

COUNTERPUNCH

Pushing the Poor Out of House and Home

BY BOB QUELLOS - JULY 18, 2007

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In May 2006, proud leaders of the City of Chicago stood in front of the TV cameras to announce their plans to bid for the 2016 Summer Olympics.

Their plan was ambitious. The city would build an immense new stadium in Washington Park on the South Side, and a sports complex at the former Meigs Field Airport, located on the edge of Lake Michigan, just outside Chicago's downtown Loop district. Plus, there would be an Olympic Village to house 17,000 athletes and officials—built in the developing near South Side, at a cost of \$1.1 billion.

But the hype surrounding the Olympics bid couldn't hide the glaring contradictions—at the same time as the city promised to spend tens of billions of dollars, severe budget restraints have been imposed on the day-to-day operations of the Chicago Transit Authority, Chicago Public Schools and Chicago Park District.

As much as anything, the campaign for the 2016 Games has cast a light on an ongoing housing crisis for the city's working majority—symbolized by the city's gutting of the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA), the agency that runs the public housing system, and the stream of residents leaving Chicago as one of the most basic of necessities becomes harder and harder to afford.

But the Olympics bid has also brought to light the brewing anger with the politicians, corporate executives and wealthy investors who are causing the crisis—and it is opening the way for activists to tell the real story of Chicago's "transformation" and organize for an alternative.

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SINCE THE 1984 Games in Los Angeles, the Olympics have been perceived by major cities as an opportunity for additional revenue. "The Los Angeles games recorded a surplus of \$232.5 million and alerted cities to the Olympics as a potential vehicle for economic gain as well as a source of prestige," wrote author Douglas Booth.

However, time has shown that the LA Games were the exception rather than the rule. For most cities, hosting the Olympics created the opposite of a profit windfall—instead, they have been unable to keep costs out of the red.

The 2006 Winter Olympics organizing committee in Turin, Italy posted a \$32 million shortfall, to be paid in full by the city. For the most recent summer Games in Athens, the total cost to the Greek government swelled to more than \$14

billion, according to budget figures released after the Games closed. Now, five years before London's 2012 Games are scheduled to begin, construction costs are 40 percent—or \$29 billion—over budget.

The downside of hosting the Olympics doesn't end with negative account balances. The history of recent Olympic Games is littered with stories of massive resident displacement that has gone mostly unnoticed and unreported. According to Canadian activist Maryann Abbs:

In Salt Lake City, the government planned to create 2,500 new units of affordable housing—only 150 units were created. There was a 300 percent rent increase in some residential hotels. In the year before the Sydney Olympics, there was a 400 percent increase in tenant evictions. In Atlanta, Project Homeward Bound gave Atlanta's homeless a one-way ticket out of town before the Olympics began. In Calgary, the government promised to create low-income housing. None was created—only a few new university residences were built.

During the 1998 Olympics in Seoul, as many as 720,000 people were relocated, leading a Catholic NGO to state that South Korea vied with South Africa as “the country in which eviction by far is most brutal and inhuman.”

Tragically, the upcoming summer Olympics in Beijing will dwarf all other Games in terms of housing displacement. According to the Center on Housing Rights and Evictions, upwards of 1.25 million residents of Beijing have already been evicted due to the Olympics.

Chicago won't witness the same drastic displacement of residents that occurred for the benefit of the Games in Seoul and Beijing. That's not because the city has exercised caution around displacement, but because it is already years into a clearance of public housing—a scheme for phased demolition over many years known as the “Plan for Transformation.” Only a few blocks west of the Washington Park site of the proposed Olympic Stadium is the southern tip of what—until 2005—was the Robert Taylor Homes. Once the largest public housing development in the world, the Robert Taylor Homes stretched north and south for two miles, comprising more than 4,300 housing units. Currently, the former site is being redeveloped. Of the 2,550 planned units in the finished project, only 851 will be public housing replacement units. According to Ben Joravsky of the Chicago Reader, the city's end goal for public housing redevelopment was about middle-class development, not improving housing for the city's poor:

The CHA's so-called Plan for Transformation opened up the South, North, and West Sides to gentrification and development. Of course, [Mayor Richard] Daley doesn't come right out and admit he got rid of the poor people. He goes along with the idea that the plan was about finding them adequate low-income housing.

Introduced in 1997, the “Plan for Transformation” is already six years behind schedule. Upon completion, it will have outsourced the majority of CHA units to the private market, allowing the CHA to shed responsibility for the built structures.

The reorganization is no small feat. Its immense scale led Jonathan Fanton of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur foundation to state, “It's probably the biggest project since the Chicago Fire.”

Many residents have been given Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV) to find housing on the private market. However, the CHA does not track the whereabouts of these residents, so activists have only anecdotes to judge from. “Communities on the city’s South and West Sides, such as Roseland and Englewood, have been inundated with families displaced from the high-rises,” wrote Chicago Tribune reporter Antonio Olivo. “Most now live in privately owned Section 8 homes, some as bad or worse than their old units.”

Through the new criteria put forward under the city’s plan, the CHA is, in effect, dumping two-thirds of its public housing stock. It has also put further constraints on residents moving back into their previous neighborhoods once they are redeveloped. Effectively, it has instituted a vetting process for residents, who are now required to work a minimum of 30 hours a week or attend school to be placed in housing.

The outcome of this policy is likely to be devastating. As William Wilen and Rajesh Nayak wrote in a 2004 research paper, “If the CHA’s screening criteria—especially the work requirements—remain unchallenged, advocates estimate that only 12 percent to 15 percent of the families...will be allowed to return.”

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THIRD-WORLD poverty is certainly not the first image that comes to mind when arriving in downtown Chicago. The single resident occupancy buildings that once characterized the South Loop are gone, and the Loop itself has undergone a rapid transformation centered on a revived theater district, the multimillion-dollar Millennium Park on the lakefront and numerous high-rise developments.

This transformation led to Mayor Daley to comment in 2002, “[Tourists] expect Nelson Algren, and they get Martha Stewart.” But since most tourists don’t roam through Chicago’s devastated South and West sides, viewing the city through their eyes provides a remarkably narrow picture. The Martha Stewart version of Chicago may exist downtown and in certain neighborhoods, but behind the facade remains the grit characterized in Algren’s 1951 essay *Chicago: City on the Make*, which detailed the city’s crooked politicians, hustlers and slums.

The reality is that while a number of residents are benefiting from the city’s economic and construction boom, many more are grappling with immense poverty and extreme racial segregation.

These trends are largely ignored by official voices, as noted by left-wing writer Paul Street, who stated, “Forty years later, in the glorious age of ‘the global city,’ the poor and often deeply poor Black children of Chicago’s ghettos appear to be more officially invisible than they were in [Martin Luther] King’s time.”

Backing up Street’s assertion is a 2005 report by the Chicago Urban League highlighting many of the socio-economic contradictions at play in Chicago. According to the report, 16 percent of Black households in Chicago live in deep poverty, and a quarter of the metropolitan area’s Black households are officially poor. The corresponding rate for white households is 5.6 percent. Of the city’s top 15 neighborhoods for child poverty (ranging between 55 and 71 percent), 10 are Black and the remainder Latino.

Chicago's current housing market further exacerbates the impact of poverty. In 22 Chicago neighborhoods, 19 percent or more of rental households spend half or more of their income on housing—each of these neighborhoods is 90 percent or more African American.

Following the national trend, the housing market in Chicago witnessed continual growth in recent years. Even with sales sliding in January 2007, the Chicago Tribune reported that prices went up 2.1 percent in a single month, leaving the median cost of a single-family home and condo at \$245,000.

According to Ginnie Mae, the government mortgage agency, a family of four earning the Chicago median income of \$46,748 would be well short of being able to afford the median sale price of a Chicago single-family home—even without prior debts or commitments. These figures are a product of national trends. In just the last five years, housing prices in the Chicago metropolitan region grew by 51.1 percent, close to the national average of 55.2 percent. In dollar terms, the median cost of a U.S. home was \$177,000 in February 2001—by June 2006, it had risen to \$276,000.

Of course, this increase in housing values hasn't nearly been matched with an equal increase in wages. While the boom in housing prices has treated one end of the economic spectrum well, it has created a nightmare for the average homeowner. Nationally, the rate of foreclosures this year is already nearing 2002, when in one quarter, a record number were recorded.

Chicago has been hit especially hard by this trend in foreclosures, with rates running at twice the national average. In fall 2006, Crain's Chicago Business reported: "In the Chicago metro area, one household in every 471 is in some stage of foreclosure. That compares with one in 658 households for Illinois and one in 1,030 for the nation."

A recent study by Loyola University in Chicago stated, "The rising foreclosure rate is primarily explained by the decline of housing affordability and the rise in predatory and sub-prime (high interest) lending." The rise in sub-prime loans is a byproduct of the housing boom. Sub-prime loans typically have interest rates that are 2 to 3 points higher than for prime loans. Over the last few years, sub-prime loans moved into high gear, comprising 20 percent of new mortgages in 2006—up from 5 percent in 2001.

Zealous loan agents, in a push to process more mortgages, grant them without requiring proof of income or tax returns. As Scott Van Voorhis of the Boston Herald wrote, "Many of the now beleaguered home buyers the agency sees were conned into buying homes they could not afford by fast-talking mortgage brokers, who often earn thousands in fees from these deals."

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OVER THE last 10 years, Chicago has increasingly orientated on the needs of the middle and upper classes. The combination of poor housing stock, skyrocketing prices, predatory lending and a dismantled public housing system has dealt a severe blow to the living standards of many Chicagoans.

Those who can no longer afford to live in the city have been forced to move into the suburbs, where a lack of services increases the strain of daily life.

Chicago's bid for the 2016 Games will further this current trend. If the city is awarded the Games, the Olympic torch will be blazing a trail of gentrification through the South Side.

Over the last 30 years, as the city lost its industrial base, it turned toward other means to ensure its tax base—chiefly handouts to big corporations (such as Boeing), which shifted the tax burden further onto homeowners and then renters. At the same time, federal funding for public housing has been continually slashed, and the future doesn't look any brighter. According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, under George Bush's proposed 2008 budget, HUD alone faces \$2 billion in cuts.

Despite claims to the contrary, Chicago does have resources to provide for its residents. That was proven yet again by Mayor Daley himself—who quickly found \$500 million for the 2016 Olympic Games to cover the inevitable cost overruns. While Chicago's Olympics bid is an unwelcome farce for many of the city's residents, it does create the opportunity for activists and residents to point out the glaring contradictions highlighted by it.

Chicago highlights the way the housing market in the U.S. has continually squeezed the poor and working class—and proves why housing needs to be seen as a human right.

BOB QUELLOS writes for the [Socialist Worker](#).

REVENGE OF THE SECOND CITY JUN 25 2008

Chicago, Say No to the Olympics!

By Ramsin Canon

https://gapersblock.com/airbags/archives/chicago_say_no_to_the_olympics

The fact that they take place in 2016 should not make Chicagoans slack. The final determination by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) on which applicant city has sufficiently supplicated to the fickle commissioners comes in October of 2009. This is not even a year and a half from today, and nearly two full years before the end of Mayor Daley's sixth term. Two years full of planning and contracting decisions that will impact the character of the city for a generation or more — potentially as influential (or traumatic) as the Columbia Exposition or the 1933 World's Fair. While opinions on the potential benefits of a Chicago Olympics vary, there can be little doubt that an Olympic games in Chicago would be a watershed event, fundamentally changing how the world sees Chicago, how Chicago sees itself, and how Chicago looks. It is a little more than symbolic that Alderman Ed Burke mused that we should add a fifth star to the city's flag if we win our bid for the Olympics (one humorous side effect of course would be the number of anachronistic calf muscle and shoulder tattoos among 18- to 34-year-olds).

Although focused on the near South Side and Hyde Park/Washington Park, the games would sprawl across the city; they would bring not tens but hundreds of thousands of tourists into the city. Our public transportation will have to operate at capacity for the entire two weeks of the games and for weeks beforehand. As local businesses seek to maximize their profit from their captive audience (and who could blame them?) costs across the city will rise; the city will assuredly institute new taxes and raise the applicable current ones. None of these things are necessarily bad — they could have long term benefits, in fact. The potential windfall in tax revenue could provide relief to property tax payers, the spike in revenue for local businesses could lead to a blossoming of new local investment by homegrown entrepreneurs. The investments in our infrastructure, including road improvements, adding capacity and efficiency to our mass transit, and the concentrated influx of cash could mean a renaissance in Chicago's infrastructure, economy and even culture, just as the Columbian Exposition lit a spark in one corner of the city that grew into a beacon that could inspire Chicagoans young and old in every corner of the city.

Here are the other things that could happen.

There could be massive cost over-runs, as there have been in most of the Olympiads in the recent past, and which we in Chicago are particularly prone to, cf., "Millennium Park."

There could be an exploitation of the need to improve the infrastructure, as when Atlanta, a city one sixth the size of Chicago, created a sanitized corridor that displaced 30,000 people, according to the United Nations Human Settlement Programme.

There could be massive fraud and abuse of the contracting process, as thousands of contracts for minor and major improvements and services are pushed through in the final years of the Daley Mayoralty, with supposedly "independent" aldermen, whose wards' business communities stand to benefit from the games, find themselves politically and practically unable to force a transparent process without potentially sacrificing their ability to influence the process.

There could be a continued dilution of any top-down negotiated "Community Benefits Agreement," as happened in New York City in the now-infamous and loathed Atlantic Yards development, [as reported](#) by In These Times' Michael Gauss. In that case, developers sought political cover by enticing a community group (in that case, the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now, or ACORN) into a backroom deal that left [plenty of room for developer wiggle room](#).

In other words, there could be a political dog-and-pony show between developers, government and coquettish community organizations eager to be courted.

There could be pay-to-play politics winding to the state level, where collar county, downstate and out-of-state legislators will surely balk at their lack of participation in a process that will make demands on the state coffers.

There could be a massive spending program in 2010, after the announcement and as preparations begin, that would re-concentrate power away from a City Council that will internally compete to either win benefits or mitigate damage, and towards the Fifth Floor, where the still-dominant Office of the Mayor will act as determinant and mediator of factional disputes. If 2011 is widely seen as the year when Chicago could finally kick the Daley habit and decentralize power back to the neighborhoods, the temptation of billions of dollars of pinstripe patronage the Olympic games could offer just the excuse to keep the monkey on our backs.

There could be massive private and public investment with zero public benefit. This is what happened in Sydney in 2000. The games ended up costing the Australian public approximately A\$2b, did not increase tourism, did not increase GDP significantly outside of the 17 days of the games, and that was that. Of course, in our case, we would likely have the added "benefit" of "urban cleansing," which, if the last 15 years of Chicago's history are any indicator, is priceless. There could also have been a slight benefit; it is nearly impossible to measure. The economic scholarship on the matter has not concluded that there is any significant benefit from the Olympics — of course, the government contractors would find that quite surprising.

There could be a net negative economic impact for the people generally. A study by Lake Forest College scholar Robert Baade (also quoted by Gauss in the In These Times piece) argued that the nature of highly-anticipated events actually tended to act as a sort of diversion for private and public dollars, rerouting them from their usual, quotidian job-creation targets in a big city. While tourism increases, the increased prices keeps others away in anticipation; you could call it Big Event Capitalism.

There could be an enormous assumption of debt by the public. Athens and Sydney had to finance massive public works programs that were technically kept off the books; the London Olympic project for 2012 has already far exceeded its expected budget.

There could be an excuse to avoid making necessary improvements. Should we really make major infrastructure and development policy changes — such as the construction of the long-hyped "Circle Line" that would connect the city's redundant through-the-Loop train lines — based on a two-week event, rather than our inter-generational needs? Why should it take an event like the Olympics to finally convince the city, state and private sector to pony up the dough to make our city a more livable place? And should that decision, once made, be based on the needs of a single event that will disproportionately benefit a very small group of people? You know the answer, of course.

These are the things that could happen.

Take another quick skim through that list and ask yourself: is there anything in the last hundred years of Chicago's political history that makes any one of these things less likely to happen, rather than more likely?

Mayor Daley wants his big shiny Olympics to play with, but he has not been a good boy. If he wants his toy, he's going to have to show he can play nice, and share.

Our position then as Chicagoans shouldn't be to just accept that His Elective Majesty gets what he wants, so let's try to get the best deal we can. Our posture should be resistance until resistance is futile. And *then* coming to the table, when both sides are well bloodied and eager for resolution.

For that reason, I respectfully disagree with Washington Park Advisory Council President and Washington Park Olympic Coalition member Cecilia Butler, who was quoted by Monique Garcia in the Chicago Tribune as saying, "We all know Mayor Daley can get what he wants and the focus should be not on stopping him, but how to make it a good thing for everyone."

The focus *should* be on stopping him. Absolutely. And, if he and his supporters on the Council and in the business and political community really still want the Olympics, then let them come begging for them. The people shouldn't just go on bended knees to the City (as though the City is some third party, separate from the people) and beg for some easily manipulated community benefits.

Chicagoans need to take a step back from our habitual boosterism and pride to see the Olympic Games bidding and siting process for what it is: a non-democratic process controlled by a small group of unelected, unaccountable international businesspeople who are wined, dined and sometimes bribed to grant a given municipality the right to concentrate huge sums of public and private funds into a very small set of bank accounts, and using the hypnotic promise of revenue and "improvements" to get into a city's DNA and engineer whatever monster they feel will best serve them.

At every possible hurdle to Chicago winning these games, we should be there raising the obstacle higher. Harrying and harassing the process. We have to start subverting the efforts of the Mayor's Office and the bid committee to portray the IOC as Johnny Olympicseed, traipsing across the globe with the torch in one hand and a sack of magic tax revenue seeds slung over the other shoulder.

Here are the institutions that we would have to contend with: the Mayor, the County Democratic party, state legislators and the Congressional delegations, the business community, established community organizations, most of the City Council and possibly the trade unions.

Sounds like a fun fight: Chicago, say no to the Olympics!



COMMENTS

Pedro / [June 25, 2008 9:29 AM](#)

I had to do a double take on who authored this column.

Its good to see that you have finally figured out that Chicago political institutions are too corrupt to be trusted with additional tax revenue. The Olympics would be a disaster to this city and its citizens.

mike / [June 25, 2008 9:45 AM](#)

Madrid 2016!

Micahel D. D. White / [June 25, 2008 8:05 PM](#)

This piece speaks about “now-infamous and loathed Atlantic Yards development” and then provides a link to the Atlantic Yards Report website with the words “plenty of room for developer wiggle room.”

If you want to read more about the amount of “wiggle room” the ACORN “backroom deal” left the developer and read a detailed analysis of the virtual nothing that ACORN and Bertha Lewis negotiated in terms of housing under the “Community Benefits Agreement” see my extended comment at: “As groups lobby against tax-exempt bonds for sports facilities, is WFP hamstrung by ACORN's AY deal?” <http://atlanticyardsreport.blogspot.com/2008/06/as-groups-lobby-against-tax-exempt.html>)

Michael D. D. White

Noticing New York

corinna / [June 27, 2008 12:47 AM](#)

Go Ramsin! Amen!

Ramsin / [June 27, 2008 9:58 AM](#)

I can write half-eloquent, passably reasonably argued columns about the need to keep the Olympics far away from Chicago, but people of like minds need to get together to come up with a plan to fight this thing.

It WILL be a disaster, in every sense of the word. And it should help in the fight to bring real local democracy to Chicago.

maardvark / [June 29, 2008 3:39 AM](#)

Of course, the Olympics will, in all probability, stay away all on their own, with or without our help. Sources generally say that we're running third or fourth, behind Tokyo, Rio, and maybe also Madrid. When the IOC comes, and takes one look at the El, they'll mutter and shake their heads, and that'll be that.

Jack Nicholson / [June 29, 2008 8:47 PM](#)

Rio de Janeiro is already on the hook for the 2014 World Cup, so that city's already on the hook for a massive ass-fucking. On the principle of least harm, we should stick the 2016 Olympics on the pre-cornholed Cidade Maravilhosa.

Carl Giometti / [June 30, 2008 12:30 PM](#)

For all the cost "over-runs" that happened at Millennium Park, we got one of the most extraordinary public spaces that exist in any city. Even conservative economic impact analysis would show that the park has been an unbelievable success.

Would the Olympics be expensive? You bet, unbelievably so. You know what else is expensive? Any decent urban project ever built since the beginning of cities.

With regards to romanticizing decentralized city power, I am just going to guess that you do not have to deal with alderman or ward politics on a regular basis. There is not a level of politics that is more short-sighted, unqualified and parochial anywhere in the world. If Mayor Daley had not taken control of this city and stripped as much power from the alderman as possible, we would be fraught with useless infighting and fatal inaction. Mayor Daley may have his short-comings but at least he has vision and know-how, aldermen supplant this with pandering and pettiness.

Marv / [July 13, 2008 8:52 AM](#)

I completely disagree with this article.

Chicago is my home, though I have recently relocated to Toronto. From my vantage point, a Chicago Olympics sounds damned exciting. The city doesn't get the credit it deserves and a huge event such as a spectacular Olympics will go a long way toward international recognition.

This alarmist rant about tax dollars and corrupt politics is just small thinking. That's how cities are built. Corruption is not exclusive to Chicago or to Daley II. Hubris defines cities, sensibility destroys them.

The Olympics will be another feather in Chicago's cap, and a big opportunity to redefine itself and give the finger to the cultural hegemony of NYC.

Goon / [September 5, 2008 12:40 AM](#)

Ah, more rants downplaying what something like this could do for the city and for neighborhood development. Will there be some shady deals? No doubt. Will there be some power abuses? Certainly. Will some people get the raw end of the deal? Yes. What makes these certainties? Because they happen in every level of government almost

universally! This article is completely naive to think that this will some how change or is exclusive to Daley, the IOC, and some contractors. Government and making anything happen in the public sector is almost certainly going to take some dirty work to accomplish. I'd rather have that than nothing at all with endless bickering (ie. IL state legislature).

I fail to understand what people are so afraid of? Temporary increased congestion? Impending gentrification of Kenwood, the remainder of Hyde Park, and the South Shore. Change of Washington Park? Razing Michael Reese hospital?

Boosterism aside, these games will be a great accomplishment for a world city such as ours. We live in a city that is arguably just as good as Madrid, Rio, Tokyo, Atlanta, Athens, whatever. Do we have as good of a transportation infrastructure? No, and I do agree with the point made above that it should not take one event to get transit expansion started, but we must start somewhere. Is the violent crime rate better in those cities, mostly yes. However, this year aside, our rates have been dropping. In my opinion I think many people are afraid that their city will change irreversibly or be hijacked from them.

This article also hits on the major Daley bashing points. And while I may not agree with everything he has ventured Chicago upon, I can understand that his leadership has keep this city from becoming a dump like other midwestern dead-industry cities. Our downtown is seeing more development than many other cities, and the same can be said in the neighborhoods (even during a bad economic period). To put it over-simplistically, if you have to break a few eggs to make an omlette, that's life.

It's like the hipsters that sit in some cafe in Humboldt Park and lament the loss of local (Wicker Park) businesses to corporate and international names, and try to remember some bygone era that has been bastardized and is now lost forever. That may be, however this is all part of a well known cycle. That's what drives neighborhoods to change and cities to grow. The Olympics in my opinion will help our city grow through urban renewal and more needed development in underdeveloped areas.

I do think in a perfect world, we wouldn't need a two week event to do something like this, but this is the real world and we have an opportunity. Why not take advantage of it?

Matt / [October 27, 2008 5:01 PM](#)

Why the NIMBY approach? The Olympics represent the worst of neo-liberalism and cause massive displacement and social problems anywhere they go. Let's have an international competitions to see which city can cause the most trouble to the IOC when they visit.

mia / [November 8, 2008 4:37 PM](#)

I am just wondering how you guys that talk negative about bringing Olympics to Chicago can change anything even if we get the bid???? Olympics are great event, and probably some of you haven' t even watched any, so you talk this way. Chicago can only get better infrastructure, tourism, create jobs in this hard time and expose internationally.

So, GOOO Chicago.

I am just glad that negative talkers can not change anything regarding coming Olympics to Chicago.

ken / November 11, 2008 8:04 PM

The Olympics are nothing more than a racist attempt by Daley to push working class, Black families out of the Washington Park, and Douglas Park neighborhoods. These neighborhoods were chosen as a path of least resistance. The families in Washington and Douglas have no political power. If President elect Obama backs this racist scheme, well, that is change we should not believe in!

SouthSide / March 15, 2009 9:57 AM

if you go to the website "realtor" search for houses \$0 to \$15,000 it becomes VERY clear where Daley plans to put his Olympic venue's, this is not a race issue as much as it is a power issue, the people who live in those homes Do vote, they Do pay taxes, and they Are the working class but they have NO representation. Obama does not give a darn about any of them, the money men made him, they made everyone think he was their savior when in reality he is stabbing us in the back. He is of by and for the bankers. When these people chant "yes we can" i say, No, you didnt, in my community people have had to move 4 and 5 times from one foreclosed building to another, so daley can have Games.

Somewhere in Daley's office he has a map of what this city will look like when he gets all those stadiums set up. Who cares about the tourists when your city has no industry? I love my city but I am tired of Napoleon and his games.

RacialHygene / March 15, 2009 10:29 AM

I just wanted to respond to the person with the "must break some eggs to get an omelet" comment, that is the most selfish, self centered, dismissive comment anyone can make about anything, the only people who ever say these things are rich bastards who have absolutely no fear of losing their home, their community, their current job and all the history that goes with it, it has become unbelievably clear that the same people who pushed eugenics turned into the egg breaking do-gooders who never did anyone any good, Everybody down here is very well aware of the fact that ethnic cleansing money lending institutions have always had it out for us, that's clear but really when you think about how they will clear out your neighborhood just how do you think it will be done? Have you noticed that the water you drink tastes funny? Have you noticed that cancer rates have soared?

Have you noticed that the men seem to be going infertile more often in high income areas?

Why aren't your little activity groups mentioning to the vegetarians that the genetically modified food they eat are killing the birds and the bees and that the people in poor countries are burning the evil rice that the pigs[who eat their own excrement] wont eat? Why is it acceptable to you to see someone on the south side lose the home their family has been living in for 30 years to be replaced by a stadium?

In turn would that person feel a little less upset if they knew that you got a little SV40 in your allergy shot.

So really when you take a big swig of your drink full of aspartame that turns to formaldehyde in your body, basically embalming you alive, i should not feel so bad, because to make the comment you made indicates that you are already dead. While you are sitting back relaxing and assuming those "poor people" are better off getting tossed on the street, just don't eat anything off plastic plates, the chemicals seeping off your fork is shrinking your nads but of course, we cant make an omelet without breaking your eggs...can we?