Protest following Charlottesville in Atlanta, GA. People of all colors and nationalities stepped forward, in the South, and across the country, to voice their moral outrage at white supremacy, and to show their love of humanity, and their desire for unity and equality.

PHOTO/JOHN E. RAMSPOTT

Public education is under attack: Why?

Read the story on page 4
“Without health care coverage I’m dead or bankrupt!” said one person in the audience. "Health insurance as a for-profit business is immoral," shouted out another, to applause. “My health care shouldn’t be a market! When did we become a society that doesn’t care about each other?”

These truths were voiced by people at a Republican-sponsored Town Hall meeting in Willington, NJ (as quoted in a May 2017 Rolling Stone magazine article).

Demanding health care as a right, people all over the country are organizing to pressure the government to provide single-payer free healthcare, where none are left out and everyone covered, with no deductibles or co-pays, paid for largely by taxes on the wealthy.

The attempt to repeal the already-inadequate and profit-driven ACA (Affordable Care Act, or ‘Obamacare’) and replace it with one that would have deprived 20 million people of coverage, and given the wealthiest an estimated $800 billion tax break, raised public resistance and fury. People are speaking up and organizing for a universal healthcare system that provides for their needs instead of lining corporate pockets. H.R. 676, Congressman Conyers’s Single Payer healthcare bill, is one of these proposals. Bernie Sanders is mobilizing a nation-wide campaign to support similar legislation he will introduce in the Senate.

Medical technology is so advanced today that prosthetic limbs can be made with a 3D printer, and millions of medical records read and digested by a computer program. Cutting-edge research on nutrition, prevention of disease and cures are constantly adding to medical knowledge, yet these healing arts are out of reach for more and more working and poor people, because of their crushing costs and the dysfunctions of the profit-driven health care system.

Under capitalism, labor-replacing production, with computers and robots doing the jobs humans used to do, means the capitalist class of billionaires have no reason to keep alive those they no longer need to exploit. On the other hand, people are demanding that the government provide them with what they need to survive. The battle over the necessity to have healthcare is a flashpoint now, as the ruling class moves to make it a commodity for sale, or a priori- ty and a guaranteed right? The struggle for that right is one that will help define what kind of a future we as a people have—one of health and wellbeing, or need- less death and misery for millions? The fight for universal healthcare is a fight for the kind of society and culture that provides these things for all, according to need.

Our Lives Are on the Line” rally for healthcare in Chicago.

PHOTO/CHARLES MILLER

An economic system that doesn’t feed, clothe and house its people must be and will be overturned and replaced with a system that meets the needs of the people. That end, this paper is a tribune to those struggling to create such a new economic system. It is a vehicle to bring the movement together, to create a vision of a better world and a strategy to achieve it.

People's Tribute, formerly published by the League of Revolutionaries for a New America, is now an independent newspaper with an editorial board based in Chicago.

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Articles that are unsigned, such as news story and editorials, reflect the views of the editorial board. Bylined articles reflect the views of the authors, and may or may not reflect the views of the editorial board.

Deadlines for articles and art: The deadline for articles, photographs and other art is the first of each month for the issue that comes out at the beginning of the following month. For example, the deadline for the June issue is May 1. Articles should be as short as possible, and no longer than 500 words.

We reserve the right to edit articles to conform to space limitations.

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Uniting in the fight for our common humanity

COVER STORY

In the wake of the hatred and violence exhibited by a group of fascists who reared their ugly heads in Charlottesville, people of all colors and nationalities stepped forward across the country to voice their moral outrage, their love of humanity and their desire for unity and equality. Tens of thousands demonstrated against hate in cities across the nation, far outnumbering any white supremacist marchers that may have appeared. In Boston, 40,000 turned out to denounce the politics of hate and division.

In Charlottesville, 1,000 people filled an auditorium to celebrate the life of Heather Heyer, who was murdered by the fascists there. The list goes on.

When a country falls into a deep economic and social crisis, as America has, the powerful are under threat of losing their wealth and power. So they take steps to divide the people and pit them against each other. We saw the Nazis do this in Germany in the 1930s, and we are seeing it in America today, although under new conditions. Charlottesville was an example. The neo-Nazis, the KKK, and other racist, fascist groups represent something rooted in the ugliest chapters of our history, and they are unacceptable. Their ideas pose a danger to our society, and Trump’s racist statements have given them cover.

But people are rejecting Trump and the fascist street gangs, and they are also fighting the other part of the fascist threat: the merger of the giant corporations and the government. Fascism ultimately is the corporations imposing a dictatorship on the country. The corporations are using the government to guarantee their power and profits in the face of a failing system, and trying to create a militarized police state to stifle democracy and dissent. This policy is supported, in one way or another, by most politicians in both the Democratic and Republican parties, the twin parties of big business. Fascism has been consolidating further under Trump, but it’s not just about Trump.

Why are the corporations moving to impose fascism now? Because increasingly, our labor is no longer needed, no matter what color we are. The computer and the robot are taking the jobs. We see this in the growing poverty. If we cannot be employed, we are a threat to the system, because our demands for food, water, housing, healthcare and other basic needs cannot be met by the existing system. For the powerful, this means containing us by getting us to fight each other and eliminating our rights.

But the massive show of unity following Charlottesville (which was similar to the popular outrage over the Muslim ban and the ongoing attacks on immigrants) shows that a huge cross-section of the people are rejecting racism and fascism. People want a humane society based on justice, equality and democracy, where the people are in control and the abundance we have is shared by all. Creating such a society is the only way to have real justice, equality and democracy. We are in a fight for that society. As one person wrote on Facebook in response to Charlottesville, “We can have all we want if we join together. Why fight each other?”

Voices from the people after Charlottesville

Editor’s note: The following quotes from Facebook following Charlottesville illustrate that the American people are sharpening their thinking in the fight for a humane world. The next step is discussing solutions in humanity’s interests.

“The powerful elite of this country has had us at each other’s throats forever. That way we can’t see them destroying this planet in the rush for more and more money and power. Unfortunately they seem to have forgotten we all reach the gates of heaven with what we entered the world with: NOTHING, absolutely nothing.”

“One day black white brown yellow red will unite… they will fight off the true enemy… the ones that deprive us of our pride… love… life… freedom… we will take down anyone and anything in our way that portrays themselves as a wall, a gate, an obstacle. We will climb the highest of mountains to reclaim our freedom… No matter what race you may be… dear America I would die standing on my feet than live on my knees.”

“I believe all this to be by design… these people that actually run this country, along with the rest of the world, are many, many steps ahead of everyone else… They think in terms of generations, and decades, where we, the general public are thinking in years and months… They have this situation exactly how they want it.”

“We have to change the way we think. It’s the only way you can know that you can be deceived.”

“If more people would understand that all presidents are puppets I bet the two party system would be flat on its face.”

“Maybe Humanity has finally realized that it’s not about being Black or white or any other color but being a Human Being and trying to love one another and at least try and over come the obstacles we are facing.”

Bill Bunting on love, peace, and the need to ‘think’

Editor’s note: Following Charlottesville, Bill Bunting received tens of thousands of positive messages about his videos from people of all walks of life who want love and unity. Please view his videos at facebook.com/bill.bunting.9 or at peoplestribune.org. Bill is a fan of the People’s Tribune and encourages everyone to subscribe or order bundles of the paper from peoplestribune.org.

Good Morning Y’all,

WOW… what a week. Lots of extremes from both sides of our energy… meaning lots of hate and lots of love. But from what I saw love won this week’s battles. Many people opened their eyes as well as their hearts and brains and saw some of the lies that divide. And many of those swore to never look back at those lies but instead move forward with our brotherhood. I see a great unity brewing. And I see a lot of stereotypes being busted… people seeing that you can’t judge a book by its cover. Realizing a brother or sister who truly has your back can come in any shape or size… be anyone.

So seeing that made me have hope that we can drop what we see with our eyes and begin to look with our souls.

Think about that. What does your mind’s eye show you. Hmmm.

Peace

THINK
Public education is under attack: Why?

From the Editors

A crisis is taking place in our educational system. Public schools are being closed or underfunded while for-profit private and charter schools get public funds and are on the rise. For many of us of the older generation who grew up during the golden age of public education, it was in social studies or history class where we learned how the invention of the steam engine gave rise to the Industrial Revolution which put an end to the rule of monarchs, feudal lords and kings as well as their mistreatment of “we the people.” One of the leaders of the French Revolution (1789 to 1799) described the role of education at that time when he said, “The secret of freedom lies in educating people, whereas the secret of tyranny is in keeping them ignorant.”

That history repeated itself in August in a Detroit, MI courtroom where seven students are suing Governor Rick Snyder and state education officials for denying them and their peers an education. The lawsuit cites over-crowded classrooms with no teachers (one class was taught for a month by an eighth grader), no books, no homework, lack of desks and school supplies, freezing cold in winter, sweltering hot in summer, overrun with vermin, saturated with the smell of dead rats and mold, along with bathroomsthat don’t work or are in disrepair. Lawyers representing the state argued that, “students have no right to literacy” because the Bill of Rights makes no mention of it. The state also argues that the state has nothing to do with Detroit public schools, yet the school district has been run by state-appointed emergency financial managers since 2009, which has lead to these deplorable conditions.

Denials don’t end in Detroit. Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel has denied that he ever told Chicago Teacher’s Union President Karen Lewis, “Twenty-five percent of these kids are never going to be anything, never going to amount to anything and I’m not going to throw money at it.” He later closed 54 public schools in the poorest communities citing budgetary reasons.

However, a recent investigative report by Crain’s Chicago Business and the Better Government Association shows that at the time when those schools were closed, the mayor diverted $55 million in Tax Increment Financing (TIF) money away from those schools to the building of a luxury hotel at McCormick Place and then to the tourist industry at Navy Pier. By law TIF money is supposed to be spent on schools, libraries and blighted communities. Meanwhile teachers are laid off 1000 at a time and there are 20,000 homeless students attending Chicago public schools.

Similar stories are told all over the country. They are indications that just as the steam engine and the industrial revolution put an end to the previous social order, in like manner the new digital, electronic revolution with its computers, robots, microprocessors and 3-D printing is putting an end to industrial manufacturing. Industrial manufacturing required a large, disciplined, well educated workforce. Since no single privately owned capitalist enterprise could accomplish that, nationalized government-run public education was built.

As the electronic revolution replaces the old industrial worker with a new class of permanently homeless and hungry workers, to that same extent, public education is being transformed into privatized education. The children of this new class face a future where the private owners of education decide whether they get an unequal education or no education at all.

Any system that forces children into such a fate has no moral claim to power and must be replaced.

Teachers Union president on challenges faced by teachers and students

Editor’s note: In anticipation of the challenges of the new school year in Chicago, Lev Rosenbaum interviewed Chicago Teachers Union President Karen Lewis for the People’s Tribune. Here is what she told us.

Lew Rosenbaum: What do you think union work means under the changed conditions of today?

Karen Lewis: The major attacks of corporate-style takeovers of the public sphere have emboldened the “bosses” or ruling elites to take as much as they can from workers, and that the narrative out there is “You should be happy to have a job.” So they will continue to hold that and the neoliberal austerity agenda over workers’ heads. It means focusing on enforcing the contract while engaging members to do much of the internal enforcement through training, support, and rigorous demands that reflect the needs of all workers.

I believe the union movement has not been able to break through myths of “we only take care of our own” because until recently, they haven’t. The general public sees no value in our work if they don’t get “results.” For educators, that looks like test scores and every child attending a highly selective college. For public service providers, it means everyone looks like a movie star on their driver’s license or each addict never succumbs to the temptation of another “fix.” All impossibilities, but it seems as if taxpayers want the impossible for their hard-earned dollars.

The conditions of work are much harder as employees are often treated as if they are “at will” instead of under a binding contract. Part and parcel of the problem is that the union movement never bothered to include all workers in their demands for fair treatment at work.

LR: What are the challenges you expect to face in the new school year?

KL: The biggest challenges will be the closing and consolidations of schools next year. There seem to be some “done deals” in the works, but CPS has a tendency to pretend to be transparent while ignoring the concerns of parents and community members on the decisions they make.

Another challenge continues to be the budget which has seen massive cuts (approximately $400M over the tenure of Forrest Claypool) and the devastating cuts to Special Education students and their programs, which leave the most vulnerable students and their rights unprotected.

LR: What is your view of what 21st century education should be like?

KL: A truly amazing education would be where students work on their own interests at their own pace, and are provided the supports, a culturally relevant curriculum they need which does not skimp on the visual and performing arts, physical education, and the opportunity to interrogate the systems of government (through systematic research) that control their lives, in a restorative, just place (not a highly militarized environment) that is technically resourced and full of adults who can provide social/emotional supports in addition to academic support. Students would be able to present their competencies based on careful analysis and self-critique of their work. Testing would be limited to teacher created assessments and whatever requirements are used by higher education.

Thousands of Philadelphia students gathered at the Board of Education to protest the lack of school funding. Communities throughout the country are fighting the attacks on public education. PHOTO/HARVEY FINKEL

Chicago Teachers Union President Karen Lewis.

PHOTO/BILL SIMPSON
Homeless and tortured

Editor’s Note: Robert Allan Tigro, Jr. lives on a boat in the Gulf of Mexico on the west coast of Florida. While in a Florida jail for a misdemeanor, he witnessed the torture and murder of a man jailed for panhandling, who was put in a restraint chair and tossed to death. Tigro has gone to the press with these revelations. This is his response to a story about how police had confiscated $234 from a panhandler.

By Robert Allan Tigro, Jr.

... being homeless and being given $234 still means you’re broke and still homeless... they have killed people in jails for holding signs like this or even one that said I love jesus please help... city council members get calls... they don’t like the problems our cities face so out in the open... then the police get called... they find a man who has maybe gone to war for his country lost friends and family and everything he has to be out on the street and then the police tell him we are taking your last bit of possessions and what little freedom you thought you had and taking you to jail... if you resist we will subject you to chemical weaponry electric shock torture or maybe we will just kill you... when they let you back out your money is gone to what they call due process and that piece of cardboard you had was kept because it was evidence... this is the state of america all americans most of you have no clue if you’re not already homeless you’re probably just a few steps away... wake up people stop treating others like dirt.

Government finances private condos, homeless live in warehouses

By Simuel Ramey

OAKLAND, CA — “Few Of Many” is a statement stenciled on one of the newly built condos in Oakland CA. What does it mean? Is it alluding to the fact that many buildings are needed for the many homeless people who are sleeping in warehouses and encampments all over the City of Oakland?

The city asserted for years that the developer was using its own funds in building these condos; but at the July city council meeting, the City admitted using H.U.D. money to help finance all these buildings under the City Housing and Community Development Department.

Under the H.U.D. policy, one-third of housing units built with H.U.D. funding must be for low-income persons. LOW-INCOME, not AFFORDABLE. The City of Oakland and many other big cities have transposed the words. In the reality of day-to-day living, these two words do not have the same meaning, and this is in violation of H.U.D. policy. The use of this language is forcing seniors, physically and mentally disabled people, low-income working people and families, people on welfare and General Assistance into homelessness.

Because their income does not enable them to move into these “affordable units”, many people have been forced to move into warehouse buildings and encampments that are not up to code. This has resulted in fires like the “Ghost Ship” that tragically claimed 36 people’s lives. The next Oakland fire claimed six people’s lives after the code enforcer passed the building four or five days before the fire. A recent City of Oak-

How Skid Row saved my life

By Stephanie Williams

LOS ANGELES, CA — I’m tak-

ing a stand on 5th and San Pedro and I refuse to leave until every-

one is off the ground.

I was standing on 6th and San Pedro on one leg after the police officers broke my leg then dumped me from jail. They call that police dumping. So I cried out for help and Skid Row saved my life and one guy I didn’t know brought me a wheelchair. Someone else brought me food. They brought me clothing then they pushed me to 5th and San Pedro where I ran into Community Sup-

port Center. There was a nice man inside. His name was Lawrence. He let me in his office and I asked him if I could do free alterations for the community. I owe my life to Skid Row and I’m never leaving. I’m going to be that little old sewing lady and I’ll be the last to tell him if I could do free alterations for the community. I owe my life to Skid Row and I’m never leaving.

Skid Row doesn’t need the police. Courtney was shot in the head by her lover and the community here chased down her killer and held him for the police. The cops are gangbanging. They gangbang us. They’re just another Ku Klux Klan and they’ve been getting away with it for years. And I’m here to spread the news about what the police are doing. We don’t need the system or the jail. Accidents happen. Skid Row was a heavenly place. Whatever happened to Officer Friendly? I’m so respected on 5th and San Pedro. They call me the governor. All we need is for the police to leave us alone. Nobody wants us. The police don’t want us. Our families don’t want us. You can’t end the homelessness. They don’t want to provide us with resources. See what they do here? Everyone helps you. In rich neighborhoods people won’t talk with anyone. People don’t need money when you’ve got community. Community is when everyone pitches in.

Why can’t I have a picnic every day? If everyone pitches in then no one has to work hard. There’s a gift in giving.

Stephanie Williams, who lives on Los Angeles’s Skid Row, says its caring community saved her life. Stephanie does free alterations for the community.

An altar where fire destroyed the artist live/work space known as “The Ghost Ship” in East Oakland last year, claiming the lives of 36 people. Developers take advantage of such tragedies to transform spaces into expensive living units, giving rise to greater homelessness.

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Fighting to save our water from corporate ownership

We need a clean environment and jobs,” says WV candidate

By Peggy Case

This is the first time she’s run for office. There is natural gas fracking going on in northern West Virginia where she lives, and she said she was inspired by a key thing that motivated her to run for the first time: Ancestry Resources, a company that intends to build a fracking wastewater treatment plant and landfill five miles from her rural home. She is running as a Democrat, but encourages rural Appalachian and indigenous/Republican candidates. She wants a more informed Bob Lee of The People’s Tribune. Learn more at: https://peoplestribune.org

One night 215 out of 250 households in Minden, WV, had the Native American horse tears on our farm and crosses by the water as long as it didn’t relate to privatize the region’s water. The work of water protectors is not radioactive, and on top of that leaves pipes in the ground forever. More threats arise each day and our unity is key to our victories.

Our technology has never been implemented. It has not been published. It is not being implemented. As a result, the city has less tens of thousands of residents, which in turn leaves us with the right to say it, and we can’t talk about the same rule: a demand that leaves pipes in the ground forever. More threats arise each day and our unity is key to our victories.

People’s Tribune is on a Facebook event page. Stay tuned.

March to Give Keystone XL the Boot in Lincoln, Nebraska, following the final state public hearing on the proposed pipeline route through Nebraska. Nebraska's fight against the pipeline is the same as the fight against Fracking, the largest fresh water aquifer in existence, and the destruction of wetlands and farmlands by the pipeline.

The People’s Tribune welcomes your comments, especially on our covers and editors. Your feedback helps us stay on course as a paper that points the way forward to a new cooperative society. Email info@peoplestribune.org or call 800-691-6888 toll free. — The Editors

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We want to hear from you!

By Art Tanderup

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More people are speaking out, says WV Senate candidate

Editor’s note: Paula Jean Swearengen, a coal miner’s daughter, is challenging the coal industry’s candidate, Democratic U.S. Sen. Joe Manchin, in the 2018 primary election in West Virginia. Among other things, her campaign opposes mountain top removal, favors renewable energy, fights for clean air and water, backs Medicare for all, demands that miners get the pensions and healthcare they were promised, and favors investment in the people and infrastructure of West Virginia to create jobs and boost living standards. Below are excerpts from a recent conversation between the People’s Tribune and Paula Jean.

“I don’t think Charleston understands exactly what we’re going through in the coalfields, but I’ve seen so many new faces in the progressive movement that it brought me to tears. One, I think coal miners, their eyes are opened because they went hungry and they’re still going hungry, and Donald Trump’s not fulfilling his promises. But Bernie Sanders won all 55 counties in the primary here, and that’s very telling in itself. I think that opened some eyes.

“I’m glad to see more people speaking out. I have met so many people through this campaign that want to make things better. We’ve had this divide between people fighting for clean water and clean air, and people fighting for jobs, and I think they’re starting to realize there’s no reason for us to be divided. And that’s the reason I’m in this campaign. Whether I win it or not, on a national level, West Virginia and our troubles are known again. I really don’t like to be the limelighter, the poster child for that, but at the same time, other voices are being amplified.

“We don’t want to see our neighbors starve. We (activists) were talking about renewable energy years ago. It’s not like we were going to be a bunch of psychopaths and go after people’s jobs in coal and have nothing left here. The push for renewables should have started years ago. Joe Manchin put out an article I think in 2006 about diversifying the economy in Appalachia and he listed coal and gas first and he put renewables way on the end of his platform back then. Coal was declining when it was at its peak here. Renewables give people independence—you can put solar panels on your roof and not be tied to the grid. They don’t want people to do that.

“A united water front is needed in this country that could keep everybody’s issues in the limelight. Right now, West Virginia is in the limelight because of the Senate race, but Flint, Standing Rock, you’re not hearing anything about them now. These problems are everywhere.”

‘Energy companies should do more for the workers’

On energy, Ojeda said, “I think our state still has the ability to be a major player for our country. Our state deserves to be compensated by those who enter our state and get rich from our resources. Our state is in financial crisis and we cannot continue to place the burden on the backs of the working class people.

“It’s time for big energy to show more appreciation to the state that has made them independently wealthy and the men and women that work for them.”

Visit voteojeda.com for more information about the Ojeda campaign.

Standing Rock water protectors honored at Sisseton Wahpeton Sioux Tribe 150th Pow Wow

By Joseph Carrillo

SWST, OLD AGENCY, SISSETON, SD — The Sisseton Wahpeton Sioux Tribe (SWST) is originally from “The land of cloud-tinted waters,” known today as the state of Minnesota.

For thousands of years, the ancestors of the “Dakotas” lived generation after generation in Minnesota. The Dakota Sioux were the first to negotiate with the U.S. government the 1851 Treaty of Traverse des Sioux and were the first to resist with arms during the Minnesota-Dakota Sioux War of 1862 against government tyranny.

After many broken treaties, hordes of German immigrants flooded into their land from Chicago and Cincinnati. There were 30,000 of them in 1854 and 150,000 of them by 1857. And after outright starvation tactics used against them by crooked businessmen and corrupt government agents, the Dakotas struck back, under Chief Little Crow, in August of 1862.

For six weeks, Chief Little Crow and the Dakota Sioux warriors fought an armed struggle against all oppressors, resulting in the defeat and final removal of the Dakotas from their ancestral homeland of Minnesota.

Thirty-eight Dakotas were hanged as a result of the war on December 26, 1862 in Mankato, Minnesota after being condemned to death in “trials” that lasted fewer than five minutes. This still remains the largest American mass execution and is one of the lesser-known acts of President Abraham Lincoln.

During an on-reservation interview with SWST member Wakan Awachin Win (“Richelle L. Solorio”), she stated: “Just like in the 1800s, the money-hungry business vultures have reached into the land of my people to do harm by force, subjecting all my people to poisons that will flow into our water sources and down into everyone else’s from the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL).

“I look at my history, specifically Chief Little Crow at this time, and I realize it’s been one continuous struggle. We can never give up opposing anything or anyone that harms Mother Earth and the people who walk upon her.

“I believe Standing Rock was just the beginning of the Water Protection Movement. At the Pow Wow, I was proud to pay my respects to the Water Protectors, who bravely faced severe injury and death by armed DAPL agents at Standing Rock.

“In the Dakota Way, everything that God created is related to us. This is just the beginning.”

Editor’s note: The People’s Tribune interviewed Richard Ojeda II, state senator from West Virginia, who is running for a seat in the US House from WV’s 3rd District. His campaign shows that taking controversial positions in states where big energy is dominant can be challenging.

Last year, Richard Ojeda was brutally beaten and hospitalized. He believes it was politically motivated. The retired U.S. Army veteran had been filing Freedom of Information Act requests to try to expose corruption in the county. However, he said that the incident fueled his resolve to keep fighting. “My job is to represent!” he told the People’s Tribune.

“I will not be bullied into casting votes because of the party or any other legislators. I am tired of listening to legislators say people need to learn to live within their means when the legislators saying those words have wealth. They have no concept of what life is like for a single parent or a person who has been out of work and just trying to keep their electric on.”
There is no democracy in Texas

Editor’s note: The People’s Tribune interviewed Manuel Torres of the South Texas Resistance Movement about the enactment of an undemocratic new law in the state of Texas to stop cities from giving sanctuary to undocumented immigrants.

People’s Tribune: Manuel, please tell us about the dangers of this new bill (SB 4).

Manuel Torres: The bill is against sanctuary cities. It is part of an executive order that President Trump enacted in his first 90 days in office.

Texas will be the first state to implement a law that forces cities and towns to stop being sanctuary cities. If people do lend support to undocumented immigrants, the law will cut them off from state and federal funds. Cops, politicians, elected officials will be fined and jailed and removed from office if they don’t follow the law. In colleges and universities, students can be asked about their immigration status.

There is now no democracy in Texas. They can remove our elected officials. What kind of democracy is that? People say you must know your rights in case you are stopped, but with this new “show me your papers” law, there are no rights. If there is no democracy and no rights for some, it will eventually affect everyone.

Anybody who “looks” Mexican can be stopped that fits the profile of being undocumented, and they can ask you for your papers. This is already happening. The bill will go into effect September 1. Between now and then, a federal judge, Orlando Garcia, will for sure let SB 4 be implemented.

PT: What is the next step for the movement?

MT: The conditions are forcing people to start thinking. People start with fear. People start thinking. People start acting. For this movement to get into motion, we need to keep organizing within our communities. We need to reach the undocumented. We need to educate the country of the necessity of unifying as one.

What the powerful want is for us to fight each other. Whether it is Charlottesville or Houston, whether we are native born or undocumented, we will not be fooled. We know what they are doing.

The people who are bare-making it are awakening and we have to educate and organize them to come out and say something. Under this law, you have no rights. But you have a right to stand up for your right to eat and your right to live.

Death in the fields

Editor’s note: this story is compiled from information from hispanicnewsnetwork.blogspot.com

On Sunday, August 6, Honesto Silva Ibarra, an H2A guest worker, passed away—the result of horrible working conditions on his job picking blueberries at Sarbanand Farms near Sumas, WA.

Coworkers reported Honesto was told to go back to work after complaining of being ill from working in the 90° heat with little or no water and breathing the thick smoky air caused by fires in nearby British Columbia.

After Honesto was rushed to the hospital, many of the workers went on a one-day strike in protest of the conditions that included 12 hour or more long working days, dirty water, no shady areas to take breaks in, untreated infections and not enough food.

The company fired those workers for insubordination and gave them one hour to vacate themselves from their living quarters. The company also held on their checks as well as their new visas in that their old visas had expired. With no food, no water, no transportation and no way to return home, they walked approximately four miles before receiving help from locals.

The whole thing would have probably been swept under the rug except that they continued marching and protesting and telling their story on Facebook and in the news. After the bad press, the company put out a statement denying bad working conditions or any part in Honesto’s death.

Some of the workers say they will stay and fight because if they don’t it will happen again. When people are not valued as human beings and seen only as sources of profit, we must ask ourselves how far have we come from slavery? If today it is the immigrant worker, then tomorrow it could be any one of us.

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Call or email us to find out if there is a People’s Tribune discussion group in your area.

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What’s in the Single Payer, Medicare for All Act?

Editor’s note: Here are some highlights from the Medicare for All bill (H.R. 676) introduced on January 24, 2017 in the House of Representatives by John Conyers Jr. (D-MI):

• Establishes the Medicare for All Program for all individuals residing in the United States or U.S. territories with free health care that includes all medically necessary care, such as primary care and prevention, dietary and nutritional therapies, prescription drugs, emergency care, long-term care, mental health services, dental services, and vision care.
• Only public or nonprofit institutions may participate. Nonprofit health maintenance organizations (HMOs) delivering care in their own facilities may participate.
• Patients may choose from participating physicians and institutions.
• Health insurers may not sell health insurance that duplicates the benefits provided under this bill.
• Funding is from existing sources of government revenues for health care; and includes increasing personal income taxes on the top 5 percent of income earners, and by a tax on stock and bond transactions.
• The program must give employment transition benefits, retraining and job placement to individuals whose jobs are eliminated under this bill.
• Establishes a National Board to provide advice on quality, access, and affordability.

The next battle for guaranteeing healthcare access for all

By Retirees for Single Payer Health Care

The leadership of both parties in Congress appear to be headed for some kind short-term, bipartisan deal on healthcare access. They should be fighting for the expansion of Medicaid in the 18 states that have refused to do so. The leadership of the health care movement must prepare and carry out a battle for the expansion of Medicaid in those states. It is somewhat like the battle against the extension of slavery in the 1850s. We have to fight for the extension of Medicaid as part of the war to pass H.R. 676, the Expanded and Improved Medicare for All Act.

This means we have to replace the state legislators and governors who oppose expansion of Medicare with leaders who will fight for it. This will be one of the key struggles in 2018 and 2020. The other key struggle in 2018 and 2020 is to elect leaders in the House and Senate who support H.R. 676 instead of the leaders in the recent battle to defund the Affordable Care Act who refused to introduce H.R. 676 in the Senate.

In 2020, we will elect the next president. Our candidate must support H.R. 676. There is no other choice. This struggle for healthcare access is too important for the people of this country to leave in the hands of the present leaders in Congress. And that is precisely what the Trumps, Scaramuccis and their ilk would like us to do.

So, healthcare movement, get it together. John Brown fought against the expansion of slavery in our past history. He would fight for the expansion of Medicaid today and for H.R. 676 in the coming years.

Healthcare: Microbes don’t care about borders or politics

By Chris Peery

TUCSON, AZ — People are looking at the healthcare debate and debacle in completely the wrong fashion. The issue isn’t only money or insurance or entitlement. The issue is the spread of disease. It is extremely difficult for most microbes to take hold in a healthy organism and, whether large or small, any group of humans clustered together is very much a living organism.

If the population is unhealthy, it gets sick. The greater the percentage of infection within a given population, the more likely it is that a disease will spread. Just look at the 1918-1920 Spanish Flu pandemic. Influenza is the most common and one of the deadliest contagious viruses. It is spread mainly when people with flu cough, sneeze or talk. Saliva droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people from as far away as six feet and can even be inhaled into the lungs. People can also get flu by touching a surface or object that has live flu viruses on it and then touching their own mouths or noses.

World War I lasted four years and by its end in 1918 had killed 17 million of the 1.8 billion people on the planet. In the span of eight weeks during that same year, the first round of the Spanish Flu killed 20 million. The subsequent resurgence of the virus over the next few years infected a third of the planet, killing another 60 to 80 million people. During that same time, life expectancy in the United States dropped by about 12 years, and it is said that this flu killed more people in a year than the Black Death killed in a century.

In 1914 the Earth’s population was a quarter of what it is today. The fastest way to travel back then was by boat or train and it took days, if not weeks, to get from one population center to another. Now we can fly anywhere in a day and most of the people still do not have adequate healthcare.

Based on National Center for Health Statistics mortality surveillance data (July 27, 2017), 5.3 percent of the deaths occurring during the week ending July 8, 2017 were due to pneumonia and influenza. While this percentage is below the epidemic threshold of 6.1 percent, what about next week, or the one after that?

As George Santayana put it, “Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.” Without healthcare for everyone, repeat it we will.

Just remember, microbes don’t care about borders or politics. They don’t care how much money you have or what color your skin is. They don’t care where you work on the planet, how many guns or bullets you have, what gender you are or who you love. Pandemics only care about one thing: whether you are a viable host.

The only way to make sure that you are not a viable host is quality healthcare for you, your family, your friends, your neighbors, your co-workers, anyone who handles your food, bottles your water, delivers your packages, or breathes the same air.

Simply put, if you don’t care about someone else’s health, then you aren’t caring for your own!
In the decades before the Civil War, the movement to abolish slavery printed thousands of newspapers, pamphlets, leaflets and books. The abolitionist press played a key role in helping people understand the moral and practical necessity of ending slavery.

Today we face a similar struggle against a system that is destroying democracy, practising injustice, driving us toward nuclear war, and denying millions of us the most basic human needs—food, water, housing, healthcare, and more. Just as the abolitionists did, the movement today needs a press to give it a voice, a perspective and a strategy. The People’s Tribune is striving to be that press.

With technology eliminating labor, we are heading toward a jobless economy. The billionaires and corporations need to suppress the millions who are standing up to fight for a new society that will provide for and protect everyone. The billionaires’ efforts at suppression include their massive propaganda machine. A development we should all be alarmed about is that Sinclair Broadcasting, which puts out the ideas of Donald Trump, recently got the ability to reach 72% of American households. The People’s Tribune is needed more than ever, because it publishes the voices of those in struggle, and offers a vision of the just, peaceful, cooperative society that is possible if the people end the rule of the billionaires.

The People’s Tribune needs your help. By donating, you help bring us closer to the goal of reaching 20% of the people in the USA. In the decades before the Civil War, the movement to end slavery printed thousands of newspapers, pamphlets, leaflets and books. The abolitionist press played a key role in helping people understand the moral and practical necessity of ending slavery.

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I do not have the luxury to turn off my television and do nothing. I see that Charlottesville, Virginia, showed us unequivocally that confederate statues, confederate monuments, and symbols offer pre-existing acts of racism.

We must take advantage of this shameful display of White Supremacism at its best in Charlotte, North Carolina. We must start to organize and mobilize the country, city-by-city, county-by-county, state-by-state. We must educate and confront the White Supremacists.

The White Supremacists will go to any length to silence anyone who resists their criminal behavior, generation mind games, and racist bull.

While we cannot hide from our history of slavery, the torturing of Blacks and the continuing torture of Blacks today, the time has come to make clear the difference between properly acknowledging our past and glorifying the darkest chapter of America history of slavery and it must end.

I personally found that when opportunities were measured, including education levels and poverty, Michigan, Mississippi, and Wisconsin were three states at the bottom for providing opportunities for Blacks.

I personally feel that General Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson statues, the confederate flag and all other confederate symbols should be removed.

But if we are going to protest the confederate symbols and flag, we should also protest the American flag, the red, white, and blue, because Black people have caught just as much Hell under the red, white and blue as the confederate flag and symbols.

The Charlottesville, Virginia, incident has given the good people of this country an opportunity to organize and mobilize together to confront the White Supremacists.