

The Story of Detroit, A Modern Parable Chronicling the Betrayal of America. The New Century's War on America's Poor and Middle Class

By Joachim Hagopian Global Research, July 03, 2014 Region: <u>USA</u> Theme: <u>History</u>, <u>Poverty & Social Inequality</u>

What has happened to America? A cautionary tale that in many ways epitomizes the onetime greatest country in the world's fall from grace degenerating into the world's greatest single threat to life on planet earth is told in the story of Detroit. Michigan's Motor City was once the wealthiest city in all of the nation, a proud hallmark of "Yankee ingenuity" leading to America's other hallmark of upwardly mobile working class affluence.

Though he neither invented the automobile nor the modern assembly line, industrialist <u>Henry Ford's Ford Motor Company</u> launched in 1903 and Model T created in 1908 became both America and Detroit's world famous icon the American car, mass producing to make it available for America's expanding middle class to afford. Indeed the rise of America, its cars and highway system mobility during the last century catapulted Detroit to industrial prominence and unparalleled prosperity as the largest US city adjacent Canada with a current metro area population of over five million people. From the end of World War II up to the war on poverty in 1964, America cut by half its number of citizens living in poverty.

However, <u>Detroit</u> in the twenty-first century has clearly fallen on very hard times, losing 25% of its population in just one decade from 2000 to 2010, falling from the tenth largest city in the nation to the eighteenth. The Motor City's municipal population peaked at 1.8 million residents in postwar 1950 when America's manufacturing base was at its glorious height. But just sixty years later the city's size has plummeted to little more than 700,000 with a mass exodus of over 60% of the city's population steadily leaving since 1950.

And now Detroit finds itself amidst a growing humanitarian crisis with 150,000 people currently living without any source of running water in their homes. And with upwards of 200-300,000 people possibly effected in the coming weeks and months, nearly half of Detroit residents could soon be without access to freshwater despite its front door on the Great Lakes being the largest freshwater system on earth. Since March this year the city's water and sewerage company has made the coldhearted decision to simply start shutting off the water supply to any people in Detroit who cannot pay their water bill. At a rate of <u>3000</u> customers per week over the last several months, the city's residents have been losing their source of running water in our nation's poorest city with 42.3% of its inhabitants living under the poverty level.

A year ago last July Detroit became the first city of its size forced to <u>file bankruptcy</u>. The urban decline of the once greatness that was Detroit is also mirrored in America's rural decline of the nearby Great Plains. But this lack of water issue for thousands of people

carries implications of a serious human rights violation being committed in the richest nation on earth. This unfolding story is but yet another sad and disgraceful symptom of the country's urban decay reflecting how rapid USA's vapid freefall from greatness straight into Third World despair for America's poor has actually become in 2014.

In 2010 the <u>United Nations</u> declared that water is a universal human right and that people denied access to lifesaving water clearly constitutes a serious human rights violation. Detroit families that have fallen on hard times, unable to keep up with two months of unpaid water bills as <u>low as \$150</u>, for several months now have been forced to live without water. And now moving into the July heat of another long hot, global warming summer, the humanitarian crisis is about to boil over.

Try to imagine even for one day living your life without running water in your home. Attending the morning ritual of turning on the hot and cold water to take our daily warm shower is something that if we awake tomorrow and no water pours out of our faucet or shower head, it would be a shocking discovery and rudest of wake up calls to suddenly realize how much we Americans would be missing and taking our water for granted if our daily, seemingly endless supply of it was abruptly shut off and indefinitely gone.

In addition to our bathing, drinking, washing our hands, washing our produce clean, using water for preparing our meals, washing our dishes, doing our laundry, having water available to mop our floors and keep our house clean and even flush our toilets, all of these daily activities obviously require running water in our home. If one day we were suddenly forced to not have the convenience of our water with the turn of a knob available for all these must daily activities, our life would instantaneously be thrown into a virtual state of crisis. Feeling dirty, unshowered and unclean, most of us would not want to even leave the house or even face the day in that aversively uncomfortable state. Forced to eating dirty produce that increases health risks for potentially lethal bacterial infection, unable to prepare our regular meals, flush our wastes down the toilet, many of us would be in an instant panic and uproar suffering just one day without our constant, taken for granted need of our convenient running water supply.

Thousands of people in Detroit without water on tap are going very thirsty these days. Deprived of lifesaving water not only imposes unsanitary life conditions, less access to drinking water especially in hot weather can quickly become dangerously fatal with dehydration and heat stroke. Without water our daily lives would minimally be drastically inconvenienced in ways most of us have never even really known, imagined or experienced. Yet multitudes of our fellow Americans' homes in Detroit along with places across America and even more so the world, unbeknownst to us who have taken water so much for granted all our lives, twenty-first century water has become the most precious and valuable natural resource on the entire planet.

Based on annual FBI database reports on violent crime, Forbes Magazine rated Detroit as the <u>most dangerous US city</u>(amongst populations of more than 200,000) for the fourth year in a row. The nearby smaller decimated city of Flint, also derailed by a downsized automated robotically operated auto industry, has the highest murder rate in the state. But with thousands upon thousands of abandoned homes left in ruin and chronically high unemployment rates – the highest among the largest US cities at <u>8.3% in May 2014</u>, desperate impoverished Detroit citizens are vulnerably prone to gangs, drugs and crime.

What is happening in Detroit is happening in all of America's cities. The war on poverty from

the 1960's has deteriorated into an all out war on the poor in twenty-first century America. The people of Detroit are metaphorically the canaries in the coal mine for the rest of us. The poor in this so called richest nation on earth have become the discard-able, disenfranchised class of Americans who are persona non grata in a country that appears to no longer care much about its less fortunate citizens when denied the human right of lifesaving water.

Privatization of such basic human rights as access to clean drinking water is rearing its ugly head all over the world, not just in far off lands like India and Equator or Africa. Pay or die has come home to roost here in America now too. The globalization and privatization of everything on earth has more and more of the world's population sinking into highly impoverished, desperate lives where life is more than a daily struggle for survival.

In recent times the bottom has been falling out for many generations of middle class families that have become burdened paying a higher percentage of taxes per their income than the loop-holed upper class and especially the majority of the largest corporations that with offshore money laundering pay no income tax at all. The US federal government has forced middle class Americans against their will or choice to finance two very costly wars resulting in military defeats dragging on for more than a decade. Clearly also by design, the government's priority to engage in perpetual Empire war around the world has been destroying America's middle class. The manufactured false war on terror has bled them dry while straining and depleting an already shaky national economy still not recovering from the 2008 recession caused by greedy Wall Street and criminal banksters.

At the 2008 outset of the current recession, <u>53% of Americans</u> still described themselves as middle class. In 2014 only 44% make that claim. Conversely, in 2008 only 25% of Americans considered themselves in the lower class while currently 40% now believe they are members of the lower class. What has been America's traditional backbone, perennial strength and single greatest key to our nation's success always rested squarely on the solid reliable shoulders of this country's vibrant and robust middle class. But now it lies dead and dying, just like the beacon of light that America once was as the world's greatest democracy.

Now America's inner cities have become war zone ghettos where kids of color are killing other kids of color like there's no tomorrow, because for too many of them, there literally is no tomorrow. Generations ago young residents from America's poorest inner cities have been forced to give up on hope, forced to adapt to the gangland culture that offers the only way of getting ahead, even if it leads to only fleeting short lived success before a bullet in the head or a one way ticket to a lifelong prison sentence ends their lives. The lawlessness and desperate despair of such failed states created by American Empire in Libya is really no different from the US creation of the failed state that is right here in America's urban war zones.

The war on poverty that began fifty years ago with President Lyndon Johnson's state of the union address was lost before it ever got started. The economic deprivation created by the massive white flight movement to the suburbs starting back in the 1950's has ever since left an empty vacuum in inner cities across urban America. And little to no concerted effort toward investment to restore economic prosperity in US cities has ever resulted. Instead, the federal government institutionalized a welfare state that has only widened the gap between the disenfranchised poor and the rest of America, only reactivating and reinforcing old racial stereotypes that unfairly and falsely believe African Americans are lazy and prefer to not seek gainful employment, a set-up whether intended or not for abysmal failure and

racial re-polarization. If next to no jobs in inner cities were ever created due to lack of any actual job creation and business investment, and the created welfare system fostered inner city residents toward increased dependency in a no-win situation where opportunity toward financial independence is completely absent, the failed social engineering experiment went awry and only hurt America's poor people far more than it ever helped.

LBJ stated his aim a half century ago, "to give our fellow citizens a fair chance to develop their own capacities." Though Johnson correctly identified the solution to the problem, like all US wars in the last fifty years, America lost its domestic war on poverty as well because it failed miserably in lifting the poor's capacity to become independent. Without jobs and employment, there is no opportunity for progress in urban America.

US foreign policy has included criminal misappropriation and mismanagement of taxpayer revenue of six trillion dollars (and still rising) to finance imperialistic wars that have resulted in humiliating, costly US military defeats, US crimes against humanity, chaotic permanent failed states left in economic ruin, unspeakable tragic violence and human loss of life that still continue today with no end in sight. Strikingly similar, US domestic policy that has been the costly war on poverty squandering 20.7 trillion tax dollars has also been an enormous and disastrous failure in reducing poverty rates in America, which have <u>remained</u> <u>unchanged at 15%</u> since LBJ first launched his ambitiously doomed program a half century ago.

Another fifty year milestone this week is Johnson's signing of the monumental Civil Rights Act. A number of courageous, mostly black Americans (though joined by white Americans as well) put their lives literally on the line protesting for racial equality during the 1950's and early 60's, culminating in legislation that outlawed discrimination ultimately aimed at equal protection of all groups, not only skin color but religion, age, gender and sexual persuasion as well. But let's examine how African Americans have fared since legislation legally protecting them from unlawful prejudice and discrimination.

One potential barometer measuring African American progress since outlawing racial discrimination might be looking at the percentage of blacks currently living outside the legal system. And the fact that more young black men today are in prison than were <u>slaves in 1850</u> speaks volumes, ushering in a new form of modern slavery in a new Jim Crowe era in America. Even way back in 1996, if you happen to be a 16-year old black male in America, you had a 30% chance of ending up dead or incarcerated. And that was nearly two decades ago. If conditions were that bad then, with nearly a one in three chance of death or imprisonment for every black 16-year old male, the war against both the poor and inner city black youth in particular in this nation has only escalated to unprecedented epidemic proportions in the last couple decades alone. As a young black man today, you are even far more of a marked man, tragically part of a dying breed of America's men of color. Life as a young Hispanic male in America is not much better... or for that matter, anyone regardless of skin color who happens to be poor in America. Class warfare is very much alive and thriving in America today – of course all by calculated <u>oligarch design</u>.

Since nearly one in three <u>African American</u> males in his twenties is involved in the criminal justice system by way of incarceration, parole or probation, by that statistic alone little progress has been made, especially since back in 1960 just prior to the war on poverty and civil rights only <u>2.4% of black males</u> between 16-35 were in prison. Back in 1960 blacks and Hispanics comprised just 38% of America's prison population but by 2010 that number jumped up to <u>60%</u> of the 2.3 million Americans in prison, by far the highest prison

population in the world.

If a black in his twenties and early thirties does not have a high school diploma, he has a <u>40% chance</u> of doing prison time, and a greater chance of prison than finding a job. Presently black Americans go to prison at a rate of <u>six times</u> the national average. Hispanic and African Americans are regularly stopped by police in traffic three times more often than are whites. Add to this disturbing mix a militarized police state engaging regularly in brutality toward the poor, and the odds of surviving life outside prison are made even more remote. All these alarming statistics perpetuate and cause poverty, and obviously it is only getting worse as time goes on.

It has been found that children raised in the growing number of single-parent homes that in recent decades have surpassed the number of nuclear family homes in the US are <u>four</u> times more likely to be living in poverty than children raised by married parents. When races are taken into account, African American families have the fewest number with fathers living in the home. For instance, in the nation's capital Washington DC up to 84% of homes are minus a father.<u>Over 70%</u> of African Americans are born out of wedlock compared to only <u>41%</u> of the general population. In contrast in 1963 only 6% of Americans were born to unmarried parents. Children who grow up without a father in the home are far more likely to suffer from a wide array of social and behavioral problems. In general <u>71%</u> of all high school dropouts grow up in fatherless homes. The grave consequences persist throughout adulthood as well. Children raised by single parents are three times more likely to end up behind bars and 50% more likely to be poor as adults. Since 1980 25% of African Americans have grown up in a home where at least one of their parents was absent due to incarceration.

Since President Nixon declared his war on drugs, definitely another horrific US war lost, Americans arrested and serving in prison on drug charges has soared. Yet both drug use and abuse as well as drug availability in America has only increased many fold. And of course the US government has also been the biggest drug war profiteer. As of January 2013 <u>over 50%</u> of the nearly 200,000 inmates in federal prison are there because of drug offenses. Minor drug charges and nonviolent crimes have clogged and crowded both our courts and prisons beyond their capacity. Also nearly one in five federal inmates report committing their crimes in order to obtain money for drugs. Rather than excessive punitive punishment of drug addicts that clearly has not worked at all, drug treatment instead of prison is a no-brainer that would save billions in taxpayer dollars and be a far more effective and humane response. But of course the oligarch agenda is to fill up all the newly built and refurbished prisons in America. The war on the poor continues unabated.

Plus the war on drugs has been especially waged on the poor in the inner cities, thus largely the African American community. Though rates of drug addiction may not necessarily be higher, certainly drug availability and drug arrests are in America's poorest economically disadvantaged cities. This only proves that the failed war on drugs seriously undermined, compounded and in effect doomed the so called war on poverty. Thousands of privatized prisons in America make large profits off the prison security complex. The profit motive has systematically sent increasing numbers of poor Americans from the decaying impoverished urban centers straight into the prison system, thus ensuring that today's war on the poor will finally provide America a war it can win.

Because of this gross disparity in the justice system between races, access to such basic democratic rights as voting, fair housing and gainful employment have posed near

insurmountable barriers that have branded and relegated a large percentage of Americans of color as second class, even sub-human citizens the rest of their lives targeted by legally sanctioned wholesale discrimination. Because they were born into a nation with such a longstanding history of institutionalized racism, economic and social inequality and gross injustice, all still widely practiced today despite the civil rights act and war on poverty, generation after generation become America's fastest growing, invisible, disenfranchised underclass, supporting the cold hard reality – born in the ghetto, die in the ghetto. The utter lack of progress since 1964 proves unequivocally that people of color in America have only become casualties of their country's war on poverty. And that is because the war on poverty since the 1970's and 80's became the war on drugs and now in the twenty-first century has morphed into an outright war on the nation's poor.

The focus of this presentation has centered on a fiftieth anniversary of critical milestone legislation meant to "liberate" not just African Americans from being victimized by discrimination, but any group within the United States based on race, creed, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age or socioeconomic class. The scope was necessarily limited to the here-and-now struggle of mostly African Americans in places like Detroit. But the thrust and purpose of this piece is to expose the truth surrounding the systematically executed war currently being waged on all poor people in not just the United States but in every nation on earth.

The oligarch NWO agenda behind every major news event in the world today, be it domestic or international, is a globalized full frontal assault on all humans everywhere currently inhabiting this planet. Oligarchs after all are equal opportunity murderers committing genocide against the entire human race. Their globalist agenda supersedes race, nationality, religion or culture. Eugenics is eugenics any way you slice it. Wholesale human slaughter – be it fast or slow – amounts to the same sinister motive and agenda, be it through Monsanto and GMO's, chemtrails, fluoride, vaccines, war, famine, disease, civil and economic collapse, governmental tyranny and oppression simultaneously manifest through political destabilization, polarization, militarization, globalization and privatization. The particular strategic methodology implemented hardly matters when the diabolical objective and outcome are all the same.

Joachim Hagopian is a West Point graduate and former US Army officer. He has written a manuscript based on hisunique military experience entitled <u>"Don't Let The Bastards Getcha Down."</u> It examines and focuses on US international relations, leadership and national security issues. After the military, Joachim earned a masters degree in Clinical Psychology and worked as a licensed therapist in the mental health field for more than a quarter century. He now concentrates on his writing.

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