

# DETROIT NATIVE SUN

## Democracy endangered

By Dr. John Telford  
SUN COLUMNIST



Democracy--they're trying to ban it  
All around our precious planet:  
Let's band together to demand it  
Back from bureaucrat and bandit!

As I sadly embark on my second year without my lovely wife Adrienne Lee Glickman Grossberg Roberts Telford, who was taken from us by cancer on January 7, 2021, I contemplate the frightening threat to the survival of our democracy and of other democracies throughout the world--which threat Adrienne as the passionate democrat that she was, no longer has to fear--but indeed WE do. Consider this: From the standpoint of degrees of development of democracy in the world's three great nations of the twentieth century, you may be surprised to see me note that Russia at the time of its revolution and China in the very earliest days of Mao were the farthest advanced--and the United States with its child labor, exploitation of the poor, and rampant Jim-Crowism was the most backward. While it's tragically true that Russian and Chinese Communism devolved into particularly virulent forms of fascism under Stalin and the later Mao, the old Humanist/Socialist ideal propounded by prescient Democratic Socialist Bernie Sanders remains a model for all humankind to embrace: Three prime examples are FDR's New Deal, Social Security, and my progressive associates' still-impending Humans-United Movement--which forms our acronym HUMANS--Humans-United Movement Advancing Nations & Society.

American democracy as a modern social system was born out of the rise of capitalism rather than out of the ancient democratic social systems of Athens in Greece first, and then of pre-Empire Rome. A true democracy isn't conceptually limited to our right to vote, nor is it one in which we should feel a need to struggle to claw our way up into--and become part of--a financially predominant and exclusionary upper class. A true democracy was, is, and must remain COOPERATIVE CONTROL OF THE STATE by ALL of its citizens--not by only a tiny FEW of its citizens. Individualism and democracy have been proved to be incompatible. The bloated oligarchic billionaire ruling class that we're saddled with in America now must be prevented from engaging in more endless wars and from fomenting provocative propaganda; e.g., that which they're currently propagating against the Chinese people. We who would restore and preserve our democracy in this perilous era of class warfare and of more than a hundred craven ReTRUMPlican Congressional legislators who have now plainly turned completely fascist must revisit and propound the brave Kingian philosophy that in the mid-twentieth century birthed the egalitarian Poor People's Campaign against racism, poverty, classism, fascism, and war.

*Longtime activist educator John Telford, now 86, is the Detroit Public Schools Community District Poet-in-Residence. Get his Detroit-oriented books at the book division of amazon.com (type in Dr. John Telford), or contact him at (313) 460-8272 or at DrJohnTelfordEdD@aol.com to get signed copies.*

## Former treasurer of Detroit Fire Department

### Union pleads guilty to stealing \$200,000

DETROIT - The former Treasurer of the Detroit Fire Department Union (DFFA) has pleaded guilty to embezzling over \$200,000 in union funds, announced Acting United States Attorney Saima Mohsin.

Joining Mohsin in the announcement were Timothy Waters, Special Agent in Charge of the Detroit Field Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Irene Lindow, Special Agent-in-Charge, Chicago Region, U.S. Department of Labor Office of Inspector General.

Verdine Day, age 62, pleaded guilty to bank fraud as charged in an information filed by the U.S. Attorney's Office. United States District Judge George Caram Steeh accepted her guilty plea and set the matter for sentencing on March 24, 2022 at 2 pm.

According to the facts alleged in the information and further developed at the plea hearing, Day was hired by the Detroit Fire Department in 1986. She worked as a firefighter, engineer, and held other positions in the union before she was elected by her peers to Treasurer of the DFFA in November 2015. She was Treasurer from December 2015 until her retirement from the DFFA and the City of Detroit in September 2019.

During the four years Day was Treasurer of the DFFA, she fraudulently obtained approximately \$167,900.00 of union funds by (1) issuing checks in her name and then changing the name of the payee in the Union's Quickbooks software; (2) cashing checks which were voided by her in Quickbooks; (3) writing checks made payable to cash; and (4) withdrawing cash from DFFA bank accounts. Day also fraudulently obtained money by diverting funds intended by the DFFA to be a donation to charity.

Day also used DFFA credit cards as her own personal credit cards while she was Treasurer and after she retired. In total, she charged approximately \$49,116.17 in personal expenses using DFFA credit cards. Her purchases on DFFA credit cards included flights, hotel rooms, cruises, car insurance premiums, satellite and cable TV service, national and state parks fees,

and furniture. For example, Day used a DFFA union credit card to charge \$9,553 for a cruise with Royal Caribbean cruise lines in 2017. Day also used a union credit card to pay for another Royal Caribbean cruise costing \$8,975 on the Liberty of the Seas in 2019. She used the union's credit card to pay her bar bill at a casino in Ohio in May 2019 and for a meal at a Bubba Gump Shrimp Co. restaurant in Cozumel, Mexico in 2019.

Acting U.S. Attorney Saima Mohsin commended the work of the FBI and the Department of Labor in conducting this criminal investigation of a corrupt union officer and said, "This prosecution demonstrates that we will not tolerate union officers who abuse their authority and line their own pockets at the expense of the union's membership. We will continue to work with our law enforcement partners to root out corruption and fraud involving unions."

"As treasurer of the Detroit Fire Department Union, Verdine Day had a duty to safeguard the dues paid by men and women who put their lives on the line each day to protect the citizens of Detroit," said Timothy Waters, Special Agent in Charge of the FBI's Detroit Field Office. "Today's guilty plea is an admission she violated her duty and the trust of these brave men and women. The FBI will continue to work with our law enforcement partners to thoroughly investigate anyone who misuses their government position for their own personal benefit."

"Verdine Day embezzled over \$200,000 in union funds in order to personally enrich herself at the expense of dues-paying Detroit Fire Department Union members. We will continue to work with our law enforcement partners to protect the financial integrity of labor organizations," said Irene Lindow, Special Agent-in-Charge, Chicago Region, U.S. Department of Labor Office of Inspector General.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Sarah Resnick Cohen. The investigation of this case was conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Department of Labor.

Day is facing a maximum of 30 years in prison on the bank fraud charge.



## Michigan man charged with assault on law enforcement during Jan. 6 capitol breach

WASHINGTON — A Michigan man has been charged with assaulting law enforcement with a dangerous weapon and other crimes related to the breach of the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, which disrupted a joint session of the U.S. Congress that was in the process of ascertaining and counting the electoral votes related to the presidential election.

Tim Levon Boughner, 41, of Romeo, Michigan, is charged with engaging in physical violence in a restricted building or grounds, civil disorder, and assaulting, resisting, or impeding certain officers with a dangerous weapon, among other charges. Boughner was arrested on Dec. 7, 2021, in Lapeer County, Michigan, and made his initial court appearance today in the Eastern District of Michigan. He had a hearing on Dec. 9, 2021.

According to court documents, video footage depicts Boughner among a crowd of rioters at the Capitol. At approximately 2:33 p.m., he used a chemical spray against the officers. Around this time, people in the crowd were throwing objects and deploying multiple chemical sprays against law enforcement officers who were attempting to secure the building. One minute later, Boughner again used the chemical spray against the officers. Later, he posted on social media about his actions that day. In a post on Jan. 6, he

stated that he "started spraying" at the Capitol and "f--- those cops up." On Feb. 17, he posted, "I have to share. My life has not been the same since this day ... I still don't know how I ended up on the capital steps having a pepper spray fight with the capital police."

This case is being prosecuted by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia and the Department of Justice National Security Division's Counterterrorism Section. Valuable assistance was provided by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Michigan.

The case is being investigated by the FBI's Detroit Field Office, along with the FBI's Washington Field Office, which identified Boughner as #337 in its seeking information photos. Valuable assistance was provided by the Michigan State Police, the Metropolitan Police Department and the U.S. Capitol Police.

In the 11 months since Jan. 6, more than 700 individuals have been arrested in nearly all 50 states for crimes related to the breach of the U.S. Capitol, including over 220 individuals charged with assaulting or impeding law enforcement. The investigation remains ongoing.

Anyone with tips can call 1-800-CALL-FBI (800-225-5324) or visit tips.fbi.gov.

The charges contained in any criminal complaint or indictment are allegations. The defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.



HURRY!

BOOST YOUR BUSINESS

Advertise with us

313-457-5944

