

Poor folks' attraction to Tea Party befuddles progressives

BY JOHNNY-BOY CREACH
STAFF WRITER

Progressives in Portland are expressing their concern and confusion on why poor people are flocking to the Tea Party movement around the country.

At a local town hall meeting and on-blogs around the city, progressives have been lighting up with their disgust and amazement that poor people would be aligning with a movement that is so far to the right, saying it's really never happened before except in places like Germany, the Middle East, Eastern Europe, Malaysia, South America, and Africa. Oh and the American South, and Midwest, and now the Mountain West...

"I've studied poor people for more than two decades, and I just don't get it," says one professor from the School of Social Work at Portland State University. "My students, who really care about poor people and have spent a lot of money to study their behaviors, don't get it either."

Another professor and writer for Blue Oregon from the anthropology department at Lewis and Clark Law School says that when he travels to places around the country he is amazed at poor people's naivety in believing in something like the Tea Party movement.

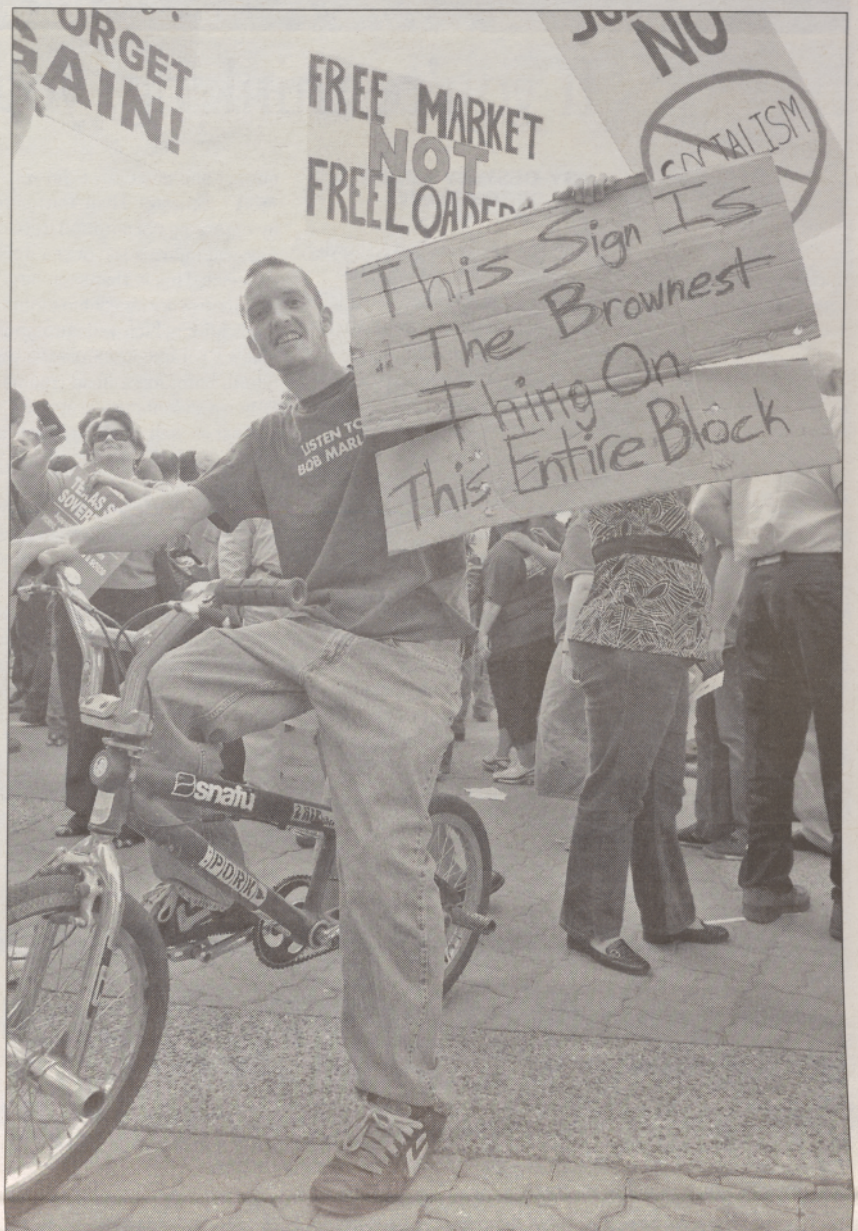
"They can't seem to understand the complexity of their own circumstance. I've shown them charts, and graphs, and a very interesting diagram about how oppression is really affecting their broken family. We're doing our best to give them as much educated advice we can about their piss-poor way of life," says the professor, who declined to give his name. "We asked poor families around the country to talk with us about how they felt, using Robert's Rules of order of course, but they just sat there and stared at the charts, and asked if there are any Snickers around, and when they could go smoke. It's disgusting."



"They listen to Lynyrd Skynyrd and have pit bulls tied up in their yards. It's really cruel," says one community organizer working for the Democratic Party. "One person I talked with wanted me to have a tall glass of Mountain Dew for breakfast, and then just wanted to chain smoke. His belly was huge. How am I supposed to work with that?"

"We're really talking about a group of people that have been working at the Circle K and Taco Bell for their entire careers and don't understand how unions, and corporate free trade benefit them. It's unbelievable," says the organizer from the window of her electric SUV. "Don't they know that Republicans are the one's fighting for the rich ones, and we're fighting for the poor?"

Progressives are planning to bring in several more economists and statisticians to better understand the problem, and how better to respond to poor people in America at a forum hosted by a local community group next month. Look for more details in the up and coming SR.



A white guy holds a sign in irony at a Tea Party rally in Eugene. Above left, among Tea Party ralliers in Tigard, signs express whatever righteous indignation their faces may lack.

Aid to France to aid U.S. Japanese aid

STAFF REPORTS

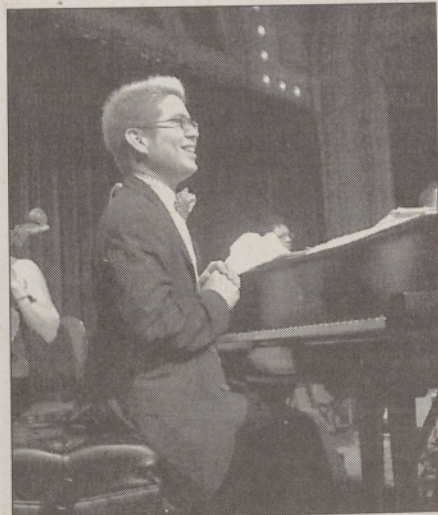
The Obama administration is asking all nations in the developed world to come to the aid of France following that country's economic implosion and spiking levels of poverty.

The French government's troubles became widespread after it sent billions of dollars to the United States, which had emptied its charity and service coffers to help Japan in the wake of its disaster trifecta.

Billions of relief dollars recently went to Japan, the third largest economy in the world, where it was used to help people without utilities, food and safe housing following the earthquake, tsunami and nuclear meltdown.

Soon after France and other nations began sending charity relief to Washington D.C. to keep the lights on at agencies that support people without utilities, food and safe housing following decades of political neglect.

The French-U.S. relations struggled under the Bush administration when France sided against Bush's decision to invade Iraq in 2003. The two countries appear to be united again through common military grounds in their assault on Libya. Fortunately for both countries, military financing has remained strong to support interventions abroad. Ironically, social programs for the French and American populations, can't seem to turn a similar profit.



A big benefit!

Portland artists Pink Martini and Storm Large announce a benefit show to benefit the last benefit show in Portland. After doing benefits for almost every non-profit in town over the past two years, the artists announced that they will do another benefit show at the Armory to help people being served by local non-profits that have been completely screwed over by earthquakes, tsunami, hurricanes, global warming and the federal government.

Tickets go on sale Friday, April 14 for \$22.50. All proceeds will go to future benefits.

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