most of the populace. Indigenous territories in North America, areas that were once thriving with the land's wealth and had strong self-sustaining communities, are depleted of these resources through development projects that usually seal the fate of that territory with environmental destruction and contamination. These lands have been used for everything from practice bombings and fumigations, nuclear waste disposal, coal mining, to the creation of golf courses and housing divisions, to name a few.

In Colombia, the environmental destruction and accompanying poverty is also an end result of development, a development means forced and violent displacement, loss of territory and traditions and environmental destruction. The Oleoducto de Crudos Pesados, an oil pipeline starting in the Colombian Amazon crossing the Andes to the Ecuadorian pacific coast, is earmarked with an annual \$58 million in Plan Colombia funds as a development project. Meanwhile, as the pipeline spits out millions of dollars in oil each day for foreign consumption, the violence, fumigations, environmental and community destruction along the pipeline's route shows that the wealth created by these so-called development projects are not for the communities living at the source or along the transportation route of these resources.

"COLOMBIA" ON LAST PAGE

Saturday June 28 • 9:00AM -1:00PM

Labor 2008 Statewide Walk

Join Union members across the state to raise awareness to Amendment 47 and stand against John McCain

For More information or to RSVP call

Sara at 303-477-6111

Saturdays 1:30PM

Get involved with The Red Pill, we have weekly meetings.

Coffee Muggers

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We need volunteers. We need your events. We need writers. And most importantly we need cash for a new copy machine. You can get a hold of us at giredpill@hotmail.com, or donate through Pay-Pal at our website www.giredpill.org. We couldn't do all this without you.

Thanks.