

YOUTH LEAD THE FIGHT TO SAVE THE EARTH



The international Youth Climate Strike, held across the country and world on March 15, demands that countries get off fossil fuels to avert climate catastrophe. See pages 3, 6, and 7. PHOTO/BRETT JELINEK, OLAFIMAGES.COM



PHOTO/JOHN STURROCK, ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

THE STRUGGLE TO END HOMELESSNESS

*Read articles from the front lines
of the struggle on pages 2 and 4*



FIVE YEARS TOO LONG!

*Flint's water is still poisoned.
Read more on pages 6 and 9*

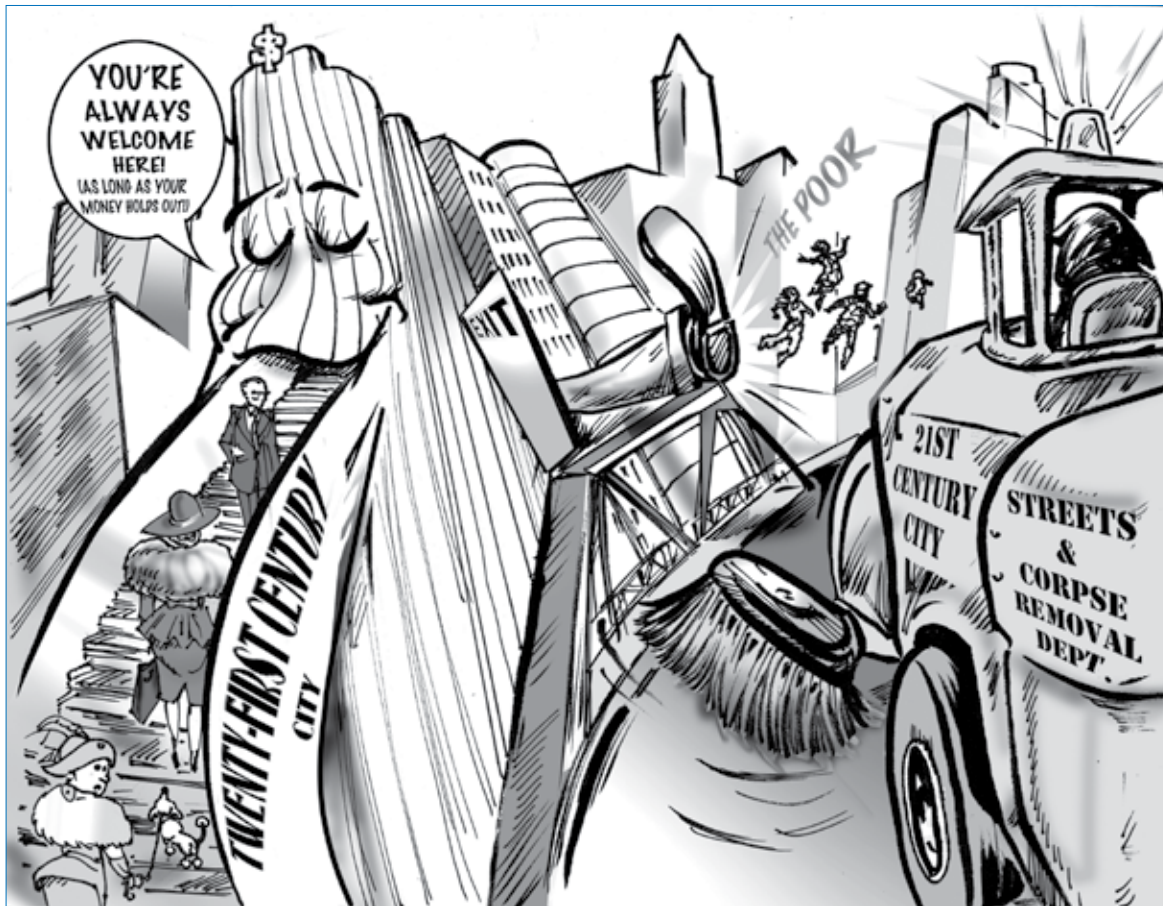
Homelessness rises with gentrification and skyrocketing rents

EDITORIAL

Every day, 4 year-old Austin Perrine, in a red satin superhero cape, hands out chicken sandwiches to homeless men and women outside a Birmingham, Alabama shelter. On his shirt are the words "Show Love." His father, who goes out with him, explains that he's "just a compassionate kid, and wants to see people happy."

This young boy with his clear heart is demonstrating with loving action the basic human principles of sharing and consciousness. At the same time, few national candidates or politicians are speaking to the growing tragedy of homelessness, the national shame and failure it represents. Why is this not being declared a national emergency, as people freeze to death in the streets of this vicious winter all across the country?

There is a direct connection between the corporations, developers, rising rents and cost of housing everywhere and the rise of homelessness and people living in the streets, couch surfing, or in their cars. Central cities are being redeveloped around high tech and condo towers built with \$10 million-dollar units, as affordable rents disappear and people are driven out of jobs, housing, and into homelessness. In cities such as San Francisco, the average rent for a one-bedroom apartment tops \$3,800 a month—people die in doorways or makeshift tents at the foot of luxury condos which often stand empty as tax shelters and investment for financial cartels.



CARTOON/ANDY WILLIS

People who move to more affordable cities and towns cause rents to go up there, as landlords and realtors gouge better-paid workers for all they can get, and the vicious cycle continues. Homelessness, whether in the street or its hidden forms, is just one face of this, the end result of housing as a profit-making commodity. This is the logic of capitalism's "maximization of profit," no matter how society is torn apart.

The leap in the number of homeless is occurring at the same time giant global corporations like Google, Facebook, and Amazon are getting tax-free rides and

destroying poor neighborhoods to build their "campuses." This is simply one example of how corporations take public space free, while people can't afford the very basics of survival. Justification for this plunder was offered by a wealthy New York developer who said, "We have to find a way to build modern buildings to compete with London, Singapore and Tokyo."

We have the abundance needed to not only house every man, woman and child—and women and children are the fastest-growing part of the homeless population—but to guarantee stable lives for all, instead of death

in the streets, suffering, and economic-inequality.

The government should guarantee housing and stable lives for everyone.

We must continue to demand of our candidates a program to guarantee housing for all, including the homeless. If a child of four can understand that this is humanly right, surely those who govern should.

The battle for housing for all is in reality a fight for a transformed society where all have the absolute right to housing and everything we need for full, creative and abundant lives.

PEOPLE'S TRIBUNE

The *People's Tribune* is devoted to the understanding that an economic system that doesn't feed, clothe, house, or care for its people must be and will be replaced with a system that meets the needs of the people. To that end, this paper is a tribune of the people. It is the voice of millions of everyday people who are fighting to survive in an America in crisis. It helps build connections among these fighters and the awareness that together, we can create a whole new society and world.

Today, technology is permanently eliminating jobs. Our needs can only be met by building a cooperative society where we the people, not the corporations, own the technology and the abundance it produces. Then, everyone's needs will be provided for.

We welcome articles and artwork from those who are engaged in the struggle to build a new society that is of, by and for the people. We rely on readers and contributors to fund and distribute this paper.

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

PEOPLE'S TRIBUNE EDITORIAL POLICY: Articles that are unsigned, such as the cover story and editorials, reflect the views of the editorial board. By-lined 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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Publisher: People's Tribune
ISSN# 1081-4787

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Youth lead the fight to save the earth

COVER STORY

With a sense of urgency youth are in the lead: marching, speaking out, occupying congressional offices in DC and state legislatures, and planning climate strikes around the world demanding governments adopt a plan to get off of fossil fuels in order to avert climate catastrophe. By their refusal to accept destruction of the planet in the corporate drive for profits, they are fighting for all of us.

In a youth-led court battle, Kelsey Juliana, 21, and 20 others as young as 11, are suing the U.S. government (*Juliana v. United States*) to stop the use of fossil fuels. “The government has known for over 50 years that burning fossil fuels would cause climate change. They don’t dispute that we are in a danger zone on climate change. And they don’t dispute that [it] is a national security threat; a threat to our economy and a threat to people’s lives and safety,” declared Kelsey.

The lawsuit claims the executive and legislative branches of government have proven inca-

pable of dealing with climate change. It argues that the government has failed in its obligation to protect the nation’s air, water, forests and coast lines. It petitions the federal courts to intervene and force the government to come up with a plan that would wean the country off fossil fuels by the middle of this century.

After five attempts by the administration and fossil fuel corporations to get the lawsuit dismissed, the Supreme Court is allowing it be heard.

This crucial court battle comes as young Americans across the U.S. are mobilizing in support of the Green New Deal resolution. A recent survey found that 81% of registered voters when asked “how much do you support or oppose” the proposal [to generate 100 percent of the nation’s electricity from clean sources within the next 10 years, upgrade the United States’ power grid, invest in energy-efficiency and renewable technology, and provide training for jobs in the new, green economy], say they either “somewhat support” or “strongly support” the plan.

Meanwhile, oil and gas



The March 15th international Youth Climate Strike in Chicago. PHOTOS/BRETT JELINEK, OLAFIMAGES.COM

development expanded dramatically during Trump’s second year, which experts warn will have terrible consequences for the climate and the planet.

With trillions of dollars invested in fossil fuel infrastructure worldwide, the privately owned energy corporations will not give up their interests without a fight. Fossil fuel billionaires

fund politicians, introduce legislation favorable to industry through organizations such as the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) and Council of State Governments (CSG), and even hold key positions in government. Wars are fought and millions have died over the control of energy resources.

It will take organized politi-

cal will to unseat these powerful corporate interests. Unity of the American people in the fight for public ownership and control of industries necessary for human life, such as energy, would be an unstoppable force for real democracy and for government that truly is “of, by, and for” we, the people. Our future and the future of mother earth is up to us!

‘They only care about money,’ says 11 year old climate activist



These youth are suing the U.S. government over climate change, arguing that the U.S. government violated the youngest generation’s constitutional rights through its climate policies.

PHOTO/THE YEARS PROJECT

The following quotes are from one of 15 Amicus briefs filed in support of the Juliana Plaintiffs, pictured above. Over 36,000 young people from around the world have signed so far.

“I already have anxiety that I deal with because it’s hard for me to understand why the

adults in charge aren’t doing anything to save our planet. They only care about money, but people are dying. They have known about this for so long and have done nothing. I want to MAKE them do something NOW.”

– JM, Colorado, age 11

“It is the duty of the government to protect our rights to life, and the moral duty to establish safe conditions for future generations. Knowing the detrimental effects of climate change and not acting upon them is an injustice to society and the future of the United States of America, neglecting the wellbeing of our country and planet.”

– HM, California, age 16

“The Juliana plaintiffs gave me hope after thinking that our environment would never get better, that there was no way that the government would listen to us. I had even accepted the fact that our environment could get so bad we wouldn’t be able to live for much longer. I told myself there was nothing we could do, until I heard about this lawsuit and I believe that legal action is one of the only ways people will finally listen. When you demand to be heard you should be heard.”

– CC, New York, age 14

Your donations help the movement raise its voice!

The *People’s Tribune* is a voice of millions fighting for a new America—a society that protects the earth and humanity from corporate destruction, and that provides everyone with all they need to live happy lives.

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WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Your feedback helps us stay on course as a paper that points the way forward to a new cooperative society. Reach us at info@peopletribune.org or call 800-691-6888.

– The Editors



This little girl was living in a camper in Washington state with her brother, parents, grandma, aunt, and two dogs. They had tumbled through the many stages of homelessness ... eviction, doubled-up, motels, and then “camping” in an old RV. These kinds of situations are popping up all over the country as corporate real estate interests and state governments work together to force out those who can’t afford the skyrocketing rents in favor of those who can.

PHOTO/DIANE NILAN, HEAR US

Could all your possessions fit into one Hefty bag?

By Suzanne McDonald

Wondering how YOU would react if a city ordinance limited your personal property to what can fit in a 60-gallon Hefty bag, and is it only for homeless residents in Los Angeles?

That’s right, one TRASH bag. That effectively MEANS no tent is allowed BY LAW.

In Los Angeles, the City has recently settled a 2016 lawsuit challenging the 60-gallon Hefty bag ordinance. The settlement does not change the 60-gallon restriction, but says that now only on “Skid Row” the City must store and protect any personal property they confiscate when citing the 60-gallon restriction. But areas outside of Skid Row will not be required to change their practice of confiscating and throwing away people’s personal property. In these areas of the city, they say they do not have “capacity” to store and protect people’s belongings when they confiscate them, and are using this claimed shortage of “capacity” to continue to violate people’s constitutional rights.

And it isn’t only in Los Angeles.

In addition, in most cities you also can’t check in to any of the few “homeless shelters” available with more than one trash bag worth of possessions, either. They do have that restriction at MANY of the shelters across the country, and although the City funds



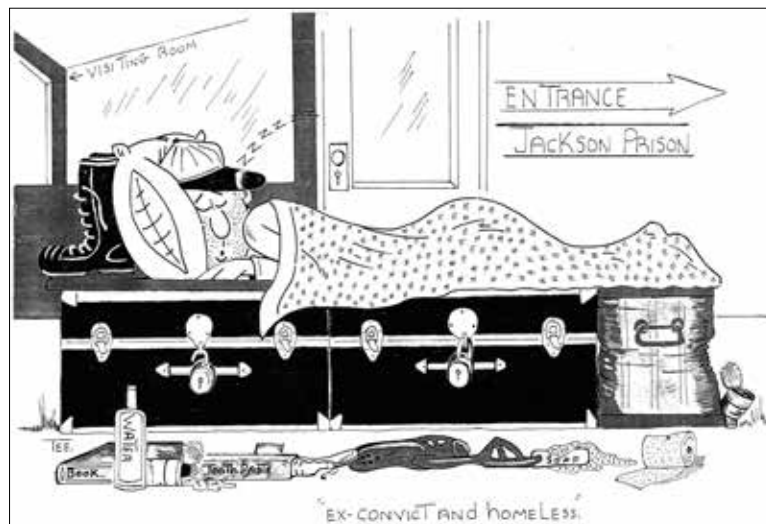
Los Angeles Community Action Network (LA CAN) is a leading force fighting Los Angeles Municipal Code 56.11 that limits the possessions of homeless residents to what fits in a 60 gallon Hefty bag.

and refers people to these shelters, they will say it’s an individual policy of each shelter over which they have no control. Where are people with NO MONEY supposed to store their tent, survival gear, and all their worldly possessions so they can even check in at a homeless shelter? Oh I get it, no biggie. ... Just get rid of it. If not, the City’s cops and “homeless outreach” workers will dispose of it for you.

They pass these ordinances and set these “policies” knowing full well they are unconstitutional. It is then the individual’s problem to challenge the ordinance in a lawsuit. And the case in Los Angeles has been in the court since 2016. Three years of continuing to STEAL and throw away people’s personal property in the meanwhile, leaving them with nothing to survive or

start from.

In all the states and cities, people with no permanent address are effectively not viewed or treated as “citizens” and many local ordinances and restricted access to public services attest to this general view ... but “not a citizen” isn’t written in the law. However, the view of government agencies is “not a resident” of their jurisdiction. That can very much get in the way of accessing public services, even eligibility for housing assistance—and also obtaining ID and registering to vote, for example. Lack of “residency” status is a barrier to accessing all kinds of things, including employment, something that people with addresses and the status of “residency” often don’t understand or even think about.



Editor’s note: This cartoon is from a prisoner in Michigan.

People are worried, their money is turning into curry,
Money is so funny how it pulls you like a roller coaster.
When are you going to Awaken?

– Kevin Fulton (‘Flee’)



Kevin Fulton, known by his street name ‘Flee,’ was found dead in February 2019 near Drumm St. in San Francisco where he used to ask for survival donations, and near an alley where he slept at night. He wrote poetry and crafted witty cardboard signs, many of them with messages of LOVE. He was active in Occupy SF, and had lived on the streets of San Francisco, with trips to Portland Oregon, since. His smile and art and his love will be missed in our hearts and on these streets, where his spirit light will continue to shine. RIP. – Sarah Menefee

Donate to the People’s Tribune!

On these pages we continue our monthly coverage of voices of, by, and for the homeless. Today, millions in this nation of plenty face rising poverty, evictions, and homelessness.

Donate to a revolutionary paper that helps bring our movement for a New America together, at peopletribune.org or send to PT, PO Box 3524, Chicago, IL 60654-3524.

Stephon Clark lives

By Cathleen Williams

SACRAMENTO, CA — On March 18, 2018, Sacramento Police drew their guns and killed Stephon Clark in his grandmother's back yard. Officers had been dispatched to Meadowview, one of Sacramento's most diverse and impoverished neighborhoods, on a vandalism call.

Stephon Clark was 22 years young, African American, and unarmed. They came around the corner of the house and fired recklessly into the dark, twenty shots. They murdered him.

This year, both the Sacramento District Attorney and the California Attorney General let the killers go scot-free.

On Saturday, March 6, 2019, the day of the DA's announcement, Stephon's mother, Se'quette Clark, spoke to the press. "It is not right, it is not right," she said, her voice steady and determined despite her terrible grief and rage. "The DA has never charged an officer with homicide. My son is the one who is going to break the mold because we are not going to accept this." She added, "This is just the beginning—the fight for justice. The fight will continue."

On March 8, in one of many demonstrations, peaceful protesters poured through one of Sacramento's wealthy neighborhoods. Squads of officers in riot gear arrested protestors as they tried to disperse, blocking their way, handcuffing and detaining 84 people, including journalists, religious leaders, and bystanders. On Tuesday, the protests continued at the City Council meeting.

Stephon's activist brother, Stevante Clark, is "all for the protests." In an interview with the *People's Tribune*, he spoke of the future of the movement, describing a vision of building an "infrastructure" of organizations in the neighborhoods struggling against police violence, brutality, and abuse.

"What do we do now?" he asked. "Look at the Civil Rights Movement. Martin Luther King had a mission, he mastered the fundamentals—outreach, organization, unity. Look at the Black Panther Party. They mobilized entire neighborhoods.

"Today in the Black community especially, we don't have 'uniforms'—I mean, we don't have organizations and connected structures that can carry out the



Stevante, brother of Stephon Clark, who was killed by Sacramento, CA police on March 18, 2018, leads the one-year anniversary march of his brother's death. Protests erupted in March, 2019 after a decision was announced that the government would not charge the officers who fired 20 bullets into the unarmed 22 year-old who was in his grandmother's backyard. PHOTO/RUDY RUIZ

fight for justice at all levels. The City Council and the DA take thousands from police unions to get elected. They can't, they don't represent us.

"We need to unify—this isn't just about Black and Brown people. When I first spoke out, I said, 'The rents are too high. The gang banging has to stop. Poverty is out of control.'

"Our communities have been segregated, born into poverty, born into the projects, our leaders taken and killed, our labor, our history, our culture stolen, our people treated as less than human—like slavery, when each man was counted as only 3/5 of a person.

"We need to arm our communities with the right information,

the right political tools, not just to take out the oppressor, but to build organizations and new political leadership that can represent our values.

"My brother Stephon now walks our streets as a prophet. He is the new political system. He is radical policy reform. He is solidarity. He is strength in numbers, in unity, in power. Stephon lives."

Louisiana's 10/2: Slavery, corporations, and profits

By Joseph Peery

The recent fight to abolish Louisiana's Jim Crow 10/2 law and free all those who were wrongfully convicted under it, has uncovered injustice that goes far beyond Louisiana.

Contrary to what we've all been taught, the 13th amendment did not end slavery, but permits it as a result of criminal conviction. Slavery was thus shifted from the plantation to the penitentiary, from the South to nationwide, with new slave masters to replace the old, i.e.; the U.S. government and Wall Street corporations. It has spawned a century and a half of propaganda painting African Americans as criminals and the number one target of the criminal justice system.

This racism allows corporations like McDonald's, Exxon, Victoria's Secret, United Airlines, Walmart, Target, and more than 50 others to make super profits by exploiting slave labor and then extending that exploitation over the rest of the working class. It's not about crime, it's about profit. No matter what color you are, if you are a convict you are a slave.

All this is hidden out in the open, in plain sight of everyone, virtually unchallenged because of the stigma of crime. It is proof of the fact that, "Race is how America does class," and that America has never done away with slavery, as well as why deep racism persists.

The people of Louisiana have challenged that racism and slavery by voting out the 10/2 Law in last November's election. The 10/2 law allowed a jury to convict someone with only 10 votes out of 12. Louisiana's ruling class has responded by calling for a Constitutional Convention in 2020. Their intent is undoubtedly to reinstate the 10/2 law in a form that can't be voted out by the people. 2000 plus incarcerated citizens weren't grandfathered into the change requiring 12 jurors to convict. Hence the struggle continues as "Unanimous Is Not Enough."

We the American people, must support the people of Louisiana in this fight for freedom and bring the innocent home.

Contact Belinda Parker Brown of Louisiana United International/Unanimous Is Not Enough at 269.369.4751.

Visions of an America where everyone can be happy

Editor's note: Below are quotes that point toward a society where we, the people are in the driver's seat, where our country's vast resources are shared with everyone, and where we all contribute to humanity's development. Please send your visions too!

"40,000 year old musical instruments and cave paintings tell us creativity is key to human development and survival. That creativity's greatest outcome to date is automation, eliminating the need for backbreaking and underpaid labor, unleashing each individual's energy to explore our true potential. When we let go of the idea that our value lies in profit, we can build the future our dreams demand."

— Danny Alexander, writer and teacher

"It is now highly feasible to take care of everybody on Earth at a higher standard of living than any have ever known. It no longer has to be you or me. Selfishness is unnecessary. War is obsolete. It is a matter of converting the high technology from weaponry to livingry."

— R. Buckminster Fuller, author, inventor, and futurist (1895-1983)

"If machines produce everything we need, the outcome will depend on how things are distributed. Everyone can enjoy a life of luxurious leisure if the machine-produced wealth is shared."

— Stephen Hawking, a leading cosmologist, theoretical physicist, and visionary (1942-2018)



Washington, DC. Youth occupy Representative offices in 2018 to pressure the new Congress for a Green New Deal.

PHOTO/RACHAEL WARRINER, SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

5 years later: Flint water disaster alive and well

This is dedicated to the recent deaths of Lori Carter, age 57, Jassmine McBride, age 30, Mary J. Watson, age 43, along with scores of others who fell victim to the toxic Flint water and Legionella related illnesses from that water.

FLINT, MI — On April 25, 2014, the lives of Flint residents were changed forever. Yet five years later we still have a toxic water problem. We still have a water bills too high to pay problem. We still have a mental and physical health issue problem. Last but not least, we still have a democracy problem.

Despite all that we have been through, we are emboldened by building relationships across the state and the country for safe and affordable water. We are emboldened by our victory in beating back the proposals to undermine the Attorney General in Michigan—threatening to compromise



our quest for remedies in the courts. We are emboldened by the electoral process that brings to the fore the need for healthcare for every man, woman, and child in this country. We are emboldened by the humanity of people around the country who continue to donate bottled water in our fight for survival. Finally we are emboldened by the growing consciousness of the people here, who are now raising the broader issue

of not just WHO poisoned Flint (governor, et. al), but WHAT poisoned Flint (the drive for maximum profit through privatization by corporations).

Several events are being held to continue raising the voice and demands of the people of the five-year commemoration.

We fight on as the revolutionary General Gordon Baker inspired us to do: "In the legislature, the courts, and the streets!"

Detroit has now shut off water to over 100,000 households

Editor's note: Below are excerpts from a talk by Maureen D. Taylor, State Chair of the Michigan Welfare Rights Organization, to a Congressional Hearing on Water Infrastructure Investment.

In 1914, when Henry Ford advertised the first \$5 a day opportunity for those willing to work on the assembly line, blue collar workers eventually fought and won a pattern for the nation of eight hour days, extra pay on weekends, paid time off for vacations, health care, academic benefits, etc. That quality of life for millions of us started to change [in the mid-1980s], forced by massive losses of high paying jobs with the onset of high tech manufacturing methods. Detroit went from 1.9 million residents to just over 700,000 at present [losing over a million people]. Today, with the population on the move, why keep so many schools or hospitals open, or education available, or water accessible—why keep



At a Congressional hearing on water infrastructure investment, Maureen D. Taylor from Detroit, MI, calls on Congress to stop all water shutoffs and restore all water services. Detroit has seen upwards of 100,000 water disconnections.

opportunities for people who will never find a job again?

In 2014 the Detroit Water Department started the most egregious campaign of mass water shut offs, targeting only low income residential customers two months behind in payments, or \$150 in arrears. In June of that year, we started hearing rumors

about something happening in Flint, Michigan. Poisonings. Both of these issues mark the genesis of long nights of terror for blue-collar workers. Residents have not been able to stop the moral bankruptcy of water shut offs or even water poisonings. We are left to create methods of survival for Detroit, for Highland Park, for Flint and for other cities and communities across the country facing shutoffs. The initial numbers targeted for mass water shut offs was 59,990 addresses. Detroit has now seen upwards of 100,000 disconnections.

Possible solutions: Federally mandated uniform policies for water and sewage affordability based on each residential customer's ability to pay; federal funding to the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund; and renewal of the Build America Bonds Program to address aging water and sewage infrastructure issues.

I don't live in a bankrupt city, I live in a city that has been

Is your tap water safe?

Millions of people are exposed to unsafe drinking water every year in the U.S. Yearly from 1982 to 2015, between 9 million and 45 million Americans got their drinking water from a source that violated the standards of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

- In 2018, Milwaukee's health commissioner resigned amid news that public health officials failed to warn families whose children tested positive for elevated lead levels from 2015 to 2017.
- Washington DC has seen lead-contaminated water since the early 2000s. By 2016, around 12,000 DC buildings were still getting their water from lead pipes.
- Brady, Texas has encountered radium levels nine times higher than the EPA limit. Residents report that the tap water can be orange, brown, or even green in color.
- Pittsburgh, PA has also struggled to combat high levels of lead in drinking water. The EPA reports that there are not enough state officials to perform mandatory inspections.
- In 2016, a 1.3 billion-gallon reservoir in Newburgh, NY, tested positive for a dangerous pollutant called perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS), which has been linked to cancer and chronic kidney disease.
- Charleston, WV, is still recovering from a massive chemical spill. In 2014 Freedom Industries leaked MCHM, a chemical foam used to wash coal, into the Elk River. As late as 2017, the nonprofit Environmental Working Group found multiple contaminants in the city's water supply.
- Water in Dos Palos, California has toxic chemicals linked to cancer and kidney problems. From 2013 to 2018, the city's well failed at least 22 safety tests.

From the Editors

Stabilizing the Earth and humanity

"When we set about ... reclaiming the earth, becoming part of the earth again, I think that will be a real accomplishment ... to rebuild the earth, to clean it up, understand its rhythm, and become part of that rhythm. The first part of it is to stabilize the earth, and consequently stabilize humanity. Happiness will arise in that process."

— Nelson Peery, excerpted from his visionary book, *The Future is Up to Us*, in the chapter titled "What Kind of World Is Possible?"

bankrupted. Congress must stop mass water shut offs; Congress must restore all water services and then determine individual eligibil-

ity; and Congress must help create a private and a public water policy nationwide. Thank you.

The rights of corporate property vs the public

By Cathy Talbott

As the people in the path of environmental destruction attempt to use their right to free speech and engage in civil disobedience to protect their communities, the corporate/government partnership uses government repression to protect the “private property rights” of corporations over the “rights” of the public.

Legislation modeled after laws passed by the state of Oklahoma in early 2017, following the anti-pipeline protests over DAPL, is now being considered in Illinois, Ohio, Indiana, Mississippi, North Dakota, Idaho, Pennsylvania, and Wyoming. Four states have already passed such legislation while Minnesota and Wyoming have vetoed prior attempts.

The model legislation calls for criminal punishment in the form of incarceration or heavy fines for those who “willfully and knowingly trespass or enter [oil and gas industry owned “private”] property containing a critical infrastructure facility without permis-

sion by the owner of the property.”

Individuals can be fined up to \$10,000 and a year in prison; for actually damaging property, protestors can face up to 10 years in prison and fined up to \$100,000; co-conspirators [which includes anyone who contributes money to a “go fund me” campaign] can see fines of up to \$1 million. These bills are written and introduced into state legislatures by members of ALEC and CSG.

Both ALEC (American Legislative Exchange Council) and CSG (Council of State Governments) are corporate “bill mills” which draft legislation in favor of corporations that is then passed on to state legislatures for adoption into law. Both receive generous funding from oil and gas industries. ALEC is composed primarily of Republican state legislators and lobbyists while CSG is bipartisan and, in addition, receives generous tax-payer funding. Both work together to protect the interests of powerful corporations and their billionaire owners.

Flint and Standing Rock



A water protector is tackled to the ground and arrested by Energy Transfer Partner's (ETP) private security. Protesters are being charged with felonies under Louisiana's new anti-protest law. PHOTO/L'EAU EST LA VIE CAMP

showed the nation that the people will not accept corporate dictatorship. The people have no choice but to carry on this fight not only in the courts but also in the streets, in every state house and in Con-

gress until we, the people prevail and have a government that takes control of these criminal corporations that decide who will live and who will be sacrificed on the altar of profits.

Bringing energy corporations under “public” control and democratically deciding how to use these resources is the next step forward in our fight to save the earth and humanity.

Environmental clean up in West Virginia



Maria Gunnoe stands in her yard in West Virginia, which is 3,500 feet from the mountain in the background that was blasted away by Jupiter Coal Company.

Maria Gunnoe speaks to the People's Tribune about what needs to be done to clean up after the industrial polluters in West Virginia. Maria is a 2009 Goldman Prize winner from Boone County, West Virginia, who has organized in opposition to mountain top removal in Appalachia for more than 20 years. She speaks nationally.

“It’s time we employ half the country to clean up after the other half. When industry profits from an area for 150 years, the

least they can do is clean up after themselves. We have huge coal preparation plants and underground mines full of copper that could be recycled too. There is employment in cleaning up these messes. Everyone needs to stop pointing fingers at West Virginia’s problems and start fixing what they can, where they can. We all love where we live and this is where our people belong.

“Reparations are owed to West Virginia and Mother Jones Community Foundation (MJCF) is bringing it all to the table.”

Editor's note: MJCF works to improve the quality of life in many of the most impoverished regions of our country and can be found at facebook.com/MotherJonesCommunityFoundation

“Voices from Chicago” Youth demand senators back #GreenNewDeal



Youth rally outside the Chicago offices of Illinois Senators Durkin and Duckworth to demand support for Green New Deal.

PHOTO/PATRICK BARANOVSKIS

Young people in Chicago gathered outside the Kluczynski Federal Building in February to urge Senators Durbin and Duckworth to cosponsor the #GreenNewDeal. These Illinoisans are letting their Senators know that bold climate policy is a necessity. Transcribed from a Facebook video:

“After the hurricane in the Carolinas, I spent time volunteering with a grassroots coalition of volunteers across the state. They were really spearheading the recovery effort. The aid I saw that was most effective wasn’t aid provided by the federal or state government or by national organizations. It was by us. It was a chain of neighbors. ... I saw old people loading really heavy boxes of canned food onto trucks in the heat. I saw community leaders with huge bags under their eyes. I saw mothers walking barefoot through makeshift storage booths looking for things like toothpaste. The UN climate change report painted a world where the entire ecosystem will be

thrive.”

“Senator Durbin talks about believing that humans are having an impact on the environment and just last week Senator Duckworth talked about increasing the share of bio fuels in our military ... those are important ... just clearly not good enough! Last summer, thousands of people, Americans, had their homes and their lives destroyed; over 100 people perished due to fires and climate change in California. ... We have the technology. The science is undisputed and the public is overwhelmingly on the side of ambitious and bold climate action.

“Science demands both justice and equality at its core. That’s why we need a Green New Deal. ... We are here to tell our senators to take a stand.

“We want a livable future and we want to save the planet. More lives will be lost; more places destroyed, more communities in danger. People are dying and something needs to be done about it now, not 20 years from now, but now.”

Historic support for community control of the police in Chicago's elections

By Gabriel Montero

CHICAGO, IL — The cry for freedom from police tyranny grows ever louder in Chicago, the only city in America that requires its public schools to teach the history of local police torture.

That cry was heard last fall, when ex-Chicago police officer Jason Van Dyke was convicted for the murder of Laquan McDonald. The day of the verdict, nearly a thousand people marched around City Hall and demanded community control of the police.

That cry was heard again on February 26 when 10 City Council candidates who support the proposed Civilian Police Accountability Council (CPAC) ordinance were elected. CPAC would allow communities to elect police oversight representatives.

Many of these candidates made CPAC central to their campaign. That includes incumbent Ald. Carlos Ramirez-Rosa, who was comfortably re-elected to a second term. He was the City Council's lead legislative sponsor of CPAC.

An additional 15 wards will see runoff elections on April 2. CPAC-supporting candidates are involved in 13 of them.

Everywhere on election day, there were signs of rebellion against the Chicago political "machine" and in favor of a new breed of participatory democracy, one that will allow people of color and the working class to maintain power over institutions that have traditionally been used to repress them, most notably the police.



Chicago protest against the lenient sentence given to ex-police officer Jason Van Dyke, who murdered Laquan McDonald.

PHOTO/DENISE POLOYAC

In a video message sent out to her supporters, Jeanette Taylor, an activist who led a hunger strike to keep open her local public school, made her support for community control clear.

"I am fighting for CPAC ... and the dignity our community so deserves," she said. Taylor led nine aldermanic candidates in the South Side's 20th Ward and will face Nicole Johnson in a runoff. Johnson also supports CPAC.

Even in the affluent, predominantly white north of the city, the need to wrest control from the corrupt Chicago Police Department (CPD) was front and center in these elections. At a packed town hall meeting on "Democratizing Police Accountability," 11 of 13 candidates from five North Side wards backed CPAC.

Speaking to the crowd, candidate Matt Martin said, "We need to have an elected community oversight board immediately... We're going to be demanding this hap-

pens not just leading up to February 26th or the runoffs on April 2nd, but every single day thereafter."

Echoing this, candidate Marianne Lalonde remarked, "Having an elected police accountability council will reduce the wrongful deaths of people of color who are killed by the Chicago police." Martin, Lalonde and fellow CPAC-supporter Andre Vasquez have all made it into runoffs in their respective wards.

Another CPAC supporter, Maria Hadden, unseated 28-year incumbent Joe Moore with over 60% of the vote in her North Side ward. Moore was against CPAC.

As Chicagoans vote again on April 2, they face a clear choice: Support politicians who have turned a blind eye to police tyranny for decades or usher in a new generation of freedom fighters who understand the time is now to give the people the power to decide who polices them and how they are policed.



Rossana Rodriguez is fighting for rent control and the defense of immigrants with young supporters in the 33rd Ward.

PHOTO/FACEBOOK

Chicagoans fight for their future

By Leslie and Andy Willis

CHICAGO, IL — This election will be different! That was the hope of millions of Chicagoans as they turned towards the April 2nd runoffs, which were under way as this is being written. Higher and higher rents and taxes, police violence, increasing costs for health care, with decreasing or non-existent services for the needy—all this continues to destroy the fabric of our communities. With schools closed and neighborhood funds diverted to property developers, many people are desperate for relief and change. The general election in February gave many a taste of victory as progressive aldermanic candidates scored some important victories. As we go forward, we cannot forget the promises made by candidates to secure our vote.

The energy and hope that has been generated across the city is something we Chicagoans need very badly. We must organize this movement into an effective force for a different future. We need to continue to reach across the Wards to embrace the movement for public housing, rent control, police accountability, the reopening of clinics, and an elected school board that serves the needs of our neighborhood schools not the elite. The process of organizing ourselves has begun and now it must be nourished with our sweat and our intelligence. It may be a long road, but the suffering people of Chicago are taking necessary steps on the path to an ultimate victory—when the many who are impoverished will be made whole.

Movement for a People's Party launches Chicago chapter

From the Editors: As the movement fights the problems that establishment parties have not been able or willing to fight, new political groupings are forming. The People's Tribune's coverage seeks to include the voices from these formations.

By Sammy Kayes

CHICAGO, IL—The Democratic Party has never been a party of the people. To the contrary, it has fought us every step of the way. The best we have ever gotten from the Democratic Party is concessions from the rich and powerful.

Those concessions were forced by outside pressure from labor movements, the left, and the disenfranchised, whether it took the form of direct action or a political party. Throughout U.S. history, left parties fought alongside mass social movements to change the

U.S. government from the outside.

Our government serves a tiny fraction of the people, that cannot be disputed. Economic power is political power, and thus, the economic powers dominates the political system, and makes the political decisions.

At a time when we need to be more organized and powerful than ever before, labor and the left are fractured and disorganized—floundering inside the Democratic Party, and splintered outside of it.

With climate change on the horizon, we are dealing with a mass extinction event on a

global scale. That is the biggest issue we face. Of course, there are many more.

The Movement for a People's Party (MPP) offers hope. Originally a statement to Bernie Sanders that he must lead a real opposition outside the Democratic Party, "Draft Bernie" became MPP, refusing to wait for one person to lead us. Instead, the plan became an insistence that we must become independent of the political establishment, and take matters into our own hands.

The MPP is now working with many prominent individuals and organizations to build a real opposition. We are working with labor leaders, the rank-and-file, progressive organizations, journalists, academics, and the Poor People's Campaign to build a major coalition—and form a new party

of the people.

Polls show that the large majority of Americans are progressive and want a major new party. They want single payer health care, free public college, money out of politics, an infrastructure jobs program, a \$15 minimum wage, financial regulations, and more.

The Chicago chapter of MPP is currently meeting at 3pm at the Wicker Park/Bucktown Public Library, on the third or fourth Saturday of each month. Right now we are developing our strategy, working groups, and spreading the word.

Our meetings and other events will be posted on our website (ChicagoMPP.org). We are hosting our own events, as well as attending others—in solidarity with allied groups and potential

coalition partners.

The answer to political change does not lie in the Democratic Party. Since its inception, and today still, the Democratic Party has made it clear that it is against the majority. It is only willing to fool us with words, failing to turn them into action. Fortunately, the majority of the population is registered "Independent" (rather than Democratic or Republican) and wish for a new party. Over 14 major unions, representing more than 100,000 members, are already part of our coalition. We have been endorsed by many prominent individuals, from comedians to peace activists and labor organizers. We will only continue to grow. Because, the time is right for a new party of the people.

Join us soon and help build the movement!

Massive movement needed to achieve Medicare for All

By Rita Valenti

Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal has introduced HR 1384 in the U.S House of Representatives with 106 congressional co-signers. It is the most extensive legislation proposed for Medicare for All, with everyone in and no one out, and replaces the traditional standard bearer HR 676. The legislation provides for:

- *Universal and comprehensive health coverage for every resident of the United States.*
- *A publicly financed government national health insurance program that ends the role of the private insurance industry in the provision of health insurance and ends the need for employment-based insurance, while including a training and support program for displaced commercial insurance workers.*
- *Comprehensive benefits that includes far more coverage*

than any existing commercial insurances, without any out of pocket costs: Benefits include hospital and outpatient care; preventive and emergency care; mental health and substance abuse treatment; laboratory and diagnostic services; comprehensive reproductive care both maternal and newborn, as well as abortion, prescription drugs, medical devices, vision, hearing and dental care, dietary and nutritional therapies.

- *All Long-term care services, prioritizing home based care; necessary transportation and openings for integrative and complementary care modalities.*
- *Financing merges existing funds from Medicare, Medicaid and other public resources. (Progressive taxation is implied.) The VA and Indian Health Services are maintained.*

Make no mistake about it. Just as it took a movement for single payer healthcare 30 years to arrive at this point, it will take a far more unified and massive social struggle to realize and implement the scope of this transformative legislative proposal. The bill rightly and repeatedly emphasizes a financial structure aimed at ending our grotesque health disparities from rural health deserts and regional inequalities to income, immigrant, racial and gender-based health inequities, while insuring high quality healthcare for all people in this country. It is recognition of a society flush with an abundance of health resources but a dearth of distribution based on need regardless of circumstance. It challenges the capitalist equation that those that own the resources can dictate the delivery of our healthcare and goes on the offense against Trump's 2020 budget proposal



San Francisco, CA. Healthcare protest. PHOTO/SARAH MENEFFEE

that cuts nearly \$2 trillion from Medicare and Medicaid.

Winning is tied to a strategic understanding of our common interests for a healthy society in all aspects of our lives, from clean water and environment, to housing and asylum and

to freedom from violence, oppression and want. Like Fannie Lou Hamer said, "Nobody's Free Until Everybody's Free": Healthcare for all means, Everybody's In and Nobody's Out!

When our children woke up to the nightmare

Editor's Note: These are excerpts from a speech in Detroit by Dr. Mona Hanna Atisha, who is a recipient of the Michigan Humanitarian Women Award. In 2015, she helped expose that children's blood lead levels doubled after Flint's water was switched.

Flint was not only the birthplace of GM. This is where brave and radical and disobedient Flint autoworkers demanded a fair share of our prosperity. The American dream was born. And because of that, [among other things, Flint had] some of the best public health.

Then in 2011, we were almost bankrupt as a city. On the appointment of a financial emergency manager ... [whose] job was to save money, they severed our half a century relationship with fresh spring lakes and pre-treated water. And instead we started running the water from the local river without it being treated properly. It was missing the ingredient called corrosion control.

So that city that once birthed America's middle class became a city where our children were waking up to a nightmare. In 2015, I was working as a busy pediatrician, in my own bubble. The patients would come to the clinic and ask if the water was okay ... and I was reassuring them that, yeah, how can their water not be okay? This is America, right? This is the richest country in the history of the world. This is the 21st century. That all changed when I heard about the possibility of lead in the water. I had learned ... that [lead] can erode cognition and twist behavior and has these life altering impacts. And science, especially in the last few decades, has taught us that there is no safe level of lead, levels that industry told us was



Dr. Mona Hanna Atisha helped expose children's high blood levels in Flint.

okay. And as a pediatrician, I learned that the burden of lead does not fall equally on our nation's children. It is a form of environmental injustice,

I went into medicine and to be a pediatrician to not only treat your infections but also to treat these inequalities and injustices. So we screen for things like hearing and vision and blood pressure, but we also screen for things like poverty and housing insecurity and nutrition insecurity. And, is your water safe to drink? And really in all of our work, doctor or not, isn't it our responsibility to open our eyes, to stand up to injustice and to fight ... together for that America ... where we care for each other and we're a democracy with equality and opportunity.

Chicago elections show people want change

By Chris Mahin

CHICAGO, IL — The winds of change blowing across America have hit the Windy City with gale force.

The results of the February 26th local election here show that Chicagoans are sick of the status quo.

On Feb. 26, a democratic socialist member of the Chicago City Council won re-election. Another socialist won a City Council seat outright (avoiding a run-off). Three other aldermanic candidates who are either members of the Democratic Socialists of America or endorsed by it made it into the second round of voting, the run-off on April 2. Whether those three win or not, the Chicago City Council will soon have its largest contingent of socialists since the days of Eugene V. Debs in the early 20th century.

The mounting support for progressive candidates—whether they call themselves “socialist” or not—hasn't developed because practical Midwesterners have suddenly fallen head over heels in love with an abstraction. It's more that Chicago—once dubbed “the city that works”—simply doesn't work anymore under capitalism. For most people, “health care for all” is not a nice idea—it's an urgent necessity. So are an end to police brutality and protection for immigrants and quality public schools.

In Chicago, candidates who advocate positions in the interests of the working class have drawn increasing support. Carlos Ramirez-Rosa, the democratic socialist alderman who introduced a measure to create a civilian board to monitor police, defeated his opponent by 20 points. Maria Hadden ran for the City Council advocating development without displacement. She trounced a powerful ally of the mayor. Jeanette Taylor helped lead the hunger strike that kept a high school open. She made it into a run-off and appears likely to prevail on April 2.

As City Council member Ramirez-Rosa told *The Nation* magazine:

“The political revolution is alive and thriving. Working people now know that ... there is an alternative to the austerity and state violence offered by both right-wing and neoliberal politicians.”

Don't expect the winds of change to stop blowing any time soon!

California higher ed students face corruption, lockouts

By Steve Teixeira

Students, faculty, and staff in Los Angeles public higher education are battling corruption and a plan to lock out thousands of future students. First, the corruption: On March 11, the FBI charged 50 people with frauds by which \$25 million was paid to get unqualified students into top universities across the U.S. Bankers, famous actors and prep school leaders were named in a conspiracy that focused on LA campuses. It wasn't the city's only college scandal. On March 6, 127 faculty from Trade-Tech demanded that the L.A. Community College District fire campus President Lawrence Frank, after the District's auditor announced that two vice presidents received \$157,000 in extra income without doing any extra work.

The money came from a grant intended to help students who struggle with math courses. A staff member has told investigators she did the work for which the president authorized extra payments to Leticia Barajas, vice president for academic affairs, and Kaneesha Tarrant, vice president of student services.

Just a few miles away, Cal State LA faculty and students are seething with resentment over President William Covino's proposal to reduce the number of students admitted each year, starting with over 600 in the plan's first year. He wants to declare *impaction*. Impaction is when a public university, which did not receive enough State funding to cover population growth, is allowed to raise admissions requirements so that fewer applicants qualify. Impaction town halls were held at Pasadena City College, Cal State LA, and East LA College in February, with the Cal State LA event attracting so many people that it was streamed to a second meeting hall.

Things began with Professor Carlos Tejada insisting that the administration not speak but first listen to why this was more than a matter of budgets and numbers. "I have been teaching here 20 years, I am a working class special admit" he declared, "a reality you do not understand. Listen to the people who do" he insisted, to loud applause.

Walter Rodriguez, an Iraq vet whose PTSD hurt his son's high school studying, said that

under the higher impactation standards his son would not be admitted, despite the family's sacrifice. Antoinette Saddler, a Pan African Studies major, pointed out that LA's Blacks already suffered an impactation, because "In 2016 we were almost 5%, today we're only 2%" of the students. Danielle Mayen was admitted under EOP's Special Admissions program, and is now an effective student and a leader. She said her vision was for people like her "to come after me and have the same opportunities that I did."

The scheduled 1½ hours became almost 4 hours, until the building had to be closed. In all that time, not one person supported impactation. But administrators later announced that their plan would proceed, ignoring speakers who had called for building a united struggle to pull sufficient funding from the Democratic governor and legislature.

Go to notoimpaction.com to read the statement signed by over 100 faculty and staff and letters from community groups and unions. Video footage of the public meetings at East LA College and at Cal State LA are on YouTube at: impactionhearingelac.



Cal State Los Angeles students hold rally against impactation proposal to cut admissions. PHOTO/PEOPLE'S TRIBUNE

dent fought to create ethnic studies and EOP.

Steve Teixeira is on the staff at Cal State LA, does social justice and union work, and as a stu-

Mexican autoworkers are not to blame for plant closures

By Al Gladlyck

DETROIT, MI — General Motors has been around since September 16, 1908.

As of February 19, 2019, GM has 84 factories open around the world. Fifty-nine of those factories are in the United States.

As of February 19, 2019, GM has sold 15 factories around the world. One of those factories was in the United States.

As of February 19, 2019, GM has closed 62 factories around the world. Fifty-seven of those factories were in the United States.

As of February 19, 2019, GM has six factories open in Mexico. (From List of General Motors Factories, Wikipedia)

By the end of 2019, GM threatens to close five more factories around the world. Four of those factories are in the United States and one is in Canada.

We are being sidetracked by Trump who has blamed the Mexican autoworkers for the GM closures in the United States.

GM, like Ford and Fiat/Chrysler, is a global entity just like the rest of the auto industry around the world. None of the GM factories are owned by the people that build cars anywhere on this planet. Both the workers in the U.S. and in Mexico must buy the vehicles they build from the company that owns the factory just like everyone else. A huge majority of the people that work for GM must go into debt just



like most people on this planet have to go into debt or go without. The problem we all face is private ownership of those factories and not the Mexican autoworkers who build vehicles for \$1 to \$3 an hour. GM will close plants and go wherever it can to maximize its profit. Now, of course, companies like GM want to cut the autoworkers' hourly wage here to the same level as the Mexican worker.

I can only say that we must support GM workers, whether in the United States or in Mexico, and the GM workers need to support one another. The Mexican autoworkers are not to blame for this crisis. Workers everywhere want to be able to provide for their families. They do not want to see their lives or communities destroyed. It is the same situation for all of us.

Fear and anger as GM closes Lordstown, Ohio plant

While GM reports a new record \$12 billion profit for 2018, some of the 1600 former GM workers in the now-closed Lordstown, Ohio plant speak out about the destruction of their livelihood and communities:

"They talk about how much they are about family ... if that's the case, keep your plant here." — Christina Defelice

"I was hoping it didn't come to this; the last drive in was bitter-sweet, what do you do from here?" — Aaron Applegate

"What makes you bitter is that they're making profit year after year after year now, and we're not seeing it back. ... GM employees are a number because they don't care. I mean you're replaceable ... for her (CEO Mary Barra) to think that she can play God, and do whatever she wants to do with any GM family is wrong. I love living here. The friends, the neighbors, a community I can call whenever anything goes on with [our] little boy [who has cerebral palsy] and they're here." — Jean Ann Applegate

"Our whole support system's gone. It's taken us 10 years and thousands of dollars; if we move, we start at square one. My heart was broken, it's hard to see people you've known your whole life and they have to pick up and move their families."

"My loyalty is done to neither party; I will vote for whoever is talking right."

"Now is the time to show our strength, both in the U.S. and Canada, to unite across borders, to build a movement of working class people to build a better future for us ... our way of life is at stake."

— From a video by Detroit DSA

The above quotes are from Detroit News, CBS News, and Detroit DSA.

Voices from the Border: Speakers available!

TRIBUNO DEL PUEBLO PEOPLE'S TRIBUNE



Read the special joint edition of the *People's Tribune* and our sister publication, the *Tribuno del Pueblo*. It features voices from the border—the refugees and those who are standing in solidarity with the international workers displaced by U.S. politics.

Speakers who recently travelled to the border to bring these voices to the public, and other experts on immigration, are available.

Speakers include Maria Martinez, a Los Angeles educator and activist in the immigrant rights movement; Margarito Diaz, a writer from Chicago

who covers labor, Latin American politics and immigration; Laura Garcia, editor of the *Tribuno del Pueblo* and co-author of the book, "Teatro Chicana"; Gloria Sandoval, a writer, educator and activist for immigrant rights in the San Joaquin Valley, and others.

Contact *Speakers for a New America* at 800-691-6888 or email info@speakersforanewamerica.com for information on bringing one of these outstanding speakers to your city.

To order copies of the special joint edition of the paper, visit tribunodelpueblo.org or peopletribune.org, or call 800-691-6888.



A decorated U.S. naval veteran narrowly avoided deportation on Valentine's Day, 2019. PHOTO/SALVADOR SANDOVAL, M.D.

Not one more deportation!

By Salvador Sandoval, M.D.

MERCED, CA — Joaquin Sotelo Tarin of Merced County, a decorated U.S. Naval veteran of the Iraq, Kuwait, and Afghanistan campaigns of 2001 to 2006, narrowly avoided deportation on Valentine's Day, 2019. Surrounded by wife and family, and numerous supporters in Merced, California, a decision was made to remove an 'aggravated felony' charge, which would have allowed ICE to deport him, despite having served sentences in jail and ICE detention.

200 to 350 Latino U.S. veterans in Tijuana were not so lucky, having already been deported. Many feel that if those who have risked their lives for this country can be so cruelly treated, that the deportation machine of ICE and our federal government will show no mercy for any immigrants at all. Hector Barajas, a veteran who was deported for over two years to Tijuana knows full well this story (See *People's Tribune* June, 2018). A naturalized citizen now, he obtained help for Joaquin that was instrumental in his success.

Joaquin, suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) after having been honorably discharged, succumbed to the vicious cycle of alcohol, drugs,

domestic violence, and homelessness—a fate that has befallen so many veterans, whether U.S. citizens or legal permanent residents like Joaquin.

As a non-citizen, he did not receive the VA attention he so sorely needed. To make matters worse, his legal defense by a court appointed attorney was lacking, opening him up to ICE deportation for plea bargaining despite his stated preference for trial by jury.

As David Alvarez, a Native American Vietnam War veteran stated in front of the ICE detention center and Senator Feinstein's office in Fresno, California: "The government is trying to 'wash' its hands by trying to send him somewhere else. ... He's a wounded veteran. We have a responsibility to heal him. ... They gave me intensive treatment, and I don't think he's gotten that."

Joaquin's path is now open to naturalized citizenship. He has undergone the treatment he was initially denied. Joaquin remains committed to "passing it forward." He is getting training as a counselor so he can help other veterans suffering with PTSD. Not one more deportation!

Stop the American war on Venezuela

From the Editors

In 1995, a handful of Venezuelans lived in luxury, while 66% of Venezuelans were living below the poverty line. In 1998, Venezuelans elected a government that they believed would put the poorest Venezuelans first. They approved a new constitution which, among other things, guarantees the rights to employment, housing, and health care.

Now, the U.S. tells Venezuelans they must accept a president chosen by the U.S. or suffer a mil-

itary attack.

The billionaires who run our country say they want to bring "democracy" to Venezuela, but they are eliminating democracy in the U.S. The American billionaires say they are concerned about Venezuelans living in poverty, but 50% of Americans live in poverty or near-poverty, and millions are hungry, homeless and without health care. Clearly what the U.S. ruling elite really wants is Venezuela's oil and to prevent the poor from determining their own future.

Since 2001, the U.S. government has spent or plans to spend nearly \$6 trillion on war. We should spend this money fighting to end poverty here and around the world, not fighting against the poor.

We have much more in common with the Venezuelan people than we do with American billionaires. The common people of the world want peace. The American people must fight to stop the American war on Venezuela and on all countries.

Military Budget: They gotta be kidding

By Dave Smokler

The U.S. defense budget for the fiscal year that began Oct. 1, 2018, is \$716 billion. It's one of the biggest defense budgets in modern American history. And if you add in other costs, actual military spending is nearly \$1 trillion a year. Consider these facts:

- The amount of money labeled "wasted" or "lost" in Iraq just in 2007—\$11 billion—could pay the annual salaries for 220,000 teachers.
- The Pentagon spends more on war than all 50 states combined spend on health, education, welfare and safety.
- The yearly cost of stationing one soldier in Iraq could feed 60 American families for a year.
- Each day in Afghanistan costs the government more than it did to build the entire Pentagon.

War is for the global billionaires, not for the people of the Earth. We were lied to in order to get us to support the wars in Vietnam and Iraq, and now the impending war against Venezuela. Isn't it time to stop the lying, to change our priorities and to let the people live and prosper? The only change vehicle around is us. Let's make it happen. And sooner rather than later! Can we stand another war?

PEOPLE'S TRIBUNE DISCUSSION GROUPS!

Call or email us to find out if there is a *People's Tribune* discussion group in your area.
(800) 691-6888 | info@peopletribune.org



By Rev. Edward Pinkney

We demand justice in Benton Harbor

porate rule.

We demand justice in Benton Harbor, in Michigan and in all society.

A community is not measured by the size of the buildings going up, but by the prosperity of the people. If the people in the community are hungry, homeless, clothe-less, jobless, and our children, our husbands, and our wives are sent to prison without evidence, how can it be said that our community is making progress?

The clergy of our community and our political leaders are all about the corporate strings attached to their backs, and that attachment is hindering our people and our community from

moving forward in a positive, prosperous manner.

The voice of the Black churches in Benton Harbor must not be threatened by the Whirlpool Corporation and the powers that be. But, of course, a lot of ministers deliver what I call a watered down sermon. So they do not have to worry about anyone making any complaints against what you are saying or teaching.

It is just hard to believe though that in the year 2019, we still have a county, Berrien Count in Michigan, with an antiquated and racist legal system. It's harder to believe that neither the clergy nor the politicians at the state or national level are taking action to

remedy the situation.

I was sitting in court. The judge stated that a white boy who was 16-year-olds told his friends, he was going to go into his house and beat his stepfather to death. He beat his stepfather to death. Judge Sterling Schrock stated to the white boy that prison would do you no good. I will sentence you to probation.

On the very same day, a Black 16-year-old kid was sentenced for killing a white man, hitting him over the head and killing him. Judge Sterling Schrock gave the Black kid life without the possibility of parole, stating that he was a menace to society and should never get out. Amazing...

Almost from the beginning of this country, the powerful have fomented this kind of racial hatred to keep us divided.

Today, the spreading common poverty gives us an opportunity to foment unity. To do so, we have to act against all injustice.

If we have throwaway people and a justice system which tolerates injustice, our society is doomed to collapse. We cannot have a just society and allow a significant proportion of it to be marginalized. It impacts the quality of life for all of us.

Rev. Pinkney is available to speak. Call Speakers for a New America at 800-691-6888.

BENTON HARBOR, MI — The fight in Benton Harbor is a war, not a conflict. It is about whether Americans will have prosperity and democracy or live in poverty under the heel of cor-

H₂O: Cool water

By Ran Dibble

*Where the water's runnin' free
And it's waiting there
for you and me?
Water, cool, clear water
— "Cool Water" as sung by
Marty Robbins*

ST. JOSEPH, MI — This country music lyric expresses the common demand by all those without IT!

We here on the shores of one of the world's largest reserves of fresh water, Lake Michigan, are also in need of free, cool, clear,

clean water.

As the nation and the world are aware of the plight of Flint and other communities on the east side of the state, we in southwest Michigan are faced with a more insidious threat to free, healthy water. Communities throughout our 6th Congressional District are experiencing water quality warnings for large to small communities like Kalamazoo, Parchment, Benton Harbor, and even small rural towns such as Lawrence. Even the big Lake Michigan has warnings to swimmers every year

regarding E coli bacteria. Many more can be listed if tests are conducted by independent testing laboratories and EPA regulations are properly enforced.

We suffer from an aged water system without proper maintenance, toxic industrial sites, agriculture animal waste and pesticide runoff ignored by EPA's regulatory testing and enforcement.

Warnings are only issued when a public outcry demands it or when conditions reach a crisis. In Parchment, MI, PFAS (*Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances*) a dangerous carcinogen, has tested at 26 times the accepted levels. Southwest Michigan is a hot spot for this type of contamination.



Every human being needs clean affordable water.

Demand free access to independent water testing! Current EPA water standards fall far short in testing for carcinogens and toxins affecting the long-term health of our children.

Support the national and statewide efforts to remove PFAS contamination from our water.

Call your government representative. Come together and organize in your common interest for free cool, clear, clean water.

Join us with your concerns every Tuesday at noon at Congressman Fred Upton's 6th District Office at 720 Main Street, St. Joseph, MI.

Standing against hate



People at the Chicago Memorial Service for the 51 Muslim victims of the massacre in New Zealand express their unity against hate. "Speeches condemning the attack, and of courage, strength, and resolve in the face of persecution were given. The names of the victims were read off one-by-one. Rest in power in paradise. And then prayers and the planting of a tree as a symbol of everlasting life," said Charles E. Edwards, the photographer of this photo. Throughout the country, the American people are expressing their moral outrage at the slaughter of people, regardless of religion, nationality, sex or country. This is a step toward the unity needed to create a peaceful, prosperous society for each and every one of us. — The Editors

144 billionaires in California — and no money for students

By Peter Brown

There's no money to fund education in Oakland, California (and the rest of California and the U.S.) for low-income students and communities, but there are 144 billionaires in California with total assets of \$9.1 trillion. If we imposed \$8.9 trillion in taxes on them, they would each still have \$1 Billion and we would have \$8.95 TRILLION in taxes for public use! For perspective, the annual Gross Domestic Product of the entire United States is \$20 Trillion. Never mind that they got rich by owning what are really social resources, which should be public.

The *People's Tribune* gratefully acknowledges a major gift of \$300 from Ann Scheetz in honor of James Rhodes. Thank you so much for your support.

So Many Words

They come to most forums
Say many words
Coiffed with intimations of home
Empty, ruling class promises.

Mass media blasts
Ghost messages in color
Insincere content
Meaningless, vacant, robotized.

The ruling class steals human dreams
Ignores real pleas from common angst,
Talks over essential needs
Shuts down the cries from silent voices.

So many words
Fake understanding of obligation
Homeless, hungry, sick people
Have no words, not even letters.

— Kathy Powers