

Coming together to resist the politics of hate

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Colorado protesters express their moral outrage at President Trump's executive order attacking refugees and his attack on immigrants. This is one of many protests taking place across the country. PHOTO/CHRIS GOODWIN, DESROWVISUALS

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Guarantee a home for everyone

EDITORIAL

Tent encampments are springing up all over America, from cities to rural areas: at the feet of new shining high rise towers in cities like San Francisco, along creeks outside small towns. People seek shelter in doorways and down in subways and in alleys and even hide in dumpsters. More and more, abandoned by even the institutions designed to help them, they are banding together in frail communities they form for mutual protection against the attacks that come at them from the government that is supposed to represent them.

The homeless are families. They are schoolchildren, millions of them, whose families can't afford a roof. They are elders, and the youth who have no future, who travel from town to town often in groups for company and self-protection. They are college students who couch-surf or live in their cars. They are from all walks of life. Some have been driven over borders in search of work, others from town to town. They are the jobless and people who work full and part time but can't afford housing.

The homeless are the growing section of a growing class of workers who are being pushed out of production by automation. Under capitalism, the owning class and the government it controls will no longer feed or house people whose labor it no longer needs.

How can an immensely wealthy country like the US justify having millions of its people suffering and dying in its streets? A small class of billionaires—540 of them in the US, with one person, Bill Gates, expected to soon be worth a trillion dollars—amass obscene wealth beyond imagination, while ever more people are thrown into poverty and homelessness. This is why homelessness is the Achilles heel of the capitalist system and its law of pay-to-play or starve. And millions of people are protesting in the streets, expressing their outrage at this immoral order and the brutality being imposed on humanity.

The growing movement against hate and for a just society must take up the demands of the homeless to guarantee all our rights and the right to what we all need to survive. This is both a moral and a practical question that affects the fate of us all. The homeless show us, where they gather to help each other, what cooperation means across all the divisions of color, background, nationality, age and all those artificial ways the ruling class uses to keep us from uniting. The homeless are pointing us to a new cooperative society.

In a cooperative society the government would guarantee everyone homes, education, healthcare, food, water—all we need would be a fundamental right, not a source of profit for a small owning class. The demands of the homeless are a call for such a society, organized in the interests of us all.



Many of today's homeless had relatively good jobs but are now discarded by companies who produce more profitably with robots and computers. The corporate class cares nothing for those who they can no longer exploit. They are not fit to rule society. Only a cooperative society organized around the needs of the people can save humanity.

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PEOPLE'S TRIBUNE

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. To that end, this paper is a tribune of 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.

Labor-replacing electronic technology is permanently eliminating jobs and destroying the foundation of the capitalist system. The people's needs can only be met by building a cooperative society where the socially necessary means of production are owned by society, not by the corporations.

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.

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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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Coming together to resist the politics of hate

COVER STORY

At this writing, it has been almost six weeks since President Trump was inaugurated, and protests in opposition to him continue with no let-up in sight. Emotions run high. “Hope not fear... Equality for all... Women’s rights... Healthcare for all... No walls. No ban...” are just a few of the peoples’ demands.

Trump portrays himself as something closer to the common man. As a corporate owner he is anything but that. He and his cabinet members aren’t just pro-big business, they are big business. People are saying, “what is this, a dictatorship?” The real common people are morally outraged at his demeaning of women, his racist hate speak toward Muslims, Mexicans and African Americans, and his blatant disregard for the environment and the disabled, among other things. It is on this basis that a very broad, massive, sustained movement is developing intuitively referring to itself as the resistance.

The Democratic Party and others would like to keep the attention of this movement focused just on Trump, or the far right, or Republicans in general. However, long before this (s)election was concluded, many were beginning to question an economic system and its political structure that finds every way

possible to enrich the tiny class of billionaires, while making an ever increasing number of American workers jobless and homeless.

When a young man recently told Democratic House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi on live TV that 51% of young people “no longer support the system of capitalism,” she defended the system. Obviously, Donald Trump is not the only “front man” for capitalism. Both major political parties are caught in the dilemma of having to protect corporate profits and private property while at the same time appearing to be for the working class. The resistance movement is a potential threat to that charade.

Our economy is not broken, it’s dying. It’s become cheaper for capitalists to buy machines to do work rather than give a worker a job. What jobs are left are temporary and at lower pay. Trump’s proposed tax breaks, deregulation and subsidies for the wealthy can bring manufacturing home to the US in large part because it’s becoming cheaper to produce here with robots than to use cheap labor anywhere in the world. There is a world of difference between made in America by robots and made in America by workers with jobs. When that difference becomes clear to the workers, it will add fuel to the resistance movement. It is under these conditions that the ruling class is imposing fascism in order to quell any and all resistance.

Fascism today is the merger



CARTOON/ANDY WILLIS

of the government and the corporations. This means not only the dictatorship of the corporations to repress dissent: it’s also the corporations using the government to guarantee their profits. While Trump’s racist propaganda of hate is used to try and distract and divide us, the corporate takeover of government continues. Public housing, public schools, parks, libraries, highways, water, even the postal services—all government entities are becoming the

private property of corporations and a source of profit for them. Soon to follow will be Medicare and Social Security.

Fascism, the open dictatorship of the corporations, is the exact opposite of what we the people are fighting for. We are fighting for a whole new society where the people are in charge, where no one lives in fear, where everyone’s rights are guaranteed and no one is homeless or hungry. The force to create this new

society already exists; it is the millions of every color, nationality and gender, many of whom have been forced into poverty by the corporate system, and are fighting for a just society for all. A first step toward a new America would be for us to unite this movement around the demand that the government be our government, take over the corporations, and run them in the interest of we, the people.

Attack on immigrants is attempt to deny democracy to all

From the Editors of the People’s Tribune

“The only crime my mother committed was to go to work to give a better life for her children,” said Jacqueline, the teenaged daughter of Guadalupe Garcia de Rayos, one of the first casualties of Trump’s war on immigrants. Guadalupe was branded a “criminal,” and deported after a routine visit to the Immigration office.

The attack on immigrants as “criminals” increased under Obama and continues today under Trump, although at a higher level.

The situation demands that we ask: who is the real “criminal?”

Is a mom trying to feed her kids, who uses a fake identification to get a job, a criminal? Is a

homeless person trying to survive in an abandoned home a criminal? Are Black kids walking down the street who the cops shoot criminals? Are you a criminal if your water is shut off? It’s grounds for taking away your kids. These people are not criminals. Aren’t the real criminals the public officials who poison the kids of an entire city in order to privatize the water for the corporations? Aren’t you a criminal if you are a billionaire or their rep who uses government as a means to destroy environmental regulations, public housing, and public education in order to guarantee your profits?

The billionaire class has to steal what little is left in the public coffers to increase their profits in this dying system. So they need to blame someone else for their crimes. The real aim of their

immoral attack on the immigrants is to stop our unity and movement for a just society. They are using the immigration issue to deny democracy to us all. But, we aren’t going for it! We say no to a government of billionaire criminals. We say no to the hate. This is the significance of our nationwide protests in defense of immigrants. We are in a fight for a new society where everyone has rights and where everyone has their needs met—and they will not stop us.

No wall! No ban!



Guadalupe, a mother who lived in the U.S. for two decades, was deported by U.S. authorities to Mexico.

PHOTO/DIEGO NACHO, GRAPHIC DESIGN+PHOTOGRAPHY

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

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



Rally in support of immigrants in Austin, Texas. The attack on immigrants is the opening gun to attack us all. PHOTO/JOHN ANDERSON

'Plane Wreck at Los Gatos (Deportee)'

(excerpts)

Goodbye to my Juan, goodbye, Rosalita,
Adios mis amigos, Jesus y Maria;
You won't have your names when you ride the big airplane,
All they will call you will be "deportees" ...

Some of us are illegal, and some are not wanted,
Our work contract's out and we have to move on;
Six hundred miles to that Mexican border,
They chase us like outlaws, like rustlers, like thieves ...

The sky plane caught fire over Los Gatos Canyon,
A fireball of lightning, and shook all our hills,
Who are these friends, all scattered like dry leaves?
The radio says, "They are just deportees"

Is this the best way we can grow our big orchards?
Is this the best way we can grow our good fruit?
To fall like dry leaves to rot on my topsoil
And be called by no name except "deportees"?

— Lyrics by Woodie Guthrie

Tragic death of immigrants inspired song of solidarity

By Chris Mahin

CHICAGO, IL — The fire began over Los Gatos Canyon. The plane crashed 20 miles west of Coalinga, California, on January 28, 1948. It came down into hills which, as one commentator noted, at that time of year are "a beautiful green, splendid with wildflowers ... a place of breathtaking beauty."

The newspaper articles written at the time describe an accident involving a Douglas DC-3 carrying immigrant workers from Oakland, California to the El Centro, California Deportation Center. Those accounts give the name of the plane's pilot (Frank Atkinson), and co-pilot (Marion Ewing). They mention the name of the stewardess (Bobbi Atkinson) and the guard (Frank E. Chapin). The stories written at the time did not include the names of any of the 27 men or of the one woman who were passengers on that flight, victims who were buried in a mass grave at Holy Cross Cemetery in Fresno, California. Those reports simply dismissed them as "deportees."

One visitor to the crash site described the scene:

"I ... can remember going to the crash site the day after the incident. ... It was a cold and

damp day. ... The sadness of seeing the meager possessions of the passengers and the total lack of respect by those who had the task of removing the bodies will be something I will never forget or forgive."

Three thousand miles away, a man took notice. Musician Woody Guthrie left his birthplace in Oklahoma during the Great Depression and then did plenty of "hard traveling" before ultimately ending up in New York. He was outraged by the callousness of the news stories which couldn't be bothered to mention the names of the workers who died in the crash. Out of his anger came a song—"Plane Wreck at Los Gatos (Deportee)," a ballad in which he assigned symbolic names to the dead.

The song, as Woody Guthrie wrote it, was without music; Guthrie chanted the words. "Plane Wreck at Los Gatos (Deportee)" was not performed publicly until 10 years after the crash, when a teacher named Martin Hoffman added a haunting melody and Woody's friend Pete Seeger began performing the song in concerts. The song's eloquent plea for justice for immigrant workers has stirred the conscience of fair-minded people ever since.

Often referred to simply as

"Deportee," the song has been covered by a wide variety of artists including Willie Nelson; Dolly Parton; Bruce Springsteen; Christy Moore; Billy Bragg; the Kingston Trio; Cisco Houston; Judy Collins; The Byrds; Joan Baez; Arlo Guthrie; Sweet Honey in the Rock; Hoyt Axton; Peter, Paul, and Mary; Roy Brown Ramirez; Tito Auger; Tao Rodriguez-Seeger; and Paddy Reilly, among others.

This year marks 69 years since that horrific plane wreck. The lyrics of Woody Guthrie's song sound as if they were written just days ago, not more than six decades in the past.

The great labor leader Mother Jones once said that we should mourn for the dead and fight like hell for the living. This year, we should pay special heed to the appeal for unity which rings out so beautifully from Woody Guthrie's song. Today, we can honor the dead of January 28, 1948 best by speaking up in defense of the living immigrant workers of today—regardless of documentation status—and by demanding that the rulers of this country cease their cowardly attempts to use the immigration issue as a wedge to divide the workers of this country.

Democracy in Baltimore is being replaced by a police state

By Jim Fite

BALTIMORE, MD — Baltimore has long been known for its militant labor and civil rights struggles. Just two years ago, massive demonstrations focused attention on police violence and the death of Freddie Gray in a police van. This metropolitan area contains over one million people and some of the worst poverty and unemployment found in the US.

Since the uprising, the billionaire ruling class has made several changes to lessen democracy and increase rule by a new form of police terror. While the City and the Justice department agree to try to curtail individual racist thugs who wear a police uniform, behind the scenes, investments are made to arrest anyone who opposes the corporate takeover of



Protests in Baltimore, MD, over the death of Freddie Gray while in police custody. PHOTO/ALEX ERKILETIAN

government.

Six months ago, it was revealed that the police had obtained money from a Texas investor to pay for airplane surveillance over the city. Last year Baltimore Police were caught

using the "Sting Ray" cell phone technology that captures all cell phones in a certain area to locate one they are looking for. The ACLU forced them to stop using this.

Baltimore Police and Mary-

land State Police are setting up face recognition software systems that make a data base of the seven million driver's license photos, the mug shots and any other state or city issued ID. They then cross check them against images seen on the hundreds of City Watch cameras. They are trying to perfect the system so that they can use cameras in the transportation, hospital, and school systems and other areas, to watch for wanted individuals.

Baltimore police are feeding mug shots into this system to cross check the faces in crowds, rallies or demonstrations, locate and arrest wanted individuals. They have used this against Black Lives Matter and other groups.

Baltimore City and County police pay \$38,000 a month to companies to scan FaceBook

and Instagram for pictures of individuals they want or information or posts they are concerned with.

Fascism is much more than the Neo Nazis. It is the corporate/military takeover of government and the destruction of our democracy. The old police terror found in the back of a police van is decried while a new police terror is implemented with little knowledge or discussion. This is done with tax dollars and private capitalist grants.

This police state is for each of us, whether you protest Freddie Gray's death, the pollution of the Bay, fracking or poor education, a system to deny your rights is being created. Now is the time to stop it.

Women leading the fight for a new society

International Women's Day

From the Editors

On March 8, International Women's Day, when people all over the globe rally for women's rights, organizers of the historic January, 2017 women's marches are calling for a strike. They want to show the country what a day without a woman would look like: "In the spirit of women and their allies coming together for love and liberation, we call for a Day Without A Woman."

Women today are the numerical majority in society, in the working class, and among the growing numbers of destitute here and globally. Consequently, women's position makes them key to social change. And, the conditions for change do exist today.

Capitalism, based on the drive for maximum profit, creates destitution. The only solution is to join with the already dispossessed to get rid of this dying system. As Jane Addams said, "The good we secure for ourselves is precarious and uncertain until it is secured for all of us..." With women playing a conscious role, a revolutionary movement for a new society can be forged. Herein lies the importance of the powerful women's movement that is arising today.

Following are quotes from some of the women who are leading this fight:

"I represent over 500 Fast Food workers here in the City of Flint who make \$8.50 per hour. We fought for that (minimum

wage was \$7.25/ hour). With Fast Food workers having the highest water rates in the nation, they cannot pay their water bills. They ask me, 'what should we do?' We don't have a SHUT-OFF policy. When I think about our water credits (per Michigan Gov. Snyder) being taken away in March, why are we not proactive? Protest does work. We will continue to fight. We are ready."

— Activist-Evangelist
Lisia Williams

"A couple of years ago, myself and members of my organization, Shawnee Hills and Hollers, stood with the Rocky Branch community of Saline County, Harrisburg, Illinois and witnessed a 200 year old forest of 1000 acres clear cut for Peabody's surface mining. Two weeks of loud machines. All our relatives losing their home-community; members crying on our shoulders in helplessness. An activist can be overwhelmed with despair. I don't fall in this trap. I become more fearless. What gives me endurance are the human beings I see standing beside me and the living world struggling to sustain."

— **Georgia De La Garza**

"Women are the backbone of our communities, whether it be in rural country homes or in the inner cities homes. Women are often the ones to stand up and protect their air, water and land while recognizing that they are protecting the future of all children, not only theirs."



Historic women's march in DC. Women are in the forefront of the struggle to protect our water.

PHOTO/ADRIAN GARCIA

Women must remain strong and vigilant in their communities and especially so now. We must stand shoulder to shoulder even worlds apart to tend to our next generation. They truly deserve a better world than the one they are now slated to inherit. It's up to us to secure a livable future for our kids and grandkids. We have our work cut out for us."

— **Maria Gunnoe** organizes in opposition to Mountain Top Removal in Appalachia

"We refer to ourselves as Water Protectors, most definitely NOT protestors, but it's that very word: water. As women we have this divine connection to the water, because we carry it in our wombs when we're pregnant. So it's no surprise that this mirrors Mother Earth and her water, her wombs, because we

ARE nature.

"As women who stand among the men on the front-line, we possess a strength that comes from our core. We possess a purpose that trickles down our spines and runs through our veins. We accept our position as it was so gifted upon us from the stars when they determined our sex. We are the sacred divine feminine. And when our waters are endangered, our wombs are endangered; and when our wombs are endangered, our children are endangered."

— **Malia Hulleman**, young Water Protector at Standing Rock

"We knew that even if the Republican Party had lost, we would have been facing a more difficult challenge: the illusion of progress. In this new order, there are new opportunities and new challenges. As a committed group of people, we have shown we are here for the long haul and we are not afraid of taking on bigger challenges. When they come to get us and deport us, I say: bring it on! We won't go quietly."

— **Marú Mora Villalpando**, active in the #Not1More deportation campaign in Washington state, excerpted from the *Tribuno del Pueblo*, sister publication to the *People's Tribune*

"Our Mother Earth is being desecrated by patriarchy and a hyper-militaristic police-state mentality that enacts violent attempts of controlling and exploiting all that is precious in the name of profit and ego. The brutality of the police-state and

its modern day slavery is merely one permutation of a deeply sick system in dire need of meaningful transformation.

"With women as our foundation, it is our collective spirit, that is radically reimagining our way of living while actively creating a more just, sustainable, and peaceful world. I especially want to uplift the struggles of transgendered, indigenous, Black, immigrant, undocumented, Muslim, and all the many women of color, young and old, whose lives and bodies are continually targeted, especially by police and state violence. The world is with you."

— **Melissa Crosby** is involved with Black Land and Liberation Initiative and other groups

"I saw the joy of women who had never participated in something like the march in D.C. It was packed, everyone welcoming one another, enthusiasm was high, banners on various issues we are facing in this crisis were everywhere. The attitude was, 'this is my sister and we are not going to sit back and let this country go down to the corporations.' Folks understand this is fascism. They agree we can't let this stuff continue. The young women know there won't be a better society unless they participate. And, as angry as they are at this nut in the White House, they would have been ready if Hillary had gotten in, too! They know these times are different. They need education on how to change to a new society."

— **Marian Kramer**, longtime civil rights and welfare rights leader



Women's march in Chicago.

PHOTO/BRETT JELINEK, OLAFIMAGES.COM

Student leader – ‘Not okay to throw people away’

By Viana Maria Roland

SAN JOSE, CA — I’m here today to shed light on student homelessness. This issue has become normalized in our society and has been pushed aside by many of our elected officials and policymakers. As a current student of De Anza College, who will be transferring into the UC system in the fall, I have struggled with homelessness throughout my college career.

Fortunately I had a car to sleep in whereas many are not so fortunate. I was unable to talk about this because I was ashamed. I was embarrassed that I was showering at school, and the only reason I tinted my windows was not to make my car look cool, but so I would be



Viana Maria Roland addresses San Jose’s Rise Up for Justice Rally on January 20, 2017.

PHOTO/NANCY TSOU

able to park in random wealthy neighborhoods in Cupertino to sleep at night and not have to worry about someone seeing me inside. I shouldn’t have had to carry around the weight of shame and embarrassment, just

as many of the homeless do.

The victims are NOT to blame. California has the largest economy in the US, and sixth largest in the world. It also has the largest population of homeless students in the country and twice the rate of homeless students as the national average. A recent study, by California State University, shows that 1 in 10 students are homeless, and 1 in 5 lacks a consistent food source. That means a significant portion of our future leaders, doctors, scientists, social workers and others who will play a critical role in the our world are currently without adequate shelter. Seeking education is their best chance of escaping homelessness and poverty, but struggling to meet basic needs makes academic excellence an extremely

difficult reality.

I am here today to call for resistance to the policies and actions that have left people sleeping on the streets, in the most powerful and one of the richest nations on earth. The election of Donald Trump has demonstrated that we cannot just stand by and wait for basic human rights such as housing, livable wages, healthcare, and affordable education to be given to us. Not only must we demand it, we must lead by example, because it is clear that our presidents, and many of our congress members and elected officials, are unwilling to show us the way. We cannot stand by and expect a system to correct the issues that it intentionally created in the first place.

The resistance to a Trump

presidency starts with doing our part to protect and shape the communities we wish to live in! We must demonstrate that we are not okay with throwing people away, whether they are homeless, or any other marginalized community. Homeless individuals will not come out of the shadows until they feel like humans again. Solutions begin when we look inside ourselves to find the empathy that our society has suppressed.

Be a part of the movement that is focused on SOLUTIONS to our homeless problem, not just temporary fixes. Attack the systemic socioeconomic and racial inequality that has allowed homelessness to flourish.

Stability first, says homeless leader

By Mike Zint

BERKELEY, CA — What does it take to get off the streets? Money? Affordable housing? Employment? Of course the answer is yes, but none of those things is the first step. The first step is stability. And stability is the one thing that is most commonly removed.

Every raid ‘First They Came for the Homeless’ has experienced during The Poor Tour has resulted in chaos. Not only by losing needed gear, but by losing what is known. Every raid results in the unknown. Where do we go? How do I replace what I need?

When will I get stable again?

And that is the question. And the need. During this protest, we have demonstrated the importance of stability. Even with 15 raids, theft of critical gear, medicine, and constantly being relocated, we have succeeded in helping six people become stable enough to get off the streets. We have helped two with work. We have sheltered and fed several dozen during the tour. And our budget is \$0.

The government needs to take a serious look at how we have succeeded. They need to take stability seriously. They



Poor Tour activists Tanis and Mike Zint in conversation. The tent protest community has been at its current location in Berkeley CA after many moves and over 15 raids. The city is now considering a proposal for a permanent tent community site and a tiny homes project.

PHOTO/SARAH MENEFFEE

need to allow an environment where stability can exist. And that means cities need to change how they are doing things.

Step 1 is to allow the homeless tents in a sanctioned campground. A tent solves almost every issue immediately. Shelter, storage, safety, privacy, personal space, and stability. Cost is minimal.

Step 2 is to allow tiny homes,

container homes, cabins, or other housing ideas that are outside the box. Perhaps giving away some of the billions of acres of publicly owned land with a cabin.

Step 3 is true affordable housing. Why is it so hard to understand that?

People say housing is a right. I strongly disagree with that. Housing is a necessity! Without housing, you die from exposure. Just like food and water are necessary to live, so is shelter. Denial of shelter is as serious as denial of food and water. That is as true as it gets!

And finally, Berkeley is a sanctuary city. But Berkeley neglects the economic refugees that sleep outside. They are everywhere, suffering. Stop their suffering by allowing them to shelter themselves.

Young and homeless in America



This young woman is one of an uncounted number of young people who find themselves without a future in America. More and more of our youth find themselves on the streets, left by a system of economic inequality to fend for themselves. Many gather together for mutual support and protection, often moving from town to town.

A new generation of poor youth is inheriting a world in trouble and a system that can’t give them a future. All ages wish to see a better future for those who come after them, and are outraged that so many have none at all. These young people, full of life and creativity, help us envision and organize for a new society.

PHOTO/DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM



People’s Tribune Radio podcasts are available at peopletribune.org. Hear from people at the forefront of the struggles for a new America.

Homeless movement speaks out!

From the Editors of the People's Tribune

The American people are morally outraged that, in this vastly powerful and wealthy country, people in the millions become and stay homeless, dying of neglect in the streets.

The *People's Tribune* has long been campaigning around homelessness and covering the homeless movement. We will continue to put special emphasis on stories by the leaders of the homeless movement themselves, and we will continue to indict a system based on profit as the cause of this senseless human catastrophe.

We are calling on people active or concerned about this issue to write for the paper, send photos, and give their feedback.

Call 800-691-6888 or email info@peopletribune.org.

Interview: Man with frostbitten fingers and toes



Thomas, homeless in Denver's cold, speaks about losing some of his fingertips and toes due to frostbite. PHOTO/PJ DAMICO

Editor's note: The People's Tribune thanks PJ Damico for sharing this interview. It is unfathomable that people are forced to sleep in the street, risking death, when eight billionaires own more wealth than half of humanity. Something has to give.

DENVER, CO —

PJ Damico: We're here with Thomas, outside the St Francis Center. The center has about 800 homeless men who come through every day. It opens at 6 a.m., so people have to fend for themselves at night. Thomas has to have his fingers and toes taken off because of frostbite. So tell me, what happened to you?

Thomas: I was camping outside cause some of us just can't handle the crowds and a lot of the rules... We were cleaning our campsite so we would not get arrested, and I got inside my tent and fell asleep. When I woke up, that's the way I was. It's a pity. So they're gonna

have to cut off my fingers.

One of the reasons I finally did come inside was because of the frostbite. It hurt me so bad. I'm sitting there at the table and I can't even make me a cup of soup... and people are just walking by and taking stuff, you never see none of your stuff again. Then it takes you three or four months just to get your ID and birth certificate. I lost my cell phone and everything.

PJ: How long have you been out here?

Thomas: I've been homeless for a little over three years now. Yeah, it's a daily struggle. Not everyone is a drug addict or an alcoholic. We need a hand up, not a hand-out. This can happen to anybody.

PJ: Would you like to get into some form of housing?

Thomas: Oh yes yes, cause the winter out here is pretty harsh. Talk about pain and agony, the cold in the morning just coming off the river, oh it's devastating. I had a couple of good changes of clothes, but everybody's taken everything I had.

PJ: What would you tell the mayor?

Thomas: I would ask him, y'know, to recognize that we're not bums, we're not hideous people. I know there's properties all over Colorado that could help people, the homeless especially with the camping, so we can try to support ourselves. I would ask him to please consider if there could be a big enough

'You should not have to pay to live on this Earth'



Stephanie Williams lives in a tent encampment on Skid Row. Many occupants of her encampment are women. She vows to stay in the community even if they put her in jail, which they have done.

PHOTO/CHRIS VENN

By Chris Venn

LOS ANGELES, CA — The encampment on Skid Row where Stephanie Williams resides is at a major intersection next to a Single Resident Occupancy (SRO) building. When you arrive at the encampment you immediately feel like you're in a neighborhood. It is a very busy intersection with a lot of foot traffic and tents tightly lined up to the right of the sidewalk. Many of the tent occupants

are women. Stephanie's tent is in the middle of these tents and has a plastic Jacuzzi next to it with a cover. When the weather is warm enough, children from a nearby shelter will come and play in the water. On the other side of her tent is a large table with chairs. This is where the community has weekly discussions on Saturdays.

Stephanie says, "We organize weekly discussions. They are free for everyone. Our subjects have been about cops when they were killing. I'm upset that they got away with another murder (Stephanie is referring to Charley Keunang "Brother Africa's" murder on March 1, 2015.) The police have pushed me down and I tell them, 'don't shoot me!' At our discussions, we also talk about people being thrown out of their SRO's because of caps on occupancy. I stay out here with this community. I'm going to stay out here no matter what happens. They've even put me in jail for staying out on the street. I buy tents and give them out. If the police confiscate the tents I just buy more tents.

This is life on Skid Row. If

we're confronted, we videotape the confrontation. There is no violence on this corner.

This past year we've seen many more kids on Skid Row. I've never seen this number of homeless before. And I also see a lot of old homeless. I just put out a swimming pool and the kids love to come and play in the water.

They have street cleaning on this street but they hide the signs so you don't know when they're (city sanitation vehicles) arriving. Then they force us to put our tents down at 6:00 am. We filed a restraining order against them to prevent this activity.

Skid Row is a good place to live. You get rid of your payments. You give up your house. My sons can't make it as they work so hard at their jobs and are barely able to survive. I tell them to come and join me at this encampment. They took all my property over a year ago. I don't think you should have to pay to live on this earth. They're not going to tell us to pay for our energy. The energy from the sun on this earth is free.



Homeless die outside Sacramento City Hall

People march to protest the cruel deaths of two homeless men who died at the entrance to Sacramento City Hall as they huddled without blankets. Homeless people seek cover under the building's overhang to escape the cold. According to estimates, on average one homeless person dies each week in this region. Is this the kind of society we want? The government owns plenty of vacant homes. We must force them to recognize the human right to housing and act on it.

PHOTO/TINA MARIE RAGLAND

lot where everybody could live—with house rules and if everyone cleaned up after themselves. We deserve a chance.

A lot of us are clean, we just

like to stay away from big crowds, cause there's a lot of craziness, madness. I'm not hating other people, I'm not even hating the people that stole my stuff, maybe

they needed it worse than I did. We all start our lives in different variations every day. We all struggle, but the way we're supposed to do it is to help each other.

Standing Rock Water Protectors with ‘DAPL cough’:

Get tested for poisoning

By Diana Zwinak

CANNONBALL, ND – Water Protectors who have traveled to the camps at Standing Rock have reported contracting a condition they refer to as the DAPL cough.

Symptoms of the DAPL cough include coughing accompanied by severe fatigue, deep lung congestion and discomfort. Not cured by antibiotics, it often lasts from two to 16 weeks. Some report bloody noses and brain fog. Others report coughing up blood.

Some say the cough is a simple response to the weather and the rough winter living conditions at camp or a possible reaction to repeated exposure to chemicals sprayed by the police at the front line. Others blame low-flying crop-dusting planes that might be dropping chemicals on the camps late at night.

An EPA report dated April 22, 2016 states that 40,000 pounds of the chemical Chlorophacinone (one of its trade names being Rozol®), which is intended to be applied by hand in prairie dog burrows, was broadcast on the ground of the Meyer’s Ranch property which borders Standing Rock’s Oceti Sakowin camp and contains sacred burial grounds

contested in September.

The violations were first discovered in late April, shortly after protests at Standing Rock began, when six dead bald eagles and several dead bison were found on the ranch. The EPA ordered that Meyers till the deadly chemical under the soil, effectively removing the surface contamination, but not reducing the risk of groundwater contamination.

Dead bison were also found as recently as August 2016, documents said.

The EPA reports that prairie dogs were left where they died instead of being routinely removed to protect other wildlife. This makes the entry of Rozol® into the local food chain quite probable. Considering the danger, the EPA’s orders to bury the chemical without any kind of fine or penalty to the commercial farmer seem light in comparison.

Since April 2016, more than 20,000 people and members of over 350 Native American nations have traveled to the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation to join in protests against the DAPL pipeline and to support Native American treaty rights and sovereignty.

Protectors who have fallen ill



For months, military and police attacked Water Protectors camped to stop the construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline. Tens of thousands of people came to Standing Rock to lend their support. Although the largest camp has now been removed, the struggle continues against the corporations that destroy our water and land.

PHOTO/ROB WILSON PHOTOGRAPHY

after their return from the camps have discovered Rozol® and other chemicals in their blood stream and in hair samples and have reported this to the UN.

Therefore, Protectors with symptoms are urged to report to a medical professional and be tested. They should request a full toxicology screening for Rozol®. Chemical exposure is very difficult to diagnose. People must be sure to tell the doctor they were likely exposed to airborne chemicals, with a possibility of ingestion of Rozol®. All suspected positive findings should

be sent to Inherent Rights Agency and the Standing Rock Legal Collective.

Sadly, like in Flint, MI, corporate interests are being prioritized over the people’s interests. The possible entrance of these chemicals into the food chain and water table are being ignored, and the rancher is not held responsible for the damage except in the form of cleanup. The health effects of this action must be documented and reported to save lives and to create a paper trail that can be used for accountability.

Trump picks ‘Big Oil’ rep to run EPA

By Bill Bunting

Ever hated an organization or agency so bad you wished you could run it so you could make it fit your and your buddies’ needs? Scott Pruitt did. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) kept him from allowing his fracking buddies to destroy Oklahoma, which already has 100s of earthquakes from fracking and injecting the waste back into the earth.

He RUNS the very agency he sued (14 times). A big oil former governor now runs the EPA. A big oil exec is Secretary of State. What do you think is about to happen? Never forget the last time oil barons were in power... Bush and Cheney.

The paper laws are set up for them to drill and frack America without any regulations. The paper laws are making it illegal to stop this senseless practice.

The Eco War is here. Time to fight back for our planet. THINK ... PREPARE ... ACT.

Another Philadelphia is coming: ‘No politics-as-usual’

By Friends of Cheri Honkala

PHILADELPHIA, PA — The City of Philadelphia and the State of Pennsylvania is being afforded a special opportunity on March 21 to step out of politics-as-usual. Fraud has become the common practice of the 197th district’s representatives. Leslie Acosta, the former State Representative, resigned on January 3, having secretly pleaded guilty to money laundering, triggering a special election. Ironically, she earned her seat during a special election when the previous Representative, J.P. Miranda, pleaded guilty to having a “ghost employee” on payroll. This time can be different. Finally, something new is being offered to this struggling district.

Meet Cheri Honkala, the Green Party candidate for State Representative, 197th District. Cheri is a decades long activist who has advocated for the rights of the individuals in her district, throughout the city, and across the nation. Once a homeless, sin-



Cheri Honkala, a long time leader in the fight to end poverty, is running for State Representative in Philadelphia’s 197th District.

PHOTO/HARVEY FINKLE

gle mother herself, she reminds friends, allies, and neighbors that poverty is shameful—but not for those who suffer hunger and homelessness. The shame, she argues, is on the systems and officials who perpetuate it.

Cheri has shown up on the steps of countless individuals facing eviction to fight with them for their right to a home. Repeated-

ly, while protesting cuts to public assistance and Medicare, she was forcibly removed from the state house floor, alongside the late David P. Richardson and one of her “sheroes,” Roxanne Jones—both highly regarded elected officials still celebrated in their districts. Cheri intends to give Philadelphia that kind of champion in Harrisburg again.

Upon winning, she will start by advocating for the comprehensive, single-payer “Healthcare for All PA” legislation currently being introduced to the State Senate, and rallying against SB10—a bill that threatens the sanctuary status of Pennsylvania cities. Pledging that no one will be deported from her district without a fight, her office will serve as a sanctuary, even if the city loses its status.

Cheri is eager to leverage power as a state legislator to stand with those against fracking and pipelines, such as the Keystone XL. And even if some have to sleep in her office, she is committed to ensuring everyone in her district has a home. She will fight for a commonwealth in which every child has access to quality education, LGBTQ rights are respected, people with disabilities are cared for with deference and dignity, and workers are paid a living-wage.

She also means to dismantle private prisons and the war on drugs while supporting the

legalization of marijuana. She exclaims that “another Philadelphia is coming” and asserts that addressing the dire needs of the 197th is an ideal way to usher in this other, better Philadelphia for everyone.

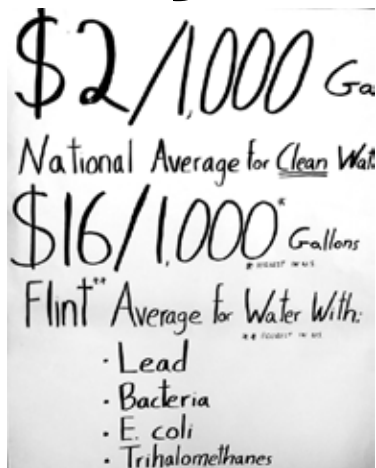
Cheri believes, as her campaign says: “We Are the 197th.”

Learn more about Cheri Honkala at cheri197.com.

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No justice, no water peace in Flint, MI



Flint protester's sign, showing how Flint residents pay exorbitant rates for poisoned water.

PHOTO/DONATED

that the state would end its payment to Flint for water credits at the end of February. This meant skyrocketing bills for water that we in Flint STILL cannot use. What's more, bond payments for an unfinished KWA water pipeline began in January. Here are excerpts of her presentation.

By Lela McGee-Harvey

FLINT, MI — “For the last 40 years in this place called Flint and Genesee County, MI, those who we've elected have chosen to serve themselves and the blood-sucking stakeholders of this city.

This is why there are two Flints and our assets are hijacked. Forty percent of the people are poor. Some of the state's largest foundations are in our city while areas of Flint look like a Third World country.

Our elected officials and leaders chose to do the work of

iniquitous people, while the real criminals remain like vampires in dark caves and buffered.

We are not a blind and dim-witted community. Out grandmothers and grandfathers told us to think for ourselves. Let us mention the number of African Americans they used in fulfilling their agenda. What man or woman who lives in a discriminative community can tolerate working for a discriminative organization? This is a sickness.

Our community is being devoured and sliced by the stakeholders and Gov. Snyder with the consent of our elected officials' participation. Bear witness with me.

Ask yourself: When was the last time you were able to cast a vote that would change someone's impoverished lifestyle? You know what your community needs, but on the night before the election, you receive a request to

change your vote, knowing that a vote with integrity alleviates the pressure of the voiceless. So, the poor become poorer.

Speak truth to power. Most of your votes and energy are for the stakeholders' control of this city.

When was the last time we were able to vote with integrity, to inquire, or to stand up for the grandmother who has no strength? But that grandmother found the strength to stand in the cold to vote you into your seat. You have misused her.

What have you done for the people in your ward? A hot dog give away don't count! Your ward is not developed or invested in is because your vote and position has been coopted. You can't negate the master's plan which does not have the North or East Side in it. What legacy will you leave? You have become comfortable collecting a check and insurance while leaving the grandmother and

young child with nothing.

Why do the people have to encourage you to point out the wrong the stakeholders are doing? Isn't it your oath to do this?

We see through all the elected officials. And the saddest aspect is that many of you misuse the people and claim God in the next breath.

The destruction of this city is on the hands of our elected officials and leaders. Silence is the new extermination and displacement of the poor.

I know there is good in each of you, but fear has created two personalities, two faces for you spiritually. Look at yourself in the mirror. If you don't have the courage as an elected official, organization, or pastor to serve the people, then resign. You took an oath to serve, not manipulate their trust.

We are sick and tired and tired of being mentally and physically sick!

Editor's Note: Flint, MI resident Lela McGee-Harvey, co-founder of Operation Unification Inc/Village, passionately spoke truth to power to elected officials at the Flint City Council after Gov. Rick Snyder informed the city

Water pollution in Appalachia: Fight to end poverty and sickness

Editor's Note: Paula Swearingin, from Appalachia, is a leader in the fight for clean water. President Trump just signed legislation undoing laws intended to protect waterways from coal mining waste. Paula speaks below about the illnesses resulting from water pollution in her home state of West Virginia.

By Paula Swearingin, interviewed by Sandy Reid

IROQUOIS, WV — You wouldn't believe the poverty and sickness here. I lived in Iroquois, WV. The Sweeny Watershed provided water to our community. It was a thriving community before the decline of coal. That community is gutted now. The poverty and drugs are horrible. People can't afford to move.

A lot of people in the community were plagued with illness because of the water pollution. Our water growing up was orange and had a blue and purple film. My little sister was born with a birth defect. She has a cyst at the base of her brain the size of a golf ball. We moved when I was 12 years old. I thought my hair was red until that point in my life. When it grew out, when I wasn't washing my hair with the water, I discovered that I was a brunette.

Right after we left, the community got together and was able to get hooked into another municipality. Then it was discov-



Women's march in Charleston, West Virginia in January.

PHOTO/CHAD CARPENTER

ered that there were high levels of Manganese in the water. God only knows what else was in the water. Manganese is only one thing I discovered when reading over some documents from the litigation for a new municipality.

Even after people get clean water; there's still a lifetime of health impacts. My little sister, my Mom, cousin and me—everybody coming out of there—has stomach issues. Since that time I have lived in other areas with questionable water contaminates. I have witnessed that my neighbor's children have cancer. I have lived in communities with cancer clusters and other diseases caused by coal mining. Most of my family worked in the coal industry. I have buried so many of my family members that our family's theme song feels like Amazing Grace. I

have heard it sung at more than my fair share of funerals.

Trump won't bring back jobs. Most of the people here voted for him because they're against Clinton, gay rights and abortion. That and the false promise to bring jobs back. Race doesn't seem like the biggest issue here, especially in the southern district. There's more anger against those living off welfare and those on drugs.

Why I'm so connected to Detroit is because it seems like our struggles are the same except they're mostly Black and we're mostly white. Greed seems to discriminate against people of color or if you are poor. It's past time for a united effort. This is supposed to be America. Nobody should fall short in prosperity and opportunity in any area of this nation.

Why water is becoming unaffordable



Children from Detroit, Flint and other Michigan cities march last year against unaffordable water shutoffs to low income families. This crisis continues, raises public health concerns, and will eventually affect us all. We have to stop the drive by corporate-government to privatize our water. Water must be owned publicly and distributed to all who need it.

PHOTO/VALERIE JEAN

From the Editors of the People's Tribune

“If water rates continue rising at projected amounts, the number of U.S. households unable to afford water could triple in five years, to nearly 36 percent, finds new research by a Michigan State University scholar.” This process is actually moving forward quite rapidly as corporations wage an all out effort to privatize—that is, privately own—the public's water. We are seeing the outcome of corporate influence over public resources throughout the country. The whole city of Flint was poisoned by an unelected governor-appointed corporate dictator who changed the water to a polluted source to set the basis for its privatization. The people of Appalachia are dying of cancer from toxic water (and air), as a result of the coal industry's lust for profit. Thousands protested the DAPL pipeline that threatened the water and land at Standing Rock. Now we are seeing the full scale unleashing of the energy corporations and environmental regulations throughout the country. Our only hope is to build a powerful movement that demands that the government work for the people, not the corporations. The government must guarantee clean, safe, affordable water and energy for everyone as a basic human right.

Californians go for better, bigger Medicare for All

By Katherine Bock

SAN JOSE, CA — The new government's naked attempts to dismantle health care are galvanizing resistance across the country. The people are in a life-and-death struggle to make our government work for the people it is supposed to represent.

On January 27, 1000 Californians confronted U.S. Republican House Majority Whip, Keven McCarthy, at his home office in Bakersfield. In the forefront were farm workers, domestic workers, nurses and clinic workers of the Central Valley. They were backed up by busloads of nurses, doctors, teachers, youth, retirees, and service workers from all over the state. Over 60 union and community organizations crowded into McCarthy's courtyard to stop his push to repeal the Affordable Care Act (Obamacare), and shrink Medicaid and Medicare.

His door remained closed—but he can't hide any more!

Amid chants of "Healthcare is a human right," "Everybody in, nobody out," and "Medicare for all," speakers expressed fear and outrage that healthcare, just won, could be taken away along with 200,000 good community jobs. "It is not fair," said Julie Otero of United Domestic Workers. She is worried that with two life-threatening lung diseases she might not live to care for her children and mother.

Dr. Paul Song, an oncologist and co-chair of the Campaign for a Healthy California, and Sandy Redding, local emergency room nurse, described daily tragedies of people unable to afford preventive care, screenings and medications, who are in the end stages of deadly conditions such as cancer,



Protesters were locked out of Representative Kevin McCarthy's Bakersfield, CA Home Office again, so they left their healthcare signs and messages for him to read. PHOTO/DONATED

diabetes, lung and heart disease.

Shamefully, 51 percent of Kevin's constituents depend on the very programs he vows to cut. What kind of representation is that? Where do humanity, fairness and justice come in? Central Valley fields still bring in \$35 billion a year and provide more of the nation's food than any other state. Yet, profits are dependent on exploitation of farm workers who endure poverty wages, grueling, back-breaking work, unhealthy conditions, exposure to pesticides, bad air, and food insecurity.

California's Medicaid expansion has gone a long way in covering low-income families. We, as a state, are covering undocumented children, and we're working on a waiver to allow their parents to purchase from the exchange.

On February 1, 1,300 more people gathered in San Francisco for a hearing about rising costs of medicine and insurance. Finally,

in 2015, we had won legislation to allow us to "pull the curtain back" on medical price gouging.

Workers testified that rising drug and insurance costs are negating any cost-of-living increases they can win. Retirees like Bob Sigala of Gilroy spoke of having to choose which life-saving medication to do without.

Shelly Hadelman Douglas, a retired critical care nurse, declared, "Insurance Companies Have had their Chance, Now it is Time for Single Payer." She told of a 7 year-old needing a lung transplant not done in California, and although a Houston hospital will do it, Blue Shield will not cover it, "out of network." Another, clearly distraught retired nurse said patient care should not be based on their ability to pay—but on their need!

California is going for Improved, Expanded Medicare for All. Stay tuned!

Guarantee health care for everyone



Protest at Congressman Dave Trott's (Republican) office in Troy, MI. People were demanding a town hall meeting so they could voice their opposition to repealing Obamacare. Instead, Trott took a trip to India. PHOTO/JIMWESTPHOTO.COM

From the Editors of the People's Tribune

The threat to repeal the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and replace it with something unknown has millions living in fear of losing their health insurance. People want the cost of their care under the ACA to come down, and they want to keep their access to care.

Defending the ACA is only a first step, however. The next step is to demand that the government extend Medicare, free of charge, to everyone. And even that is just another step; in the end we have to take the profit motive out of health care so we can make sure everyone gets care, not just insurance.

Forcing the government to recognize health care as a human right is a key battle in the fight for a whole new society where all of us can lead happy and healthy lives.

Demonstrating at the Gates of Hell is not enough

By Retirees for Single Payer Health Care

DETROIT, MI — NEW Technology demands a change in our economic relationship.

Demonstrations and protests are a good beginning. We are in a political struggle with the "billionaires" to get the government to support our side. The "billionaires" are in a political struggle with us to keep the government on their side.

On January 4, 2017, The Washington Post responded to the Ford Motor Company announcement that 700 jobs would be created in Michigan by the year 2020.

"The next wave of workers in

Flat Rock will build mostly self-driving and electric cars, including a hybrid Mustang. Unlike manufacturing roles of decades past, though, the jobs will probably require computer literacy and more than a high school diploma." (The real reason Ford abandoned its plant in Mexico has little to do with Trump.)

Macomb County in Michigan voted for the "new" government in the November 8 election by 50,000 votes. Twelve percent of the people 25 and over have not graduated from high school. Another 65% have only a high school diploma. This means that 77% of the people in the county are not qualified for any of those 700 new jobs coming

to Michigan.

Warren, MI is one of the cities in Macomb County, Michigan.

On January 15, as part of a nationwide protest of the attack on the Safety Net (Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid) by the "new" government, a protest was held at the Macomb Community College in Warren, MI. Some 5000 protesters showed up in support of "healthcare". Veteran U.S. Representative John Conyers, Jr. announced that he would introduce H.R.676—Expanded and Improved Medicare For All Act in this session of Congress once again.

On January 20, U.S. Representative Conyers joined with oth-

er U.S. Representatives to boycott the Inauguration Day ceremonies of the "new" government. More than 51% of those U.S. Representatives were co-sponsors of H.R. 676. They are in a political struggle with the billionaires who now control the government.

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) cannot be repealed over the next two years but it can be defunded and that is what the "new" government will do. But the ACA is not their main target. The Safety Net (Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid) is being attacked because technology does not pay Safety Net taxes.

On January 21, people from

across the world gathered in protest of this "new" government, including 1.5 million people in this country.

On January 24, U.S. Representative Conyers introduced H.R. 676 in the 115th Congress.

Social Security and Medicare in the main exist to help retirees who have paid their dues and disabled people who can't pay their dues to survive in a society based on having a job. Medicaid exists to help maintain the health of people who can't pay their dues because there are no jobs.

H.R. 676 extends access to healthcare for all us, whether working, retired, disabled or jobless.

Texas: The fight for the arts



My art can be described as bringing a piece of street art indoors—whether it be a museum or your living room wall. In the past, graffiti artists have painted on canvas. Usually these pieces are the artist's name or design on canvas. My art is basically the same concept, however, my pieces are taken from an actual mural painted on the city streets. As with any art, the target audience is all people from all places. Here in the Rio Grande Valley, we are in dire need of more art-based programs to give kids the ability to express themselves in a positive atmosphere and setting. In our area, art is seen as something used to merely pass the time. In reality, students should be given the ability to sharpen their artistic abilities so that they can compete with kids in bigger cities, attending art schools or private art classes. Because of the poverty in our area, kids with amazing artistic skills must push their talent aside in order to gain employment instead of allowing their talent to gain momentum. Sadly, here, most districts put little to no emphasis on artistic expression. I believe there will always be a place for art in the future.

— Gilberto Garza, Rio Grande Valley, Texas

Rise up and speak from your heart!

By Lisbit Bailey

SAN FRANCISCO, CA — In 2009, four members of the League of Revolutionaries for a New America in San Francisco, California, created the first Revolutionary Poets Brigade (RPB). Through engaged poetry, the RPB speaks out and informs the people of the vice inherent in the capitalist system.

Since then, more Brigades have formed under this mission, in the US and Europe. In the US: Los Angeles, Chicago, Albuquerque and New York. In Europe:

Paris and Ivry, France; Palermo, Sicily; and in Italy: Rome, Bari, Avellino. In 2016, the inmates at Pesaro Penitentiary formed a Brigade after a poetry reading given there by one of the founding members of the RPB.

Today, the RPB writes, rises up, and speaks out against the alarming threats of the fascist Trump administration. Through socially and politically engaged poetry, the RPB network leads with strength and inspires motivated community interest that will overthrow oppressors in all guises.

At this time, most especially, the formation of new Brigades of poets is heartily encouraged! In the US and abroad, in communities of poets in small towns, big cities and everywhere in between. Please go to the RPB website at <http://revolutionarypoetsbrigade.org> for more information including the Mission Statement under the “About RPB” button. Contact the RPB at revpoetbrig@gmail.com.

Lisbit Bailey is From Revolutionary Poets Brigade, San Francisco.

Letters to the Editors

The People's Tribune received many comments on our January, 2017 edition entitled: “Trump: Why he can't and won't bring jobs back.” The cover story showed robots replacing workers and posed a solution: that society should own these robots and distribute the abundance produced to all. Here's a few excerpts from some of the letters we received:

“The objective of human civilization is to eliminate work. Thus, advocating for jobs is a futile effort... most jobs are a pointless waste of time and resources... Fully a billion people on this planet are simply not needed to do anything in order for the global economy to function, and that number will only get larger. We should be fighting for a universal basic income, healthcare, food, clothing and housing for all. That requires a Global Direct Democracy and the elimination of the corpora-

tion, patents and “intellectual property”, the nation-state, and all hierarchical systems of human control designed specifically to funnel wealth to the top from the bottom. We must all become global citizens now. Nothing less will suffice.”

— Ymetca

“Exactly, 4th generation robotics (that we are in) will be a big leap in job loss now hitting the lower income bracket. This will bring about major social upheavals as well as another economic crisis, not just in the US, but globally. Some countries are exploring the need for a basic income guarantee...”

— Wayne

You can send letters to the editor by emailing info@peopletribune.org or sending a letter to People's Tribune, P.O. Box 3524, Chicago, Illinois, 60654.

People who want real change subscribe to the People's Tribune!

From the Editors

A supporter of the *People's Tribune* posted the following on their Facebook page, along with a photo of the paper and a subscription form, generating great interest in the paper:

“The *People's Tribune*. Subscribe today. And if you have something you want to say send it to them. Check out their web page as well so you can see this paper is about ‘we the people.’ Join the real change in America.”

Subscriptions are \$20 per year and help us guarantee the paper gets out to those in the movement for a new society. Our printing and mailing costs are about \$3000 a month. This means we need 150 NEW subscriptions a month. If every reader asks their friends to subscribe, we will achieve this goal.

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REFUGEES

Amici, friends, immigrants, welcome to the land of broken hearts. Your heart is – for different reasons, or the same as mine – broken.

Did you disembark with a bag full of clothes, papers and dreams? Did you leave your family, friends and part of yourself behind? I did.

Did you run into a wall of discrimination? I did. Is your accent an impediment to a job you're qualified for? Mine is, still.

Sins of my ancestors are recounted to me. We immigrants, refugees are like seeds spread by the wind and dropped in fertile lands.

We become tempered, resilient civilian soldiers for the common good militating under a new flag. Another heart grows in us,

working at minimum wages, or less. Our job isn't an important one but “well done” is important. All in all our destiny was, is a benevolent one.

Many perish in deserts, seas, wars. In the process we get wiser, hopeful. Quoting George Santayana, also an immigrant,

“It was a cloudy day, but brightening...”

— Diego De Leo

Whirlpool Corporation closing all Benton Harbor, MI schools

By Rev. Edward Pinkney

BROOKS/FREMONT CORRECTIONAL FACILITY, MI — Let the truth be told. Capitalism generates inequality and wealth, status and power. You must recognize the unfairness of a system that allows wealth to accumulate to an unlimited degree and claim to provide equal opportunity for the people. It is a system that undermines democracy by concentrating power and wealth in the hands of a few.

The oppressor is the establishment, which operates the system that oppresses the people. The establishment no longer needs educated workers as it once did. It once took 50 people to make one automobile. Now one person makes 50 automobiles. Education is the last thing on the oppressor's list for the minorities.

The factory jobs previously provided were for workers of the predominantly Black Benton Harbor and the predominantly white St. Joseph (across the river). The jobs provided stability and a good standard of living. Then in the 1990's, a pattern typical of the Rust Belt, emerged. The jobs began to disappear. Jobs were replaced by globalization, sent elsewhere, or replaced by robots.

Whirlpool Corporation, a global appliance manufacturing company, is the largest single employer and single biggest political influence on local government in Berrien County, MI. Whirlpool controls the county commissioners, Berrien County Courthouse, its judges and prosecutors, Benton Harbor Com-



Rev. Pinkney leads a march against the development of the public Jean Klock Park, where a private golf club and luxury housing has been built, pushed through by the Whirlpool Corporation's money and power. PHOTO/BRETT JELINEK, OLAFIMAGES.COM

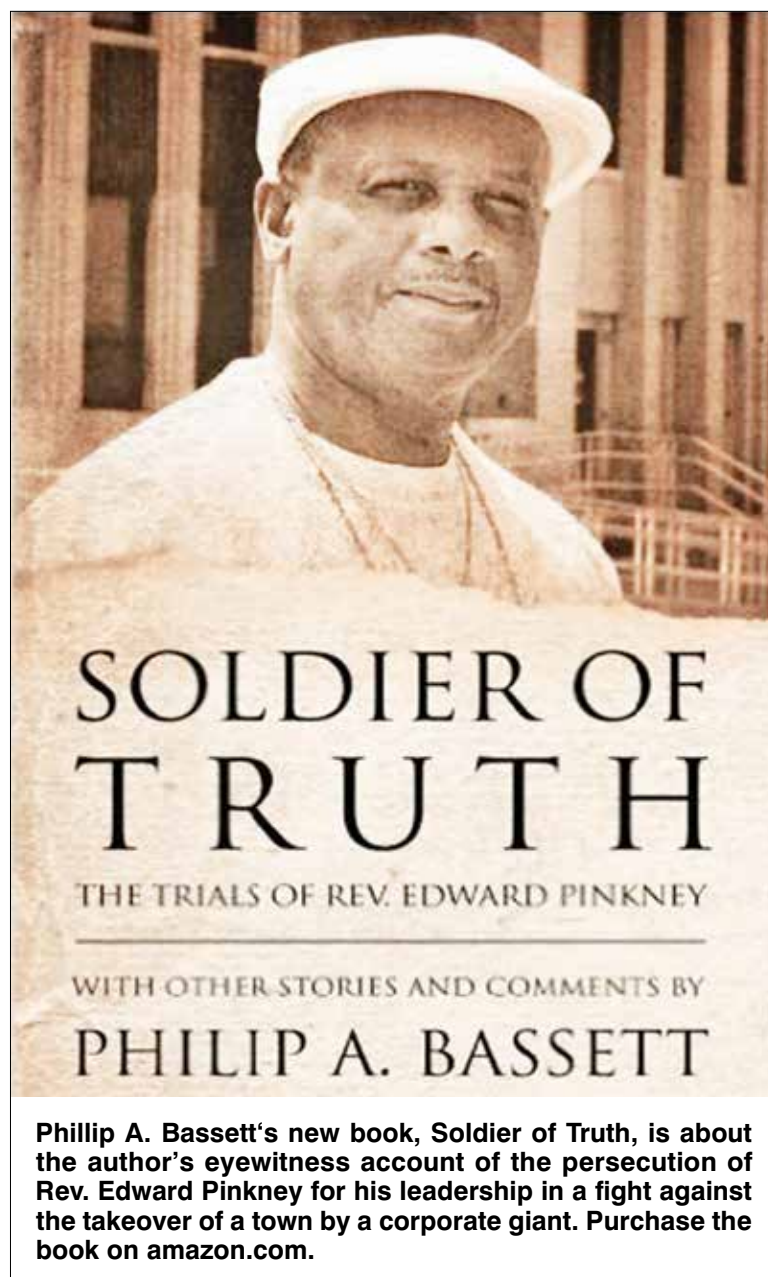
missioners and Benton Harbor School District and Board.

Whirlpool set its sights on turning the city of Benton Harbor into a lakeside resort for the wealthy. Whirlpool and other corporations teamed up and began transitioning the area from an industrial based economy to a tourist, real estate and service-based economy. First, they built a \$500 million arena plus the Jack Nicholas Signature Golf Course complex that would take 465 acres of Benton Harbor and deprive the city of its greatest assets, which includes Jean Klock Park.

Whirlpool no longer needs educated workers from Benton Harbor. Whirlpool Corporation now plans to close all of Benton Harbor schools. The city of Benton Harbor is down to five schools and now Whirlpool and Gov. Rick Snyder are going for the throat to close three more schools.

I Rev. Edward Pinkney have for years gone to school board meetings to tell the board what needs to be done to educate the students and that parents must get involved. I am afraid the parents, teachers and school board members have been misled and lied to by Whirlpool. Now we have three schools closing, overcrowded classrooms and there is no telling what kind of education the children will get. In addition, the school system has gotten many loans from the state. Where is that money? Who is responsible and accountable for our students' education? Who is responsible for the attack on our school system?

The Whirlpool Corporation is determined to crush the residents of Benton Harbor. Economic and social equality is the essence of democracy and is the antithesis of capitalism. We must confront the Whirlpool Corporation at all cost.



Arkansas community with roots in slavery still fighting for its rights

By Simuel Ramey

MCALMONT, AR — The area around McAlmont is an agricultural community rich with African American history. It had been a slave quarter and later a land grant to African American sharecroppers to live in. The community is now threatened with gentrification.

Dr. Joycelyn Elders, a local hero, had practiced medicine at McAlmont's Ruffin and Jarret Nursing Home. She later rose to the position of Surgeon General of Arkansas and then US Surgeon General under President Bill Clinton. Dr. Elders had a street named after her in McAlmont until somebody changed it without rights. The community wants it changed back.

Harris Elementary

School was established in 1886. Originally named Holt Pulaski County Training School, it was later known as Pulaski County Special Training School and was instrumental in educating former slaves. Today it has after school programs for children, a community garden, adult education GED, computer literacy classes and a job placement center. The community continues to fight a never-ending battle against efforts to close the school. The Dallas Cowboy's Running Back Derrick McFadden, and 2016 Olympic Long Jump Gold medalist Jeffrey Henderson, are notable Harris alumni

For information contact: Vern Henderson at 501-410-3020.

From 'Where the Suburb Dams the City'

I.
My parents minted their love in the mountains
got coaxed back by relatives who lied about dying instead of just say "I miss you"—
they were chosen by you, Chicago. To be under the tax of your county but not
the history of its street names. I know it gets hard to discern pay grade
from fate, I know it's too bitter to consider them the same. Made me learn your trains
are braver than your statesmen, running with every class,
overworked and underfunded, like your bloodlines go where only your wish can reach.
And where one of your Blues ended always sounded like a question,
between 22's and Kings, from my 2nd floor Cicero porch, all my friends
answered the ramblings you left on the bellies of ethanol tanks screeching
through our town, traffic stopped like a public service announcement in
another language, like we ought to stare at how the wonder of money
shoulders the opiate of progress, it's ladders clutched around a stomach
sick or cold or smuggling something.

— Michael Garza